



MacIntyre Academies Venture Academy

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Including the Protection of Children and Young People in accordance with national guidelines for under 18s

Version	Purpose / Change	Responsibility	Date
MAT version	The Trust Safeguarding Forum, consisting of Safeguarding Leaders from across the Trust and the NSPCC Educational Consultant, have collaborated to produce a standardised Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which will be adapted to encompass local procedural differences at each academy. The new policy complies with the updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021		

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1. Policy Scope

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and this policy, including appendices, applies to all MacIntyre Academies Trust (MAT) employees, as well as volunteers and those involved in governance sitting on the Local Advisory Board or the MacIntyre Academies Trust (MAT) Board.

2. Policy Aims

- We aim to provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. One where children feel safe, secure and respected, where they feel confident that they will be listened to.
- We recognise that our children are vulnerable to abuse. Some have experienced or witnessed abuse, and this can impact on their self-esteem and self-worth. For this reason, we aim to provide a stable, secure and predictable environment where children feel accepted and protected.
- We aim to use curricular and informal opportunities to educate our children about abuse and enable them to advocate for their and others safety and wellbeing as they grow.

3. Policy Statement

We are committed to protecting children from harm by providing a caring, safe and stimulating environment and by creating a culture where children come first and where everyone feels confident that they will be listened to.

The MacIntyre Academies Trust Board (MAT Board) and the Local Advisory Boards (LABs) take seriously their governance responsibilities under section 175 of the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our academies to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm, it also relates to aspects of school life including:

- the health and safety of children
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- providing first aid.

We understand that safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere in or outside of school and emphasise to all employees, volunteers and governors that they should be alert to possible concerns and have an 'it could happen here' attitude.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- MAT Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
- MAT Health & Safety Policy
- MAT Equality and Diversity Policy
- MAT Compassionate Schools Policy
- MAT Whistleblowing Policy
- MAT Recruitment and Selection Policy
- MAT Staff Code of Conduct
- MAT Complaints Policy
- Venture Academy Anti-Bullying Policy
- Venture Academy Attendance Policy

- Venture Academy Behaviour Support Policy
- Venture Academy Complaints Policy
- Venture Academy E-Safety Policy
- Venture Academy Equality Policy
- Venture Academy First Aid Policy

4. Safeguarding Principles

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility alongside promoting the welfare of our children.
- We will provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, confident, valued and respected, and have the confidence to approach adults if they are in difficulty.
- All staff members will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members will always act in the interests of the child.
- We will provide staff with the necessary information and training to enable them to meet their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- We will ensure safer recruitment practice is implemented through effective DBS checks of all adults within the academies who have access to young people
- We are committed to working in partnership with others to safeguard children

5. Equality statement

Due to the nature of our provisions, the children who attend our academies can have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for them with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

Additional vulnerabilities: Some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect than others. Several factors may contribute to that increased vulnerability, including prejudice and discrimination; isolation; social exclusion; communication issues; a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur; as well as an individual child's personality, behaviour, disability, mental and physical health needs and family circumstances.

Children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), disabilities: Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect because there may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability. Children with SEN and disabilities can be impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. Some children are not able to understand that what is happening to them is abuse, or they may not have the communication skills to express their concerns.

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- 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
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Are showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;

- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are Children Looked After or Children Previously Looked After

6. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)](#) 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.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the **Education and Training (Welfare of children) Act 2021**, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- **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
- Part 3 of the schedule to the **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school
- **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
- Warwickshire Local Authority Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.
- Warwickshire Local Authority Child Missing in Education protocols
- This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association

7. Definitions

The use of the term 'safeguarding' in this policy also includes / covers 'child protection'.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

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 also defines neglect in more detail.

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). The 3 partners will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

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

8. Responsibilities

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and this policy, including appendices, applies to all MacIntyre Academies Trust (MAT) employees, as well as volunteers, including Trust Board and Local Advisory Board members.

All visitors and partners to our academies must uphold their responsibility to children safety by complying with this policy and reading and understanding our safeguarding leaflet when on site. The safeguarding leaflet or statement on an electronic sign in system, will also detail the key instructions visitors must adhere to in terms of the academy E-Safety Policy and the MAT Acceptable Use of ICT Policy (which covers the use of mobile phones).

Where services or activities are provided on the academy premises by another body, the body concerned must have appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children must liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

8.1 The MacIntyre Academies Trust (MAT) Board Responsibilities

- The MAT Board (via the Group Director) has strategic leadership responsibility for the Trusts safeguarding arrangements and procedures.
- The Board has a nominated Trust Board Director who acts as the nominated Safeguarding Trustee.
- The Board commissions an annual safeguarding review that is undertaken by the Group Director, the report outlines how MAT schools have fulfilled their duties in relation to safeguarding and child protection, highlights best practice and makes recommendations for improvements.

8.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities (Principal's responsibilities)

The Principal is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and has overall responsibility for safeguarding. They must ensure that staff understand and follow policies and procedures agreed by the Trust Board.

The Principal of each academy is responsible for ensuring an up-to-date and contextualised school safeguarding and child protection policy is in place and that all staff, volunteers and visitors fully understand their role in protecting children and the academy's safeguarding procedures. This policy must be displayed on the academy website and reviewed annually.

The DSL's (Principal's) responsibilities are:

- To ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the Trust Board, having been approved by the LAB are fully understood, implemented and followed by all staff.
- To ensure that their name and contact details, as well as that of the DDSL and other key contacts are clearly advertised in the academy, with a statement explaining the academy's role

in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

- To ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DDSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities in inter-agency meetings, inter-agency work and assessment.
- To be (or to support where the role is delegated) the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked after (CPLA) to promote the educational achievements of any children who are looked after by the Local Authority and to ensure that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep CLA and CPLA safe
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies.
- To ensure that arrangements are put in place to ensure that full regard is given to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at all times (in line with Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 sections 157 and 175 and section 11 of the Children Act 2004).
- To ensure that the policy on safeguarding children is fully compliant with the provisions of the DfE (2021) Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- To ensure the expectations of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) are met in relation to working with external partners to ensure effective practice and response to concerns.
- To challenge anyone who does not appear to be taking action in relation to safeguarding.
- To publish the Safeguarding Policy, make it available for public scrutiny and make arrangements to support a process of annual review undertaken by the Trust Board.
- Be responsible for taking the lead in situations relating to allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Record details of all allegations against staff and volunteers and report them immediately to the Group Director and inform the Chair of the LAB.
- Be responsible for carrying out any actions agreed by the LADO and reporting on outcomes where relevant to do so in confidential circumstances.
- To report on safeguarding at each LAB meeting (standing item) and provide an annual report to the LAB in relation to work and training undertaken in respect of safeguarding.
- To ensure that the academy follows safer recruitment processes, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record.
- To ensure that children are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe at all times, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To refer all allegations that a child has been harmed by, or that children may be at risk of harm from a member of staff or volunteer to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority within one working day prior to any internal investigation.
- To ensure that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk of harm to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service, as advised by the Designated Officer.
- To recognise that staff working in the academy who have become involved with children who have suffered harm, or appears likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting and to support such staff by providing an opportunity to discuss their anxieties and seek further support as appropriate.
- To ensure that appropriate checks are undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the academy.
- To ensure that there is an identified senior leader to take on the above responsibilities in the absence of the Principal.

8.3 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) Responsibilities

A Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead (DDSL) carries the lead responsibility for Safeguarding reporting to the Principal.

The DDSL (or a staff member with DSL training in their absence) is responsible for:

- Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Social Care Assessment team, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. A written record of the referral will be sent to the Assessment Team by the end of the working day the referral is made.
- Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Developing effective links with relevant agencies and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters.
- Keeping up to date with current knowledge in order to fulfil the role.
- Ensuring that either they or other nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team attends Child Protection Conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents/carers.
- Challenge anyone who does not appear to be taking action in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that any children that is subject to a child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team.
- Ensuring staff regularly update their knowledge and skills at termly Safeguarding training and by email updates as required. The training must enable staff to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, how to respond to a child who discloses abuse and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- Providing an annual report for the LAB, detailing any changes and reviews of relevant policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DSL, and by all staff and Trust Board Directors / Local Advisory Board members; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children subject to a child protection plan (anonymised).
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the academy's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made.

8.4 The Local Advisory Board (LAB) Member Responsibilities

- To attend relevant safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.
- To ensure that there is a named LAB member who oversees safeguarding.
- To ensure that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are provided with copies of or access to the academy's safeguarding arrangements, and sign the MAT Staff Code of Conduct before they start work.
- To ensure that the academy has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff and volunteers including allegations made against the Principal and allegations against other children.
- To challenge anyone who does not appear to be taking action in relation to safeguarding.
- To challenge and scrutinise the Principal's reporting on safeguarding practice.
- To ensure that the academy has a safeguarding policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available to parents/carers on request.
- To ensure that the academy has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with policy and guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board and locally agreed inter-agency procedures (this includes the Chair of LAB taking the lead in cases where an allegation has been made against the Principal).
- To ensure that the academy operates safer recruitment procedures and ensures that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children.
- To ensure that a member of the senior leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children.
- To ensure that staff undertake appropriate training on safeguarding children.
- To remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that a LAB member is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal.
- Ensure that the academy teaches children about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe at all times, including when on line, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

- To consider and where appropriate approve, any recommendation from the Principal, that a member of staff who does not work directly with children be asked to read only the condensed version 'Annex A' of Keeping Children Safe in Education. This would only be considered where staff who are not working in regulated activity with children have literacy issues and may struggle to assimilate the entirety of Part 1. The LAB should record the rationale for any such decision.

8.5 Nominated Safeguarding LAB Lead Responsibilities

All members of the LAB understand the importance of their specific interest and responsibility in safeguarding. In order to foster the right partnership between the LAB and the academy a LAB member whose focus is on Safeguarding takes a lead on Safeguarding visits and audits, undertaking the below additional responsibilities on behalf of the LAB.

- Be committed to attend/undertake relevant training to ensure their effectiveness in this regard either in school, through the MAT or externally provided
- To monitor and scrutinize the academy adherence to safer recruitment procedures and make appropriate checks of the Single Central Record, including an annual audit.
- Undertaking an annual Safeguarding Audit with the Principal and be involved in any external Safeguarding Audit.
- Undertaking termly Safeguarding visits, after every visit, updating the LAB by means of a written report which is then discussed at the LAB meeting.

8.6 All staff Responsibilities

- All staff will read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- All staff will sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- Undertake appropriate training in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at their induction and there afterwards at least annually. This will include online safety.
- Complete all CPD tasks relating to "safeguarding" within the deadline set.
- Be alert to signs of abuse and reporting concerns immediately to the (D)DSL.
- Raise concerns about a child with the (D)DSL.
- Deal with all incidents in line with the Trust's policy and record them as such.
- Maintain awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.
- Act appropriately and in line with the staff code of conduct at all times, modelling the highest standards of care and courtesy to pupils and other adults
- To challenge anyone who does not appear to be taking action in relation to safeguarding and follow escalation procedures in line with [section 9.2](#) or [section 13](#) of this policy respectively.
- Read and understand this policy and appendices. Where you do not understand any aspect to immediately seek guidance from the Principal, the DDSL or a member of the DSL trained team.

8.7 Abuse of position of trust

MacIntyre Academies staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards children must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff must 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 academy staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.

The MAT Staff Code of Conduct sets out expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

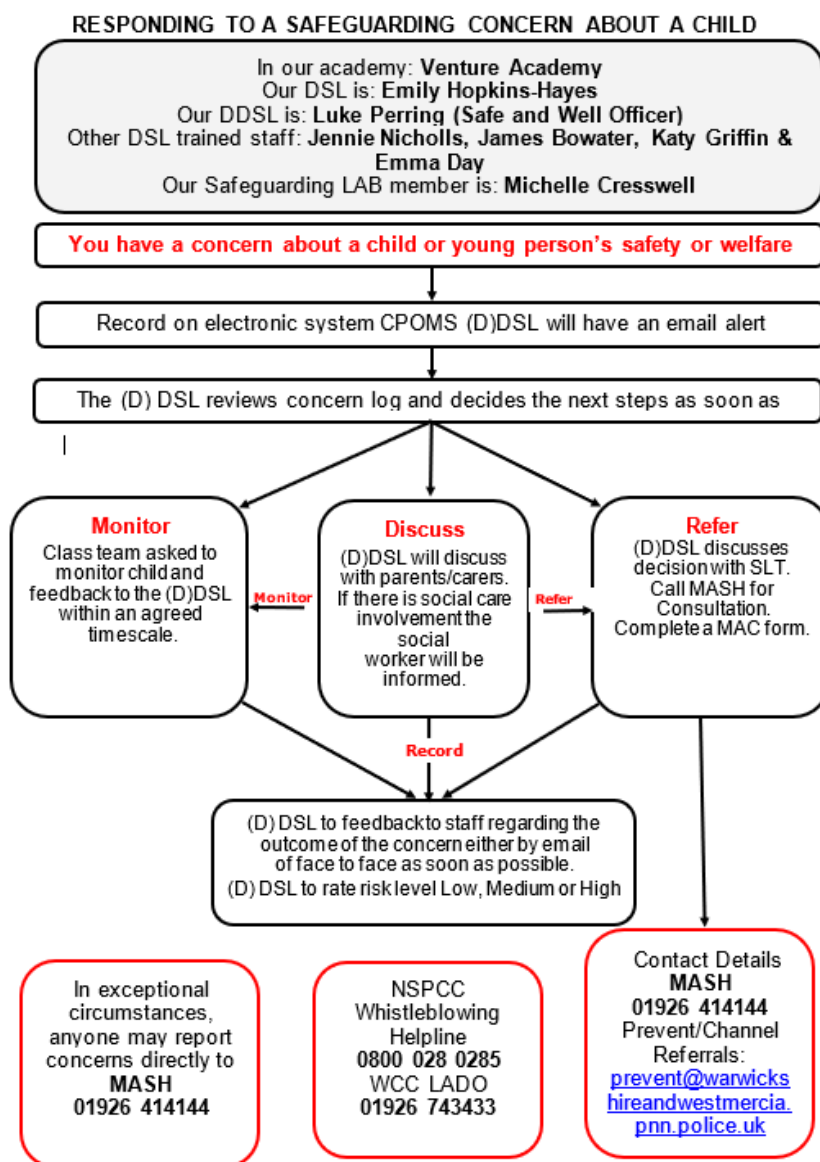
9. Procedures

9.1 Local accountability

Our academy procedures for safeguarding children are in line and work with the context set out in the below diagram:



9.2 Procedure for taking action



9.3 Reporting systems for our children

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for children to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children
- Make it clear to children that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

Pupils are able and encouraged to speak to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable speaking to. We publicise safeguarding information in a pupil friendly manner in classrooms, therapy rooms, toilets and online. Pupils can additionally email the principal and other DSLs directly if they are concerned about their safety and wellbeing.

Pupils are taught how to report e-safety concerns from outside school through the computing curriculum.

9.4 Notifying Parents or Carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents/carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents/carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL. If we believe that notifying the parents/carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents/carers of all the children involved.

9.5 National / Local Emergency Procedures (Including COVID-19)

The procedure for identifying vulnerable children in the event of a request from government for a partial school closure.

Vulnerable children and young people

When the government asks parents/carers to keep their children at home and for schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend decisions need to be taken regarding which children should come into school, and which should stay at home and learn remotely.

children of key workers, as defined in guidance from the Department for Education, are offered places at school by default.

It is important to note that eligibility for free school meals in and of itself will not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability of a child for these purposes.

We will identify the most vulnerable children as follows:

- Children who have a social worker, including children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. It may be appropriate to undertake a risk assessment in relation to children with social workers, in some cases children with a social worker can safely remain at home. However, the school will provide a place for any child with a social worker:
 - If the social worker requires a place to be provided;
 - and the child's parents/carers are willing to send the child to school;
 - and the child does not have an underlying health condition that puts them at increased risk.
- A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

- Children up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in consultation with the local authority and parents/carers to determine whether children with an EHC plan need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children with EHC plans can safely remain at home.
- Other children who the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers to be vulnerable, including those children who may be in receipt of early help; were previously the subject of child protection or child in need plans; were previously looked after; or whose situation and wellbeing at home may become unsafe or insecure if they do not attend school.

We recognise that situations can quickly change and so keep in regular contact with parents/carers ensuring that if any child who was safe at home at the beginning of a partial closure begins to struggle and needs to attend school, that decisions can be reviewed and changed.

In circumstances where we consider a child to be vulnerable and eligible to attend school but a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to school, the DDSL will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer. If the child has a social worker, the DDSL will liaise with the social worker and seek to involve them in the discussion with the child's parents/carers. Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of their child contracting COVID-19, the DDSL will discuss those anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. If the child has a social worker, the DDSL will liaise with the social worker and seek to involve them in the discussion with the child's parents/carers.

In line with advice from the Local Authority, we will create and maintain an up-to-date register/database of all children who are considered vulnerable as above and will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's Social Workers and The Virtual School for CLA and CPLA. The lead people for this are Luke Perring (DDSL) and Gary Percy and Katy Griffin (CLA Designated Teachers) and in their absence the Principal. The register will contain the names and contact details of the children's parents/carers; other significant family members; social workers; family support workers; and any other key professionals including health professionals and youth justice workers. The register will be accessible to the DSL, the DDSL and all of those with DSL level training. Secure access will be arranged for those who may need to self-isolate and/or work from home.

We will assess and review the level of vulnerability of each child on the register using the RAG rating format as below. The RAG rating criteria are:

Red

most at risk of harm, self-harm or neglect (will include all children subject of a child protection plan); and all children who are looked after unless they are in a stable setting)

Amber

a moderate risk of harm, but with some protective factors (Is likely to include some of the children with a Child in Need plan and/or being supported by a family support worker)

Green

some concerns or unmet needs; or have been red or amber and need monitoring.

Every child on the vulnerable children register is allocated to a member of DSL trained staff, who is responsible for ensuring that the identified level of support and contact is provided. Our DSL trained

staff will record all contacts and outcomes with vulnerable children and their families in the usual way so that those records are visible to colleague DSLs which will be reviewed in weekly DSL meetings.

Isolation periods and vulnerable children and young people

Any child displaying symptoms of COVID-19 are advised not to attend school or are sent home and advised to take a COVID-19 test. If the test is positive they are asked to isolate for 10 days, if it is negative they would be expected to return to school.

If a child is absent with COVID-19 the Family Footings Team and/ or class team will check in by telephone on a weekly basis to ensure the safeguarding of the child.

If a child who is rated as Red or Amber in terms of their vulnerability is absent due to COVID-19 then additional check in's will take place and relevant external professionals such as Social Workers will be made aware

10. Recognising abuse

[Appendix 1](#) outlines types of abuse. Refer to the flow chart in [section 9.2](#) for making a referral.

10.1 If a child is suffering, or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger:

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral.

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

10.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it

Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Further detail on what to do if a child makes a disclosure to you is included in [Appendix 3](#).

10.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a child is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a child has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a child may be at risk, are set out in [Appendix 1](#) of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve Children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a child is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine children.

Any member of staff who suspects a child is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#).

10.4 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, staff must report all concerns around extremism via the procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

If there is an urgent call for action (a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger) and the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which academy staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a child. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

Think someone is in immediate danger

Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group

See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

10.5 If you have a mental health concern

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.

Staff will be alert to behavioral signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#).

10.6 If a child is at risk of Harmful sexual behaviour:

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and which may be harmful or abusive (derived from Hackett, 2014). It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour.

HSB encompasses a range of behaviour, which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It is harmful to the children who display it, as well as the people it is directed towards. Technology assisted HSB is sexualised behaviour which children or young people engage in using the internet or technology such as mobile phones. This might include:

- viewing pornography (including extreme pornography or viewing indecent images of children)
- sharing nudes or semi-nude images/video (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

Staff must report all cases of Harmful Sexual Behaviour and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

10.7 If a child is at risk of sexual violence and/ or sexual harassment:

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable, and must never be overlooked or dismissed as 'banter'.

Staff must report all cases of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay

10.8 If a child is at risk of online abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices. Children may experience several types of abuse online such as cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Children can also be groomed online: perpetrators may use online platforms to build a trusting relationship with the child in order to abuse them. This abuse may happen online or the perpetrator may arrange to meet the child in person with the intention of abusing them.

Staff must report all cases of possible online abuse and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

10.9 Our children as potential abusers

In some cases children at our academies may be easily led / groomed by others. This may be as victims or, indeed, as perpetrators. For this reason the wellbeing curriculum covers sexual correctness, age of legal responsibility and keeping themselves and others safe. Any concern a member of staff has should be raised following the procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

10.10 Children Looked After (CLA)

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep CLA safe.

We ensure that staff understand the child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents/carers or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. And the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The DSL has details of the child's social worker.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CLA safe. Further information can be found in the academy **Designated Teacher for Children Looked after and Children Previously Looked After Policy**.

Staff must report all concerns, however small they may seem and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

10.11 Children and young people missing from education

Children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Staff are aware of the academy Children Missing in Education Policy.

Staff must report all concerns, however small they may seem and follow procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

10.12 Children and young people missing from home or care

Children who run away or go missing (particularly repeatedly) and are thus absent from their normal residence are potentially vulnerable to abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or

exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It could also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

10.13 Young carers

We recognise that some of our children have responsibility for looking after other family members, whether in an officially recognised way or not. We will be alert to any additional support they may need as a result.

10.14 Safeguarding young people in our academy who are 18 years old and over (vulnerable adults)

We will support young people to remain at the academy until they are nineteen. At the age of eighteen all young people reach the age of 'adulthood' and as such move from children's services within their local authority to being supported by the adult team. This means that any safeguarding issues that may affect them are also reported and dealt with by the adult safeguarding team. Our own internal reporting procedures and duty of care to these young people remains the same.

11. Peer on Peer Abuse

We use the term 'peer on peer incident' rather than 'peer on peer abuse' to take account of the full range of our children's complex needs and intent.

We recognise that even if there are no reported peer on peer incidents this does not mean that it does not happen at the academy.

Peer -on- peer incidents can take various forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse including (but not limited to)

- serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- relationship abuse
- domestic violence and abuse
- child sexual exploitation
- youth and serious violence
- harmful sexual behaviour
- prejudice-based violence including but not limited to, gender-based violence.
- financial abuse and coercive control between children.

Peer on peer incidents can occur between any number of children of any age and gender and between children of the opposite or same gender.

All staff recognise that children can abuse their peers with intent and are trained to understand and implement the academy's policy and procedures regarding peer-on-peer incidents. All peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will always be challenged and never dismissed as 'banter'.

We recognise that some violent behaviours demonstrated by children at school happen in crisis without intent and refer to our Behaviour Support Policy and Individual Risk Assessments to inform this. However, allegations of abuse may be made between children in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include, but are not limited to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Members of staff to whom such allegations are made and/or who become concerned about a child's sexualised behaviour, including any known online sexualised behaviour should follow the procedure in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

11.1 Responding to peer on peer incidents

In order to prevent and tackle peer-on-peer abuse we adopt a contextual Safeguarding approach in order to understand and respond to the risk of harm to which children can be exposed, and/or harm which they can experience, beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that children form in their neighbourhoods, schools, and online can feature violence, coercive control, and abuse. Parents/carers can have little influence over these contexts, and the risk of harm to which children can be exposed, and/or harm which they can experience, outside of the family, can undermine

parent-child relationships. This may include the potential for peer-on-peer incidents to take place across social media platforms and services; and for things to move from platform to platform online.

The academy will also consider the potential for the impact of the incident to extend further than the academy's local community (e.g. for images or content to be shared around neighbouring schools) and for a victim (or alleged perpetrator) to become marginalised and excluded by both online and offline communities. There is also the strong potential for repeat victimisation in the future if abusive content continues to exist somewhere online. Online concerns can be especially complicated. Support is available from The UK Safer Internet Centre at 0344 381 4772 and helpline@saferinternet.org.uk and the Internet Watch Foundation at <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>.

When responding to a peer-on-peer incident account will be taken of:

- Context of the incident
- Context of all children involved
- Degree of intent
- Nature of any power imbalance or coercion

Our response will be to:

- Agree any immediate actions in respect of the victim and identify any support required
- Agree any immediate action in respect of the alleged abuser to maintain the safety of the other young people.
- Decide how the alleged abuser's parents/carers will be informed of the matter and be involved in discussions/decisions unless to do so would risk the safety of the alleged victim/abuser/other child.
- Decide when and how to involve external agencies in supporting the needs of all children involved.

11.2 Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Peer on Peer Abuse

11.2.1 Recording peer on peer incidents

Incidents will be recorded and categorised with the rationale for making the decision to record the incident as:

- a) Low level concern
 - b) Behaviour incident
 - c) Serious incident
 - d) Safeguarding concern
- When an allegation is treated as a safeguarding concern the procedure in [section 9.2](#) must be followed.
 - Staff will **not** attempt to investigate the circumstances at this stage.
 - The DDSL will gather information from the young person making the allegation and consider whether they are at risk of significant harm.
 - If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, the DDSL will discuss with the children parents/carers their option to report it to the police.
 - Once advice has been taken from Children's Social Care and/or the police, the academy will begin its investigation, unless this is being undertaken by another agency. The DDSL will speak separately to the young people involved to gain a statement of facts from them, using consistent language and open questions for each account. Any written evidence or images will be gathered.
 - If the allegation regards sexting, devices containing images will be confiscated, turned off and securely stored until they can be handed over to the police.
 - Parents/carers, of both the alleged perpetrator and the alleged victim, will be informed at an early stage and kept updated on the progress of the referral. If the police/social care are involved we will wait for their agreement before informing parents/carers.
 - The DDSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a secure copy on the child's safeguarding file.
 - If the allegation highlights a potential risk to the academy and the children, the academy will follow the academy's Behaviour Support Policy and Procedures and take appropriate action.

- In situations where the academy considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment will be completed, together with a support plan.
 - The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up review with everyone concerned. In some cases, it may be necessary to call an urgent review with the Local Authority to plan a way forward.
- If there is an investigation ongoing criminal or otherwise, the academy may consider that the child is unable to be educated on site until the investigation is concluded. The children will then be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Incident recording must carefully consider the safeguarding needs of all children involved.

11.2.2 Support for the child who has been harmed

The support the children requires will depend on the individual but responses include:

- A support plan/anxiety management plan will be put in place for the children, naming someone who they can talk to and listing support strategies for managing issues.
- The child can speak to a trusted adult in school.
- The child may require support from the pastoral team, to improve peer relationships if the incident was of a bullying nature.
- The child may require counselling from an appropriately qualified professional
- Consideration of a referral to outside agencies including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- The child may be supported by a peer mentor.
- Parents/carers may also need support from the academy.

11.2.3 Support for the child or young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

It is important to find out why the child has behaved in such a way. It may be that they may have been harmed themselves in a similar way or may be experiencing their own difficulties. The academy acknowledges will consider the following:

- A risk assessment and support plan will be put into place.
- The child can speak to a trusted adult.
- Identify whether the young person needs support from the Pastoral Team.
- Complete an Early Help Referral to ensure that outside services are made available to the child.
- A referral to outside agencies, including CAMHS, Sexualised Inappropriate Behaviours Service (SIBS) or the Child Sexual Exploitation Team may be a requirement in the case of sexually harmful behaviour.
- In cases of bullying, the academy will ensure that natural consequences follow for this behaviour, including restorative practice, if appropriate.

12. Confidentiality

We will manage and share confidential information about children in line with 'Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents/carers (HMG 2018)'. All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child, family and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) places duties on the academy and individual staff to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. This does not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021) states clearly that "Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children".

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the DSL, another SLT member or outside agency as required (e.g. Education Safeguarding Manager).

It is reasonable for staff to discuss day-to-day concerns about children with colleagues in order to ensure that children's general needs are met. However, staff must follow the procedure set out in [section 9.2](#), without delay.

If staff have concerns about a member of staff these must be discussed with the Principal and staff must follow the procedure in [section 13](#) without delay.

In the case of concerns about the Principal staff must follow the procedure in [section 13](#) and raise them with the Group Director or LAB Chair, without delay. The person receiving the referral will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

There have been a number of cases nationally where senior leaders in schools failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 emphasises that any member of staff can contact and/or make a referral to Children's Social Care if they are concerned about a child.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from a child and/or parents/carer to share sensitive information within the academy or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL or DDSL may share information without consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Data Protection Officer.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. All such information will be handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018, which require that sensitive 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 will be protected by user accessibility on the ICT system, only allowing those staff with DSL training. The records will only be made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access to sensitive information. Any sensitive information that needs to be stored on portable devices such as laptop computers or tablets or on portable media such as a CD or flash drive will be password protected and where possible also encrypted and kept in locked storage.

13. How to report a concern about a colleague or other adult who works with children.

Staff are expected to report **all** concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues or other adults who work with children- including what may seem minor contraventions of the MAT Staff Code of Conduct.

Where staff are concerned about the conduct of a colleague (or other adult) towards a child, without delay, they must report this to the academy Principal.

- Staff should *use the 'whistleblowing tab on CPOMS'* or if they prefer speak to the Principal directly. If the Principal is not available the concern can be reported to the academy Chair of Governors Guy French, or to the Group Director or to external bodies as per the flow chart.
- Any concern or a complaint about the Principal should be reported to either the Group Director or the academy LAB Chair.

The MAT Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Use of the policy is promoted by line managers through support and supervisions.

Staff may also report concerns about suspected abuse or neglect to directly to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or to the Police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action for example out of hours if you cannot contact the Principal or Group Director, in the school holidays or if they believe that their concern has not been taken seriously enough by the Principal.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 between 8.00a.m. and 8.00p.m, Monday to Friday or e mail help@nspcc.org.uk. Information is also available on the NSPCC website at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>.

13.1 How allegations made against staff will be managed

The Principal, or where the allegation is about the Principal, the Group Director, will lead any investigation in accordance with the procedures set out in section 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. Ensuring that both the welfare of the child is looked after, as well as investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation.

As required by Working Together to Safeguard Children, all allegations in respect of an individual who works at the academy that fulfil any of the below criteria will be reported to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority (LADO) within one working day, by the academy Principal. Unless the allegation is about the Principal in which case the Group Director will undertake the responsibility.

Allegations made against staff take account of anyone working in the academy including supply teachers and volunteers who have:

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

Any conduct which causes a sense of unease or is inconsistent with the MAT Staff Code of Conduct should be reported following the procedure in [section 13](#), without delay, including that which does not fall into the definitions above.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress.

Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. However, in some cases staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that allegations are investigated fairly, quickly and consistently and that all parties are protected. In the event of suspension, it will be on the basis of a 'neutral act' with full pay, the academy will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the academy or historical allegations will be reported to the Police.

13.1.1 Confidentiality

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.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, the academy will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation against a member of staff is being investigated or considered.

13.1.2 Complaints

The academy Complaints Policy and procedure is published on the academy website and available to parents/carers, children and staff who wish to report concerns. This includes the option of escalating concerns beyond school leadership to the Nominated Trust Board Safeguarding Lead.

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the relevant safeguarding and HR procedures in accordance with the procedure set out in [section 13.1](#).

13.2 Inviting the views and experience of children, visitors and other stakeholders

We invite feedback and/or disclosure from all stakeholders in a number of ways. Where feedback is generic and about the quality of education in our academies, each academy website has an easy access link in order for any stakeholder to give feedback. We also welcome feedback by telephone or in writing to the direct number and address of the academy.

Sharing specific experiences or views

Any visitors to the site, staff members or children can share their views at any time with either a member of the leadership or the person supporting them verbally or in writing. All new visitors are given a leaflet or on-screen information at sign in that tells them who to speak to if they have any questions or concerns while on site.

Surveys

We carry out surveys at least annually to ascertain key performance information in relation to safety and wellbeing, among other areas. These are child surveys to gather pupil voice, and parent surveys and the staff engagement surveys. They ask specifically about feelings of safety and related issues such as bullying so that the academies can plan improvements and celebrate successes.

How we ensure children's voices are heard

Children are allocated to tutor groups that have at least 2 familiar adults in them. They will see these familiar adults at the start and end of most days and are encouraged to participate in activities such as circle time, where they can raise questions, make observations or voice concerns. Our core value of "Continuous positive regard" should engender trust and confidence in our children with the adults that support them.

Student council

We have student councils where children can ask questions, make observations or voice concerns about issues affecting them or others in the academy.

Extensive pastoral and therapeutic support teams

These include Compassionate Schools Coaches and talking therapists. Children may also choose to confide in these colleagues either in passing or in planned intervention sessions, if something is bothering them.

We publish information around the academy telling children how they can raise safeguarding concerns or other things that might be worrying them and introduce this to children when they first join the academy.

We accept that behaviour is often a form of communication for our children. We analyse patterns of behaviour and intervene where children are showing signs of escalation, as this may indicate a feeling of high anxiety, a lack of safety in or out of school or other issues that children are unable to communicate verbally. Through pastoral, therapeutic and safeguarding colleagues we plan the best approach where such issues arise in order to offer the best and most effective support.

14. Safer Recruitment

We endeavour to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'suitable' staff and to only allow 'suitable' volunteers to work with children by complying with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and the Local Authority Safer Recruitment policies.

Full details of our adherence to Safer Recruitment practices can be found in the MAT Recruitment and Selection Policy. In summary, Safer Recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that 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
- if offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role
- if offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed by a panel of at least two school leaders/LAB members, if shortlisted.

Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in Regulated Activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

We maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment checks undertaken and ensure that the record is maintained in accordance with section 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and guidance issued by the Local Authority.

15. Other adults on site

15.1 Visitors

Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office sign in system and to display a visitor's badge whilst on the academy site, which confirms that they have permission to be on site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance. Parents/carers who are simply delivering a letter or collecting their child do not need to sign in. The Principal will exercise their professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the academy follows safer recruitment processes, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record and a vetting and recruitment process that places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.

We ensure that there is at least one member of each interview panel has completed the safer recruitment course.

15.2 Volunteers

Volunteers will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the academy and contact with children. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity. More detail is found in the MAT Volunteer Policy.

15.3 Supervised volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safer recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the academy's risk assessment process and statutory guidance. More detail is found in the MAT Volunteer Policy.

15.4 Agency Staff

We check the identity of agency staff on arrival.

Before arrival on site we quality check agency staff to ensure:

- they have complete safer recruitment checks with the agency
- they have the correct level and status of DBS
- they have the required experience and qualifications.

A photograph of agency staff members is emailed ahead of their arrival by the agency as well as formal confirmation that the above is in place.

15.5 Contractors

We check the identity of all contractors working on site and request DBS checks where appropriate. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or in regulated activity.

16. Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. When our children attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the academy, the Academy's Safeguarding Policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on the academy site, we will check that those organisations have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

17. Training

All staff must complete the appropriate level of safeguarding training within the defined timescales. Mandatory training for all staff is undertaken annually.

All staff also receive training regarding personal online activity, use of social networking and electronic communication with children, about which there are strict rules and monitoring. Where staff are found to be in breach of these rules they may be subject to disciplinary action.

DSL and DDSLs undertake the initial designated safeguarding training and a subsequent refresher course every two years delivered by a suitably qualified professional/organisation.

The Trust Board and LAB members undertake mandatory safeguarding training annually.

The nominated LAB member is offered safeguarding training from a strategic perspective on a three-yearly basis, this can then be disseminated to the rest of the LAB.

All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the academy Safeguarding Policy, and reference to it on our website.

All members of staff, volunteers LAB members and Trustees are inducted and trained so that they understand:

- The contents of the Academy Safeguarding Policy
- The signs and symptoms of concern
- How to respond to a child who discloses abuse
- What to do if they are concerned about a child
- The role of the DSL
- The importance of their behaviour as outlined in the Governor Code of Conduct
- That any individual may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care services
- About the Early Help process, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
- Their Prevent duty and about the Channel process
- Online safety

18. Reporting

All staff are made aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to raise concerns about a child, including those that relate to the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

All staff are made aware that the assessment of harm or abuse has to be multi-disciplinary and no single professional should take or have the responsibility of individually determining whether harm has occurred or not.

On receipt of an alert the DSL will refer and discuss any disclosed concerns with the duty assessment team in the child's home local authority and inform the Warwickshire Local Authority duty and

assessment team of the referral. This referral will also be discussed with the LADO and advice taken on next steps.

Where possible the DSL will discuss concerns with the family and inform them of any referrals being made to children's social care team, unless this may place the child at risk of significant harm, lead to the risk of losing evidence or in cases where fabricated or induced illness is suspected.

The referrer will keep written evidence of:

- Discussions with the children
- Discussions with staff
- Discussions with parent/carer
- Discussion with managers
- Information provided to children's social care team
- Decisions taken (clearly timed, dated and signed)

The timings of referrals must reflect the level of perceived risk, but should usually be within one working day of the recognition of the risk/disclosure, where thresholds are met.

19. Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the academy who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate. Staff are also able to access support via the Employee Assistance Programme and at times through our own internal qualified practitioners such as clinical psychologists and talking therapists.

Guidance for staff can also be found in the following document: [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings](#) (May 2019)

An additional [COVID-19 addendum](#) (April 2020) has been released to read alongside Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings.

We place great importance on staff wellbeing and invest in the wellbeing of staff in a range of initiatives. More information can be found in the MAT Wellbeing Policy.

20. Monitoring Compliance and Impact

This policy will be reviewed annually in via the Trust Safeguarding Forum. It will then be customised to reflect any local aspects according to their geographical region.

At every review we will consider the most up-to-date legislation and statutory guidance.

The Local Advisory Board will approve any review of this policy before it is presented for adoption to the MAT Board.

The Principal will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the Local Advisory Board at every LAB meeting.

The Group Director will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity at every Trust Board meeting.

Implementation of this policy will be tested by:

- Internal audit
- External audit
- LAB and Trust Board visits
- Random testing by line managers

Appendices:

1. Categories of abuse and concerns - Definitions and Indicators of Abuse
2. Responding to a Safeguarding concern about a child – poster of section 9.2
3. Responding to disclosures/allegations of Abuse (the 6 R's – what to do if)

APPENDIX 1

Categories of abuse and concerns – definitions and indicators.

Note: It is critical that all adults and children understand that abuse is not always committed solely by adults and can be from same/similar aged peers.

- a. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- b. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
- c. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.
- d. **Neglect:** 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, for example, because 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
- e. **So-called 'honour based' abuse (including Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation):** So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

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

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

- b. **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

- c. **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".
- d. **Serious Violence:** All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change

in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

- e. **Domestic abuse:** Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

- f. **Radicalisation:** Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This is known as The Prevent Duty.

RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD

In our academy: **Venture Academy**
Our DSL is: **Emily Hopkins-Hayes**
Our DDSL is: **Luke Perring (Safe and Well Officer)**
Other DSL trained staff: **Jennie Nicholls, James Bowater, Katy Griffin & Emma Day**
Our Safeguarding LAB member is: **Michelle Cresswell**

You have a concern about a child or young person's safety or welfare

Record on electronic system CPOMS (D)DSL will have an email alert

The (D) DSL reviews concern log and decides the next steps as soon as

Monitor

Class team asked to monitor child and feedback to the (D)DSL within an agreed timescale.

Discuss

(D)DSL will discuss with parents/carers. If there is social care involvement the social worker will be informed.

Refer

(D)DSL discusses decision with SLT. Call MASH for Consultation. Complete a MAC form.

Monitor

Refer

Record

(D) DSL to feedback to staff regarding the outcome of the concern either by email or face to face as soon as possible.
(D) DSL to rate risk level Low, Medium or High

In exceptional circumstances, anyone may report concerns directly to **MASH**
01926 414144

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline
0800 028 0285
WCC LADO
01926 743433

Contact Details
MASH
01926 414144
Prevent/Channel Referrals:
prevent@warwicks
hireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk

APPENDIX 3

Responding to disclosures/allegations of Abuse (the 6 R's – what to do if)

If a child says or in some way indicates that abuse has taken place:

1. Receive

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Take what is said seriously
- Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible after

2. Reassure

- Reassure the children that they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Do not promise confidentiality**; you have a duty to refer, make it clear who you need to tell.
- Do not** make promises you cannot keep e.g. "It will be alright now"
- Reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it e.g. "you're not to blame" despite what they may have been told.
- Avoid condemning the alleged abuser.
- Tell the child that there are people who will help, and will keep them safe.
- Reassure the child that information will only be shared with those who need to know

3. React

- Allow a child who is freely recalling significant events to continue but do not press for detail beyond what is minimally necessary to be clear that some form of abuse is being described.
- Do not** ask leading questions; "Did he/she....?" Such questions can invalidate evidence.
- Do not** make suggestions about what has taken place or how it came about, or question the child except to clarify what he/she is saying.
- Do** ask open "TED" questions; Tell explain describe
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; the children may have affection for him/her
- Do not ask the children to repeat it all to you or another member of staff before referring
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to
- Do not** make assumptions of the child's feelings

4. Record

- Write down exactly what has been communicated immediately afterwards, describing specifically what was communicated and how and what you said in response
- Do not destroy your original note
- Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. Ensure that as far as possible you have recorded the actual words used by the child.
- Record statements and observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions

5. Remember

- Contact the DSL
- Do not** assume the parents/carers/carers are not involved with or a party to the abuse.
- Always remember-responsibility for making enquiries & investigating allegations rest with children's social care & police child protection team (CPT) along with other relevant agencies, not us.

6. Relax

- Get some support for yourself

It is important in your report that you include the child's physical/emotional state and ensure the report is signed, dated and timed.

You must inform the DSL immediately.

You must not discuss any of the information with anybody; all information received from the child should remain confidential at all times.