Schools Safeguarding Children and Young People (Child Protection) Policy – SO-0189

Reference Number	SO-0189
Version Number	4.6
Date of Issue / Latest Revision	1 September 2026
Policy Owner	Assurance and Compliance (Safeguarding)
Policy Lead	Safeguarding Lead
Ratified	
Next Review	August 2027

Contents

Contents 1
1. Purpose 2
2. Scope 2
3. Legal framework 3
4. Related documents 4
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) 5
6. Responsibilities 6
7. Training 7
8. Whistleblowing 8
9. Safeguarding expectations 8
10. Early intervention and early help 10
11. Mental health and gender expression 11
12. Dealing with allegations against staff, trustees and volunteers 13
13. Allegations against pupils and responses to child on child abuse (including harassment and violence) 14
14. Missing child and children missing or absent from education 16
15. Informing Parents and Carers 20
16. Secure school premises, personal electronic devices, and photographs 20
17. Confidentiality and information sharing 22
18. Monitoring 23
19. Contacts 24
20. Equality Impact Assessment 27

21. Evaluation Measures 28
22. Appendix 1 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead 30
23. Appendix 2 – Types of harm and specific safeguarding issues 32
24. Appendix 3 - Child on child abuse guidance and procedure 41
25. Appendix 4 - Procedures for staff responding to safeguarding concerns 47
26. Appendix 5 - Dealing with allegations against staff, the Principal, trustees or volunteers 49
27. Appendix 6 - Missing pupil procedures 54

1. Purpose

1.1. *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

1.1.1. providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge

1.1.2. protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online

1.1.3. preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

1.1.4. ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

1.1.5. taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2. Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As is stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026:

1.2.1. *"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's responsibility**... In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners 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**".*

1.3. Everyone at the school will maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.

1.4. We know that autistic children are potentially more vulnerable because their communication may not be understood by others, they may struggle with social interaction or have difficulties understanding people's motives, they may be less able to report abuse and thus be more vulnerable to it. This necessitates greater vigilance among professionals in recognising, reporting and investigating potential signs of abuse as well as ensuring that safeguarding is a focus when working with autistic children and young people.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to National Autistic Society schools.

2.2. This policy and its procedures apply wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils even where this is away from the school, for example on an educational visit. It also applies in our school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision and Post-16 provision.

3. Legal framework

This policy has regard to law, statutory guidance, regulations and standards issued by the UK Government in accordance with:

3.1. Section 94 of the *Education and Skills Act 2008*

3.2. Home Office - Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023

3.3. Home Office - Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Susceptible to Radicalisation 2025

3.4. Department for Education - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

3.5. Department for Education - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

3.6. Department for Education - Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2026

3.7. Department for Education - Children Missing Education 2025

3.8. Department for Education - Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools 2023

3.9. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014

3.10. Department for Education - Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework

3.11. The Children Act 1989

3.12. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002

3.13. Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

3.14. The Children Act 2004

3.15. The Children and Families Act 2014

3.16. The Children and Social Work Act 2017

3.17. Department for Education - The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children 2018

3.18. Department for Education - Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners 2024

3.19. Department for Education - What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused: Advice for Practitioners 2015

3.20. Department for Education - Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and Guide for Practitioners 2017

3.21. Home Office - Female Genital Mutilation: Resource Pack

3.22. Department for Education - Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (2018)

3.23. Home Office - Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines 2023

3.24. Department for Education - Help, Protection, Education: Concluding the Children in Need Review 2019

3.25. Department for Education - Teaching Online Safety in Schools 2024

3.26. Department for Education - Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2026
3.27. Department for Education - Behaviour in Schools 2022
3.28. Department for Education - Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance 2022
3.29. Department for Education - Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools 2023
3.30. Department for Science, Innovation & Technology and UK Council for Internet Safety - Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings 2024
3.31. Department for Education - Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education Policy Paper 2025
3.32. Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

4. Related documents

This Policy should be read alongside the school's:

4.1. Positive Behaviour Support Policy SO-0029
4.2. Supporting Behaviour in Schools Policy SO-030
4.3. Complaints Resolution Policy National Autistic Society Schools and Children's Services QS-0010
4.4. Admissions, Remissions and Exclusions Policy SO-0230
4.5. Incident Management Policy QS-0001
4.6. Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure SO-0194
4.7. Online Safety Policy SO-0106
4.8. Anti-bullying in National Autistic Society Schools & Children and Young People's Services Policy - SO-0193
4.9. Mobile Phones (Personal) Policy SO-0001
4.10. Data Protection IGP-02
4.11. Acceptable Use of ICT Policy ISP-09
4.12. Artificial Intelligence Policy IT-0007
4.13. Whistleblowing SO-0023
4.14. Conduct & Capability Policy HR-0040
4.15. Safer Recruitment Policy and Guidance for National Autistic Society Schools & Services HR-0021
4.16. Staff Code of Conduct
4.17. Relationships and Sex Education Policy SO-0133
4.18. Intimate Care Policy for Schools and Children & Young People's Services SO-0005
4.19. Use of Restrictive Practice in Schools Policy SO-0039
4.20. Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools Policy SO-0353
4.21. Supported Home Learning SO-0351
4.22. Safeguarding Quality Assurance Framework
4.23. Safeguarding Incident Investigation Tools

5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

5.1. The school has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status and authority (Designated Safeguarding Lead) to be responsible for matters relating to safeguarding, child protection and welfare.

5.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school	
Name	Lucy Burholt
Email Address	Lucy.burholt@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8139168

5.3. The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are set out in Appendix 1, and are in line with guidance taken from *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.*

5.4. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will carry out their duties.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Name	Anne Williams
Email Address	Anne.williams@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8139168 020 8752 9617

5.5. In this policy, reference to the Designated Safeguarding Lead includes the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead where the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable. However, the **ultimate responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and cannot be delegated.**

5.6. Either the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy must be available to staff and pupils during the school day, either directly or by telephone. If the DSL is 'off-site', this must be communicated to all staff.

5.7. If both the DSL and Deputy DSL are not available, staff should share concerns with another member of the senior leadership team who should contact the National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team immediately should further advice/support be needed (see contact page for details). The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) must have undertaken the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Lead training (including local inter-agency working), to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, and must attend full refresher training at two-yearly intervals (minimum), attend additional safeguarding training on key issues, and attend updates and briefings at least annually.

5.8. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (as a minimum) should also have undertaken **Prevent training and Online Safety training,** and be able to support the school with regards to their requirement under the Prevent Duty.

6. Responsibilities

Every member of staff, agency staff, volunteer, Trustee and/or School Governance Group member of the school is under a general legal duty:

6.1. To protect children from abuse and neglect.

6.2. To provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

6.3. To be aware of the school's child protection procedures and to follow them.

6.4. To know how to access and implement the school's child protection procedures, independently if necessary.

6.5. To keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event in accordance with this policy.

6.6. To report any matters of concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.7. Staff connected to the School's Early Years and Later Years provisions are under an ongoing duty to inform the school if their circumstances change which would mean they meet any of the criteria for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006. Staff should refer to their contract of employment in respect of their ongoing duty to update the school.

6.8. The Charity's Board of Trustees and Independent Safeguarding Board ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the Local Safeguarding Partners and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.*

6.9. The Board of Trustees will ensure that there are appropriate procedures and policies in place to support timely and appropriate action to be taken to safeguard a child and promote their welfare, and that regularly updated training takes place with all staff and volunteers.

6.10. Trustees will ensure that Safer Recruitment principles are adhered to in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026,* including the additional requirement to undertake online searches for all shortlisted candidates - this is outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

6.11. The Board of Trustees will review any serious incidents and instruct a post-incident review with the support of National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team to ensure all policies and procedures are being adhered to and have oversight of annual Safeguarding Audits conducted in all schools.

6.12. The Board of Trustees ensure there are clear lines of accountability through the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Framework, which is completed and reviewed termly.

6.13. A designated teacher is appointed by the Principal to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after / in care and previously looked after (**see Contacts for contact details of the designated teacher for looked after children**). As the central point of contact for the school, the designated teacher will ensure appropriate and timely liaison with the Virtual School and where appropriate, the Virtual School Head.

6.14. The Trustees will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep children in care/looked after children safe.

6.15. In particular, they will ensure that the information they need in relation to the child's legal looked after status, their care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carers by the authority looking after them, is made available to them.

7. Training

Induction

7.1. All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will be provided with induction training that includes:

7.1.1. This Policy;

7.1.2. The staff [Code of Conduct/Staff behaviour Policy/handbook] including the whistleblowing policy, staff Social Media/Acceptable Use Policy and the Behaviour Policy;

7.1.3. The school's Online Safety policy and practice, including the filtering and monitoring systems in place, how to use them, and how to ensure pupils are using the internet safely.

7.1.4. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their identity and contact details together with that of and the Deputy(ies);

7.1.5. Safeguarding procedures in response to children who go missing (as outlined in Appendix 6 of this policy);

7.1.6. Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Child protection and safeguarding training

7.2. All staff, Trustees and School Governance Group members will complete annual safeguarding training as appropriate to their role.

7.2.1. There is elearning available - Safeguarding and Child Protection training (iHasco level 1 equivalent including Online Safety), which will be updated annually;

7.3. All staff including the Principal will receive a copy of this policy and Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the School's Code of Conduct/Staff Handbook and the Behaviour Policy and will be required to confirm that they have read and understood these. A record of this will be kept for training and auditing purposes.

7.4. The Principal and all staff members will undertake appropriate child protection training which will be updated annually and following consultation with the London Borough of Ealing Safeguarding Partners or the NSPCC. Training will include guidance on the duties of staff in relation to both children in need and children at risk of harm. In addition to all staff attending Safeguarding and Child Protection training, all staff will receive regular updates or staff meetings to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

7.5. Staff development will also include training on online safety including the school's filtering and monitoring procedures and the requirement to ensure children are taught about online safety. Please also refer to the Online Safety Policy SO-0106.

7.6. Additionally, the school will assess the appropriate level and focus for staff training and responsiveness to specific safeguarding concerns such as:

radicalisation; child sexual exploitation; criminal exploitation including through 'County Lines'; female genital mutilation; cyberbullying; child on child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment) and mental health.

7.7. All members of the National Autistic Society Education and Children's Services team, the School Governance Group members, and Trustees will undertake appropriate training annually to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

7.8. All staff must complete the Autism awareness modules as part of their induction. All staff to be mindful of the additional vulnerabilities of Autistic individuals.

8. Whistleblowing

8.1. All staff are required to report concerns to the Principal. If the Principal is absent or if the allegation relates to the Principal, staff are required to report directly to the **Director of Education and Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team.**

8.2. All staff have access to SafeCall as an alternative method to raise a concern confidentially via phone: 0800 915 1571 or email: nas@safecall.co.uk

8.3. Staff must report any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Whistleblowers must be reassured that a disclosure made in good faith will never lead to a detrimental position for their employment. A knowingly false disclosure however could lead to disciplinary action.

8.4. See Appendix 5 and the Whistleblowing Policy for full details of the procedures to be followed in relation to allegations against staff. All guidance stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 regarding the management and record keeping of whistleblowing allegations must be followed, which includes liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer as appropriate. Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) contact information is detailed within section 11 of this policy.

9. Safeguarding expectations

Concerns about harm, including disclosures

9.1. All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery (see Appendix 2), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

9.2. Every disclosure or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the school will be taken seriously and action taken in accordance with this policy.

9.3. The child protection training provided to staff considers the types and signs of abuse staff should be aware of. Further details are set out in Appendix 2.

9.4. Whilst all of our pupils are identified within the criteria for those potentially requiring Family or Early Help (in accordance with KCSIE 2026), if a member of staff is concerned that a pupil may be in need of additional support via an Family or Early Help Assessment or are concerned they are suffering harm, the

matter should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

9.5. All staff should be aware that children may not be able to, feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened, this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. It is important to recognise that for some children, the abuse may be normalised and they are not aware that it is abuse/harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusting relationships with children and young people giving opportunities and facilitating communication.

9.6. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately and Police if necessary. Prior to making the referral, attempts to consult with parents/carers should be made unless there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that in doing so, the pupil will be at risk of further harm. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Contact details of local children's social care can be found in section 11 of this policy. Children's social care have a statutory duty to provide a response to any referrals made however when this has not been received in a timely manner, the school must continue to pursue the response with urgency.

9.7. No single person working with children can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

9.8. All staff are particularly reminded:

9.8.1. From October 2015, in accordance with section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, staff must personally report to the Police, 'known' cases of FGM, cases where they discover that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out, or a child/young person discloses it has taken place. The staff should also discuss any such case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

9.8.2. Under the Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023) concerns about children who may susceptible to being drawn into terrorism must be reported to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will make a referral as appropriate in line with the Local Authority protocol.

Autistic children and young people can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

9.9. There may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's diagnosis without further exploration;

9.10. These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying/child on child abuse (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;

9.11. There is potential that children with SEND or certain medical conditions can be disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying/child on child abuse without outwardly showing any signs,

9.12. pupils may hide or mask the difficulties they experience;

9.13. There may be communication barriers and children and young people's communication may not be understood by the adults around them;

9.14. And difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

At our school we identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by:

9.15. ensuring the DSL and SENCo work closely, sharing information regarding concerns relating to pupils/pupils;

9.16. pastoral support is targeted as required;

9.17. Where possible pupils' voices and views are regularly captured, adaptations are made and resources used to capture the 'voice' however that is communicated,

9.18. all notable changes in behaviour, mood or presentation are monitored and reported to the DSL;

9.19. all unexplained injuries, and injuries for which there have been where conflicting explanations are reported to the DSL.

10. Early intervention and early help

10.1. Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, including from universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help. All school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

10.1.1. is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs

10.1.2. has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)

10.1.3. has a mental health need

10.1.4. is a young carer

10.1.5. is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves

10.1.6. has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours

10.1.7. is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines

10.1.8. is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

10.1.9. has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit

10.1.10. is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation

10.1.11. is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism

10.1.12. has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

10.1.13. is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
10.1.14. is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
10.1.15. is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
10.1.16. is a privately fostered child.

10.2. In the first instance staff should discuss possible Early or Family Help requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in completing an assessment.

10.3. Schools should be conscious that each local authority can have different procedures and support available around Early and Family Help, and that the procedures of the pupil's home/placing local authority should be followed where a pupil comes from out of area.

Community-based Early Help assessment

10.4. If children do not require the support of statutory children's services, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead the liaison with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in carrying out this assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

10.5. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for Family Help can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

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

11. Mental health and gender expression

Mental health

11.1. Research suggests that Autistic children, young people, and adults are at increased likelihood to experience mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression.

11.2. Pupils may feel anxious in their day-to-day lives due to navigating social and sensory environments that might be difficult or challenging. Research suggests autistic people are more prone to experiencing anxiety and estimates that up to half of all autistic people experience high levels of anxiety on a regular basis.

11.3. School staff need to be alert to all pupils' mental health needs and consider what additional support may be needed.

11.4. School staff need to be alert to changes in a pupil's mental health and be curious as to what may be causing this.

11.5. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

11.6. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they

may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

11.7. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 sets out the key roles f education staff in relation to pupils' mental health:

11.7.1. Promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness.

11.7.2. Observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one.

11.7.3. Ensuring early targeted support is provided.

11.7.4. Liaison with/referral to specialist services where needed.

11.8. 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.

11.9. Any concerns in relation to the mental health of our children and young people should be raised with the DSL, the school's Mental Health Lead and in some cases the SENCo also, without delay to ensure children and young people can access the right support at the right time.

Children who are questioning their gender

The following expectations are based on the statutory guidance issued by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, pages 64-70.

11.10. School staff should take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and should be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences. Staff should remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying.

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

11.12. The school should ensure that their decision-making process is documented and records are kept when considering any request for support with social transition.

11.13. In making decisions about supporting social transition, the school must comply with their distinct but interacting obligations under safeguarding legislation and equality and human rights law, ensuring that any assessment of discrimination is informed by their evaluation of the welfare and best interests of the child and other children.

11.14. The school has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. They should consider how best to fulfil that duty towards a child who

is questioning their gender, as well as their peers, ensuring that any agreed course of action takes account of the impact on all of those affected.

11.14.1. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 sets out key expectations regarding pupils' use **of toilets, changing rooms,** and **participation in sport** which must be followed by schools in relation to social transition.

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

11.16. In the vast majority of cases the school should work with parents or carers to determine what is in the best interests of the child as well as considering any clinical evidence or advice and seeking any additional non-clinical professional advice where relevant (for example from the SENCO), including involving the designated safeguarding lead. Schools consider everything that could be affecting a child, including whether they have any wider health issues or neurodiversity. We know that all our pupils are autistic.

11.17. However, in the rare circumstances where involving parents or carers would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them, staff should discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead to determine what action is needed to safeguard the child, before the parents or carers are contacted or any decisions are taken.

11.18. Schools should be particularly conscious of safeguarding concerns relating to primary aged children.

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

11.20. Further guidance relating to implementing social transition, concerns, and the Equality Act can be found on pages 64-70 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

12. Dealing with allegations against staff, trustees and volunteers

12.1. The school has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff, agency or supply staff, trainee teachers, Trustees and volunteers who work with children that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse, and protect everyone from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures are set out in Appendix 5 and follow the DfE guidance found in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

12.2. The local authority has designated a particular officer, or team of officers, to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children (Designated Officer(s) also known as LADO).

12.3. The designated officer(s)/LADO must be informed immediately and in any event within one working day of all allegations against staff (including supply), Trustees and volunteers that come to the school's attention and meet the criteria set out in Appendix 5.

12.4. Any allegation against staff must be directly alerted to relevant individuals including the Director of Education and Children's Services and the National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team.

12.5. [Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

12.5.1. The school will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on the premises of the Sybil Elgar EYFS (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and will provide details of the action taken in respect of those allegations.

12.5.2. These notifications will be made as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the allegations being made.]

12.6. Detailed guidance is given to staff, agency or supply staff, trainee teachers, Trustees and volunteers to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil. This guidance is contained in various policies and guidance including the National Autistic Society Code of Conduct.

13. Allegations against pupils and responses to child on child abuse (including harassment and violence)

13.1. This section should be read in conjunction with the Anti-bullying in National Autistic Society Schools and Children and Young People's Services Policy SO-0193.

13.2. For the purposes of this policy, our language will replicate that used in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026:

13.2.1. For the purposes of this guidance, we, in places, use the term 'victim'. It is a widely recognised and understood term. It is important that schools and colleges recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Ultimately, schools and colleges should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the child is most comfortable.

13.2.2. For the purpose of this guidance, we, in places, use the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)'. These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate to aid effective drafting of guidance. However, schools and colleges should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. As above, the use of appropriate terminology will be for schools and colleges to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

13.3. Children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child or peer on peer abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the

indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports (see Appendix 3).

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

13.5. All pupils are to be reassured that any allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Victims must never be given the impression that they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report.

13.6. Staff will be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation and hazing type violence with respect to boys.

13.7. All pupils can raise concerns confidentially regarding child-on-child abuse directly with any member of staff. via face-to-face drop-ins, arranged meetings, email, phone or text. See Section 19 Contacts for email addresses and phone numbers.

13.8. It is important to acknowledge that pupils may not be able to share concerns about child-on-child abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may never make a direct report.

13.9. Where concerns have been raised by anyone regarding child on child abuse, children will be enabled to share their feelings in their known preferred communication method with a person they can trust, such as a parent, teacher, relative, friend or advocate.

13.10. It is understood at the school, that even if there are no reports in the school, it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) to ensure it is dealt with immediately and report into CPOMS.

13.11. At the school we will not tolerate abuse between pupils. It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. This will not be tolerated in the school and may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

13.12. Child on child abuse in the form of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying will not be tolerated, please refer to National Autistic Society Anti-Bullying Policy for further guidance.

13.13. All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ children and young people, who evidence suggests are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils. The school's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

13.14. The initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How staff respond to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. See Appendix 3.

13.15. All allegations regarding child on child abuse are to be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy (see Appendices 3 and 4). A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may need to be suspended from the school during the investigation in order to ensure their safety and the safety of other pupils. The school's Behaviour Policy will apply. If the allegation is in relation to sexual violence or sexual harassment, guidance set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 will be followed.

13.16. The school will take advice from children's social care services and Police as appropriate, on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse.

13.17. Rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the Police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The Police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

13.18. Where an allegation is made against a pupil, both the victim and the alleged perpetrator will be treated as being at risk and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this Policy will be followed. See Appendix 3.

14. Missing child and children missing or absent from education

Introduction

14.1. Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding – refer to Appendix 6 of this Policy for relevant procedures.

14.2. Children missing from school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children. We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

14.3. Current allocated social workers must be consulted on any issues in relation to attendance for the children they are supporting, including: responding to unauthorised absence or when the child is missing education.

14.4. In managing attendance, the following actions represent standard practice:

14.4.1. We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers/Emergency contacts. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

14.4.2. All staff are informed of the school Missing Pupil Procedure which can be found in Appendix 6 of this Policy. This procedure is to be

used for searching for, and if necessary, reporting, any pupil missing from the school. The procedure includes the requirement to record any incident, the action taken and the reasons given by the pupil for being missing.

14.5. The school shall inform the relevant local authority of any pupil who does not attend the school regularly, has a pattern of absence, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

Children missing or absent from education

14.6. The school recognises that autistic children and young people are at increased risk of being missing or absent from education and need appropriate support in place to access school. Please refer to Appendix 6 for procedure.

14.7. The school recognises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and will follow guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2026, and Children Missing Education 2025 to promote their safety and wellbeing. The procedures in this policy will be followed when dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help to identify the risk of abuse and neglect and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in the future.

14.8. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. We will closely monitor pupils' attendance in order to identify persistently absent pupils or new patterns of absence in order to protect children from missing more education or being exposed to contextual safeguarding concerns.

14.9. Where a child is going to be deleted from the pupil roll, the school will inform the local authority in which the child resides in the applicable circumstances.

14.10. Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admissions register:

14.10.1. The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;

14.10.2. The new address; and

14.10.3. The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

School transfers

14.11. Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record in the admission register:

14.11.1. The name of the new school; and

14.11.2. The date on which the pupil first attended or is due to start attending the new school.

14.12. Where children leave the school (including in year transfers) the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the

new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 states:

14.12.1. *In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual pupil. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and can have that support in place for when the child arrives or incidents that may indicate concerns about serious violence or harmful behaviours.*

14.12.2. *Where information indicates a risk to others and/or the individual pupil, for example where a pupil has previously carried, threatened with, or used a knife or weapon, it is incumbent on the receiving school to assess risk, and accordingly, put in place a safety and support plan for when the child arrives… It would be good practice for a conversation to take place between the designated safeguarding leads at both settings, where there are issues or concerns.*

Elective Home Education

14.13. Where a parent has expressed their intention to Electively Home Educate their child, in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 it advises that local authorities, schools, and other key professionals should work together to coordinate a meeting with parents and carers where possible before a final decision has been made, to discuss what support can be put into place to either support the child to remain in school or to discuss next steps. This meeting will ensure that parents and carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child.

14.14. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 emphasises that this is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. This meeting will be arranged by the Principal and any details regarding the meeting and any documentation relating to the request for Elective Home Education (EHE) will be recorded on CPOMS.

14.15. Where a parent Elects to Home Educate their child, schools must:

14.15.1. Delete the child's name from their admissions register upon receipt of written notification from the parents that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school. However, schools should not wait for parents to give written notification that they are withdrawing their child from school before advising their local authority.

14.15.2. Schools must make a return (giving the child's name, address and the ground upon which their name is to be deleted from the

register) to the local authority as soon as the ground for deletion is met, and no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. They should also copy parents into the notice to the local authority.

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

14.16. See Department for Education Guidance on Elective Home Education for more information.

Alternative provision

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

14.18. The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs; it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to.

14.19. Schools should obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can assure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

14.20. The school remains ultimately responsible for the commissioned provision. The school must continue to carry out safeguarding checks and conduct due diligence to ensure that the provision is appropriate for meeting each child's individual needs.

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

Work experience

14.22. When a child / young person is sent on work experience, the school will ensure that the provider has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place to protect pupils from harm.

14.23. If the person providing the teaching, training, instruction or care or supervision to the child on a work experience placement or activity will be doing so frequently or for more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight, this is a regulated activity. The school must not allow someone on the barred list to take part in regulated activity. Other individuals in the workplace who are not

involved in teaching, training, instructing or caring for or supervising the child on a work experience placement or activity are not in regulated activity.

14.24. The school will remain responsible for a child or young person's welfare during their time at an alternative provider.

14.25. This responsibility includes monitoring of attendance and involvement in management of safeguarding concerns where appropriate.

15. Informing Parents and Carers

15.1. Parents and carers will normally be kept informed, as appropriate, of any action to be taken under these Safeguarding procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the Designated Safeguarding Lead will need to consult the Principal, the designated officer (LADO), local authority children's social care services and / or the Police before discussing details with parents.

15.2. In relation to Prevent referrals, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider seeking the consent of the pupil and their parent/guardian when determining what information can be shared. Whether or not consent is sought will be dependent on the circumstances of the case but may relate to issues such as the health of the individual, law enforcement or protection of the public.

15.3. In relation to online safety, parents and carers will be informed of the systems that are in place to monitor and filter online content in school, how the school plans to use online material in the curriculum, and who from the school pupils may be interacting with online.

15.4. Where concerns are raised about a pupil's use of the internet or access to online content, parents and carers will be consulted prior to any action being taken such as confiscation of devices.

15.5. Risk assessments of a pupil's needs will be done in consultation with parents and carers.

15.6. The school will take a collaborative approach with parents and carers, working together to help keep pupils safe both at school as well as at home and in the community.

15.7. The school will assess and support all families, including consideration of whether support should be offered under the Early Help framework (see section 9).

15.8. See also Appendix 5 for details about the disclosure of information where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, volunteer or the Principal of the school, based on guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

16. Secure school premises, personal electronic devices, and photographs

16.1. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline.

16.2. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything

16.3. other than this should be by exception only. Statutory guidance on Mobile phones in schools is clear that the department expects schools to implement

a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

Secure school premises

16.4. The school will take all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances permit and safe for our staff and children.

16.5. Daily checks are conducted by the site team to ensure the site is safe and secure prior to opening each morning.

16.6. There are electronic signing systems that all staff and visitors must log in and out of when arriving and departing. Our sites are secure to both prevent intruders and to prevent children absconding, with high fencing, fire padlocks, fobs and CCTV for key areas. Site Operatives patrol the perimeters throughout the day and some fencing has privacy screens. Our security is inspected by the Local Fire Brigade and the NAS Premises Executive to ensure that fire safety regulations are not breached. All staff have fobs and fire keys on them at all times to ensure that they can support with the safe evacuation of children and visitors if needed. Receptionists on both sites prioritise all aspects of gatekeeping and the safety of the school community. There is clear information given to all visitors on arrival and displayed in waiting areas about safeguarding and their visit. All visitors to school must be accompanied by a member of our team when on our premises during school time.

16.7. When the school premises/facilities are hired or rented by an organisation or individual (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities), the Designated Safeguarding Lead will work alongside the [School Business Manager / Site team / Principal] to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

16.8. External providers'/organisations' own Child Protection policies and procedures should be provided to the school and in liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, agree how and when to report any concerns to the school.

16.9. Safeguarding requirements will be documented within any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

16.10. Please see the school's NAS Acceptable Use Policy ISP-09 and the NAS Mobile Phones (Personal) Procedure SO-0001-001-0322 which includes guidance on the use of cameras and mobile phones in the EYFS setting

Staff personal electronic devices

16.11. Staff are not permitted to have their mobile phones / similar devices (such as smart watches) turned on, unless they have the express permission of the Principal.

16.12. Under no circumstances are photographs or videos to be taken of pupils on a personal device.

16.13. Staff are not permitted to show any images from their personal mobile phone to pupils.

16.14. Staff will adhere to the Online Safety Policy at all times.

16.15. The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones and cameras, by staff and pupils is closely monitored by the school, in accordance with the Personal Electronic Devices Policy.

16.16. Staff will report any concerns about pupils' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to using the school's reporting procedure

Photographs

16.17. Photographs may only be taken of pupils on school devices with the express permission of the Principal.

16.18. Photographs and videos of pupils remain the property of the individual and cannot be used externally without the individual/parental permission in writing. National Autistic Society Photo Permission forms are available and should be completed by the pupil or parent/ carer (whichever relevant).

16.19. Photographs and videos of pupils will be carefully planned before any activity with particular regard to consent and adhering to the school's Data Protection Policy and Photography Policy. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) will oversee the planning of any events where photographs and videos will be taken.

16.20. Where photographs and videos will involve pupils who are looked after, adopted pupils, or pupils for whom there are security concerns, the Principal will liaise with the DSL to determine the steps involved.

16.21. The DSL will, in known cases of pupils who are looked after or who have been adopted, liaise with the pupils' social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the pupils.

16.22. Visitors may not photograph pupils, and may only photograph buildings with consent of the school.

16.23. As described in more detail at Appendix 4, photographs should not be taken of pupil injuries unless this is requested by appropriate external agencies such as the Police, medical professionals, or Children's Social Care. Any photographs taken for this purpose should be taken on a National Autistic Society device, shared via secure methods (such as encrypted email), and deleted once shared.

17. Confidentiality and information sharing

17.1. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. The school has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

17.2. Concerns 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, which must always be the paramount concern. The school will share any safeguarding concern internally to the relevant people (National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team) and externally to our safeguarding partners using secure networks or password protected documents.

17.3. The school will keep all Child Protection and Safeguarding records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

17.4. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 states '*When deciding what information to share, schools and colleges should consider:*

17.4.1. *The relevancy of the information, including to the current safeguarding risk,*

17.4.2. *What is necessary for the receiving setting to know, and*

17.4.3. *Whether it is clearly presented and appropriately contextualised.*

17.4.4. *Professional judgement should be used to ensure that the information shared is focused and proportionate. This may include summarising or omitting information which is not necessary for safeguarding purposes. But care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk.'*

17.5. The school will co-operate with the Local Safeguarding Partnership, Police and local authority children's social care services to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in accordance with the requirements of:

17.5.1. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

17.5.2. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

17.5.3. Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023

17.5.4. Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Susceptible to Radicalisation 2023

17.5.5. Government advice: Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners 2024

17.6. Where allegations have been made against staff, the school will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and, where appropriate, the Police and local authority children's social care services to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom.

18. Monitoring

18.1. Principals and DSLs will undertake weekly CPOMS 7-day report monitoring to review all incidents recorded, categories effectively applied and ensuring all actions are recorded and are effective.

18.2. When monitoring and reviewing concerns, Principals and DSLs will ensure that concerns have been appropriately escalated to and acknowledged by internal channels, (such as Near Misses, Health and Safety concerns, Behavioural concerns, and Safeguarding concerns) as well as external agencies.

18.3. Any serious incidents at the school will be investigated in line with the Incident Management Policy QS-0001, which includes a review of the safeguarding procedures within the school and a report to the relevant National Autistic Society teams and/or School Governance Group. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) may assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the school's procedures.

18.4. Trustees and the Independent Safeguarding Board will undertake an annual review of this policy and its procedures and of the efficiency with which the relevant duties have been discharged.

18.5. Trustees and the Independent Safeguarding Board will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regards to child protection and Safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.

19. Contacts

Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school	
Name	Lucy Burholt
Email Address	Lucy.burholt@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8813 9168 07917 210456

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Name	Anne Williams
Email Address	Anne.williams@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8752 9617 07436 831243

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Name	Thea Smit
Email Address	Thea.smit@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8813 9168 07483 037822

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Principal of Sybil Elgar School	
Name	Chloe Phillips
Email Address	Chloe.Phillips@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8813 9168

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Name	Marius Roteliuc
Email Address	Marius.Roteliuc@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 87529617 07542 858820

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Name	Padmaja Namballa
Email Address	Padmaja.Namballa@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 87529617

National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team	
Safeguarding concerns and reports should be sent to the Safeguarding Team inbox at notifications.safeguarding@nas.org.uk and not to individuals' emails.	
Role	**Name and Email Address**
Safeguarding Lead	Danielle Wilson Danielle.wilson@nas.org.uk
Safeguarding Advisors	

Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB)	
Name	John Goldup
Email Address	John.goldup@nas.org.uk

National Autistic Society Lead Trustee for Safeguarding	
Name	Pamela Marsden
Email Address	Pamela.marsden@nas.org.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	
Local Authority Name	London Borough of Ealing
Officer Name	Vincent Mitchell
Email Address	asv@ealing.gov.uk
Telephone Number	020 8825 8930

The telephone numbers of Local Authority Children's Social Care departments are as follows:

Ealing	Contact Telephone Number	Contact Email
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	020 8825 8000 Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service ECIRS	ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	0208 825 7072	cwdtduty@ealing.gov.uk
Early Help	SAFE 020 8825 8000.	ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk

Barnet	Contact Telephone Number	Contact Email
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	0208 359 4066	mash@barnet.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	0208 359 2000	
Early Help		

Bi-Borough	Contact Telephone Number	Contact Email
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	020 7361 3013	socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team		
Early Help		choy@westminster.gov.uk

Brent	Contact Telephone Number	Contact Email
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	020 8937 4300	
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	020 8863 5250	
Early Help		

Bucks	Contact Telephone Number	Contact Email
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	01296 387146	bscp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team		
Early Help		

Harrow	Contact Telephone Number	Contact Email
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	020 8901 2690	
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	020 8424 0999	ChildrenWithDisabilities.ChildrenWithDisabilities@harrow.gov.uk

Early Help		

Hillingdon	**Contact Telephone Number**	**Contact Email**
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	01895 556006	safeguardingpartnership@hillingdon.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	Duty Manager	lbhmash@hillingdon.gov.uk
Early Help	01895 556006	strongerfamilieshub@hillingdon.gov.uk

Hounslow	**Contact Telephone Number**	**Contact Email**
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	020 8583 6600	childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	020 8583 2222	0_25DisabilityTeam@hounslow.gov.uk
Early Help		

Richmond	**Contact Telephone Number**	**Contact Email**
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	020 8547 5008	Online referrals: https://richmond-self.achieveservice.com/AchieveForms/?mode=fill&consentMessage=yes&form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-da394165-16af-4405-a3ad-76d5290b80ce/AF-Stage-cb21d287-c7c9-4074-8115-8ac1a7c3e20b/definition.json&process=1&process_uri=sandbox-processes://AF-Process-da394165-16af-4405-a3ad-76d5290b80ce&process_id=AF-Process-da394165-16af-4405-a3ad-76d5290b80ce
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	020 8770 5000	
Early Help		

Slough	**Contact Telephone Number**	**Contact Email**
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	01753 477321	sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team	01753 875 362	
Early Help		

Surrey	**Contact Telephone Number**	**Contact Email**
Main referral (MASH/Front Door)	0300 470 9100	mash@surreycc.gov.uk
Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team		
Early Help		

Prevent information as follows:

Prevent	
Email Address	prevent@ealing.gov.uk ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk
Telephone Number	020 8825 9849 / 020 8825 7590
For more information visit: https://www.egfl.org.uk/services-children/safeguarding/anti-radicalisation-prevent-duty#contact	

The telephone numbers of relevant **Prevent** partners are as follows:

Channel Police Practitioner	
Name	Metropolitan Police Prevent Team
Email Address	preventreferrals@met.pnn.police.uk
Telephone Number	

Channel Local Authority Chair	
Name	Councillor Jasbir Anand
Email Address	prevent@ealing.gov.uk
Telephone Number	

The following contacts may be useful for pupils/staff:

School Principal	
Name	Chloe Phillips
Email Address	Chloe.Phillips@nas.org.uk
Telephone Number	020 8813 9168

Designated Teacher for children who are in care / Looked After or previously Looked After Children	
Name	Thea Smit
Email Address	Thea.smit@nas.org.uk

Telephone Number	020 8813 9168 07483 037822

Other Useful Contacts	
NSPCC Childline	0800 1111
NSPCC	0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk
Ofsted's Whistleblower Hotline	0300 123 3155
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285
NSPCC FGM Helpline	0800 028 3550
NSPCC Gangs Helpline	0808 800 5000
Forced Marriage Unit	020 7008 0151 fmu@fco.gov.uk Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm Out of hours: 020 7008 1500 (ask for the Global Response Centre)

20. Equality Impact Assessment

This document has been assessed to determine if any of the changes made have a positive or negative impact on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and how we will mitigate any adverse effects. It also supports duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations).

To be completed by the Governance Forum responsible for the document when ratified.

Document title:		
Does this document affect one group less or more favourably than another?		
Aspect assessed	**Yes/No** (please ✓)	**Explain what the impact is and what action is being taken to mitigate the risk**
Being married or in a civil partnership	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Race: including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin (inc. Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT))	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Sex	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Gender reassignment	Yes ☐ No ☐	

Religion or belief	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Sexual orientation	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Age	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Disability: learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairment and mental health problems	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Is there any evidence that some groups may be affected differently?	Yes ☐ No ☐	
If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐	
Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	Yes ☐ No ☐	
If so, can the impact be avoided?	Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐	
What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?		
Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐	If yes, an action plan must be developed and implemented

To be completed prior to sending to the Policy Officer	
Governance Forum	
Date Ratified	
Name of Chair	

Any actions identified through the assessment must be recorded on Radar, which will maintain an action log detailing the action owner, timescales, and supporting evidence to confirm completion.

As an inclusive employer, we value and respect the contributions of all staff members and are committed to ensuring our policies are accessible to everyone. If you require this policy in an alternative format, please contact the Policy Owner to discuss your requirements.

21. Evaluation Measures

Findings from audits will be reviewed to identify systemic issues and inform updates to the Policy Framework. The audit criteria will be determined by the evaluation measures specific to each policy.

Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Method of monitoring	Individual responsible for the monitoring	Monitoring frequency	Group or committee who receive the findings or report	Group or committee or individual responsible for completing any actions
To ensure compliance with this policy, the audit will review evidence of the ratification process used for other policies. Any actions identified through the audit should be recorded on Radar, along with agreed completion dates. Actions will only be closed once evidence has been provided to confirm that the required work has been completed.					
Any training associated with this document will be monitored in accordance with the Mandatory Training Programme (where applicable).					

22. Appendix 1 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are outlined in full within Annex B Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and summarised below:

22.1. To be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of safeguarding and child protection;

22.2. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will carry out this role where the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable. The ultimate responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and cannot be delegated.

22.3. To co-ordinate the safeguarding and child protection procedures in the School;

22.4. To advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to them;

22.5. To encourage a culture of listening to children, being alert to the different ways autistic children may communicate their concerns, wishes and feelings;

22.6. To liaise with and manage referrals to all relevant agencies in a timely manner and where necessary:

22.7. Referring to social care or supporting staff who make referrals

22.8. Referring Prevent concerns to the appropriate authority

22.9. Where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child, referring to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) or other professional regulator as required

22.10. Where a crime may have been committed to the Police. See NPCC When to Call the Police guidance.

22.11. To ensure that all members of staff and volunteers receive training of appropriate frequency and content relating to safeguarding (including online safety), child protection and safer recruitment procedure, including induction for those staff who start at different points of the school year, and to keep and maintain records of this training;

22.12. To ensure the school's Child Protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by all staff;

22.13. To ensure the school's Child Protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly;

22.14. To ensure the Child Protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this;

22.15. To liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the local authority children's social care services and other external agencies on behalf of the school;

22.16. Keep the Principal informed of all actions, unless the Principal is the subject of a complaint (see Appendix 4 for the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff);

22.17. To monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection;

22.18. To monitor records of pupils in the school who are subject to a Child Protection plan/Child in Need Plan to ensure that this is maintained and updated as notification is received;

22.19. To liaise with other professionals to ensure that children who are subject to Child Protection plans are monitored, and to take part in Child Protection conferences or reviews.

22.20. To ensure the secure transfer of the Child Protection file when a child leaves the school (including in year transfers). The Child Protection file should be transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days of an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term.

22.21. To liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the local Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

22.22. To understand and recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face, including online.

22.23. To promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.

22.24. To work with the Principal and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:

22.24.1. ensure that the school knows who its cohort of children who have or have previously had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,

22.24.2. support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have previously had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Prevent and Radicalisation

22.25. In accordance with the *Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023) and Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Susceptible to Radicalisation* (2023) the Designated Safeguarding Lead has, in addition, the following responsibilities:

22.26. Acting as the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters relating to the Prevent duty;

22.27. Coordinating Prevent duty procedures in the school;

22.28. Liaising with local Prevent coordinators, the Police and local authorities and through existing multi-agency forums, including referrals to the Channel Police Practitioner and/or the Police where indicated;

22.29. Undergoing in-depth training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels. It is recommended that this training is updated at least every two years;

22.30. Maintaining on-going training programme for all school employees regarding the risk of terrorism and extremism, including induction training for all new employees and keeping records of staff training; and

22.31. Monitoring the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to the Prevent duty.

23. Appendix 2 – Types of harm and specific safeguarding issues

Recognising Types and Signs of Abuse and Neglect

23.1. All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online.

23.2. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

23.3. All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

23.4. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

23.5. **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.

23.6. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or

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

23.7. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

23.8. **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, 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

23.9. All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that often overlap and can put children at risk of harm (including but not limited to those listed below). The following behaviours and indicators can be signs that children are at risk:

- 23.9.1. Drug taking and/or alcohol misuse
- 23.9.2. Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- 23.9.3. Serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation
- 23.9.4. Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or seminudes.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

23.10. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues:

- 23.10.1. Child on child abuse (including violence and harassment) (see Appendix 3)
- 23.10.2. Mental health
- 23.10.3. Young carers
- 23.10.4. Child abduction and community safety incidents
- 23.10.5. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- 23.10.6. County lines

23.10.7. Children and the court system
23.10.8. Children missing from education
23.10.9. Children with family members in prison
23.10.10. Cybercrime
23.10.11. Domestic abuse
23.10.12. Homelessness
23.10.13. Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
23.10.14. Preventing radicalisation (including the Prevent duty and Channel)
23.10.15. Serious Violence
23.10.16. Honour based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

Signs of abuse

Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to:

23.11. The pupil says they has been abused or asks a question or makes a comment which gives rise to that inference;
23.12. There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury, the injury is unusual in kind or location or there have been a number of injuries and there is a pattern to the injuries;
23.13. The pupil's behaviour stands out as either being extremely withdrawn, extremely challenging, or there is a sudden or significant change in the pupil's behaviour;
23.14. The pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons;
23.15. The pupil's development is delayed; the pupil loses or gains weight or there is deterioration in the pupil's general wellbeing;
23.16. The pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed;
23.17. The pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by their parents or carers.
23.18. Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with children, for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
23.19. The NSPCC website is a good source of information and advice.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

23.20. Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.
23.21. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.
23.22. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given

practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. All schools are required to teach about personal safety through the RSHE curriculum. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines, and modern slavery

23.23. Different forms of harm often overlap, and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

23.24. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

23.25. Exploitation can happen via technology.

23.26. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

23.27. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, having a physical or learning disability, or being neurodivergent, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

23.28. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Home Office Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

23.29. Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation. Where children:

- 23.29.1. appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions which 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 and sexual exploitation,
- 23.29.2. associate with other children involved in exploitation,
- 23.29.3. suffer from changes in emotional well-being,
- 23.29.4. misuse alcohol and other drugs,
- 23.29.5. go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- 23.29.6. regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

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

23.31. **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** can be a one-off occurrence or 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 may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

23.31.1. have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and

23.31.2. suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

23.32. Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Department for Education - Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners.

23.33. **County lines** is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

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

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

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

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

23.37.1. go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home,

23.37.2. have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime),

23.37.3. are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs,

23.37.4. are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection,

23.37.5. are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house' or 'cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity,

23.37.6. owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters, and

23.37.7. have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

23.38. Modern slavery encompasses exploitation, including sexual exploitation, criminal financial exploitation, human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including

forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

23.39. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the system used within the UK to support potential victims of exploitation and modern slavery. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of exploitation and modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Home Office Modern Slavery statutory guidance.

Serious violence

23.40. There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in committing serious violence. These may include:

23.41. increased absence from school,

23.41.1. A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups,

23.41.2. A significant decline in educational performance,

23.41.3. Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries, and

23.41.4. 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.

23.42. The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

23.42.1. Being male,

23.42.2. Having been suspended, spent time in alternative provision or permanently excluded from school,

23.42.3. Having experienced child maltreatment,

23.42.4. Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery,

23.42.5. Having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence, and

23.42.6. Having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

23.42.7. A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the home office's serious violence strategy.

23.43. Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school and can concentrate in particular places. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. It is important that schools and colleges try to understand where these places are, with a view to working with partners to promote safety for children. Listening to children and consulting with staff can help establish when and where they feel unsafe. Working with wider partners can also help build understanding of the local context beyond the school or college and help co-ordinate a collective safeguarding response around the school day.

Cybercrime, online safety and safe use of technology

23.44. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline.

23.45. Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

23.46. Young people across the UK experiment with illegal online activity, often without understanding the legal or ethical implications. The impact of cybercrime extends well beyond immediate financial losses, with scope to cause disruption to national infrastructure.

23.47. Cyber-dependent crimes include:

23.47.1. Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded,

23.47.2. 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources

23.47.3. Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

23.48. Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

23.49. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide preventative police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing.

23.50. **Online Safety** - the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

23.50.1. **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

23.50.2. **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

23.50.3. **Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying.

23.50.4. **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

23.51. There are close links between online safety concerns and child on child abuse. Whilst there are risks of online child on child abuse and access to

potentially harmful content outside of school, pupils may still have access to mobile and smart devices in school and therefore staff must be alert to this risk and ensure pupils adhere to policy in respect of the use of mobile and smart devices on site.

23.52. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only. Statutory guidance on Mobile phones in schools is clear that the department expects schools to implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

23.53. Staff must ensure pupils understand both the risks and potential sanctions of non-compliance in respect of the use of mobile and smart devices, as part of the Online Safety Curriculum and in accordance with the Online Safety Policy (Including Acceptable Use of Technologies) and the Behaviour Policy.

23.54. Communications with parents and carers should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. Our school uses filtering and monitoring technology to maintain safety on school devices. Parents and carers are to be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online to support online safety in the home.

23.55. As part of the Annual Safeguarding Audit, the school will undertake an annual review of the approach to online safety, inclusive of an annual Risk Assessment which will be shared with the Local Education committee/local relevant committee.

23.56. Staff will also be aware of the organisational policy (Artificial Intelligence Policy IT-0007) on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and ensure that any use of AI by staff is done safely and responsibly in accordance with organisational policy.

Domestic abuse and Operation Encompass

23.57. 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, and ability to learn.

23.58. 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.

23.59. **Operation Encompass** is an information-sharing scheme between the **police** and relevant education settings operating in all police forces across England and Wales. In November 2025, a new statutory duty was placed on the police to notify a child's education setting, and where relevant, local authorities, if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. This includes all children connected to a household where they have attended a domestic abuse incident; children who are physically present at the incident, children not physically present

during the incident, and situations where a child might reside in another household temporarily or permanently.

23.60. The aim of the duty is to support education settings to provide timely, informed support to children affected by domestic abuse, to ensure the school has up to date information about the child's circumstances and enable immediate support to be put in place according to the child's needs. This places no new responsibilities on education settings.

23.61. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures or referrals and applies solely to domestic abuse incidents. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

Preventing radicalisation (including the Prevent duty and Channel)

23.62. All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

23.63. Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of the school safeguarding approach.

23.64. **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

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

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

23.67. It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn into terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. The school will be sensitive to age and learning appropriate behaviour. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

23.68. Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Susceptible to Radicalisation 2023 notes the following:

23.68.1. There is no single pathway to being radicalised. There are many factors which can, either alone or combined, lead someone to subscribe to extremist ideology, and thereafter be drawn into or become an advocate of terrorism. These factors often include exposure to radicalising influences, real and perceived grievances (often created or exacerbated through grievance narratives espoused by extremists), and a person's own susceptibility.

"Honour" or faith-based abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)

23.69. So-called 'honour-based' Abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

23.70. Abuse committed in the context of preserving honour often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.

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

23.72. **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.

23.73. All staff must be aware of the requirement 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.

23.74. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions.

23.75. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils.

23.76. 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 good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and involve local authority children's social care as appropriate. The reporting duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases, or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, staff should follow local safeguarding procedures.

24. Appendix 3 - Child on child abuse guidance and procedure

Child on child abuse (including violence and harassment)

24.1. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

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

24.3. All staff should be aware of the different forms of child-on-child abuse can take, such as:

24.3.1. Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).

24.3.2. Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse).

24.3.3. Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm

24.3.4. Physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon.

24.3.5. Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment.

24.3.6. Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and seminudes, including those generated using AI.

24.3.7. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

24.3.8. Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.

24.3.9. Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

24.4. There is a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of all forms, including child on child abuse; it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it,

24.5. Even if there are no reports of abuse it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.

24.6. We believe that all children and young people have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children and young people should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils.

24.7. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

24.8. All allegations of child on child abuse should be reported immediately to the DSL. The DSL will consider the need for agency involvement which may include Police and or Children's Social Care.

24.9. The DSL will be mindful of support and supervision needs of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, this will be discussed in consultation with the Principal and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Understanding harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence

24.10. **Harmful sexual behaviour** (HSB) can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into

sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable.

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

24.12. **Sexual harassment** refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and offline and inside and outside of school. In this context it specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment. Such behaviour can violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

24.13.1. Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments,

24.13.2. Making sexual remarks about clothing or appearance and using sexualised names,

24.13.3. Sexual "jokes" or taunting,

24.13.4. Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, or interfering with someone's clothes. Schools and colleges should assess when such behaviour crosses into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim,

24.13.5. Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature,

24.13.6. Upskirting (this is a criminal offence), and

24.14. Online sexual harassment, which may occur independently, or as a broader pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This may include:

24.14.1. Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes.

24.14.2. Sharing of unwanted explicit content,

24.14.3. Sexualised online bullying,

24.14.4. Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media,

24.14.5. Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and

24.14.6. Coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

24.15. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can foster a culture that normalises inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to sexual violence.

24.16. **Sexual violence** refers to rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Action the DSL must take in respect of Child on Child harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual violence, or harassment

24.17. Reports of child on child abuse, particularly sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex, requiring difficult professional decisions

to be made. Any decisions are for the School to make on a case-by-case basis, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role, using their professional judgement, and being supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the Police as required.

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

24.19. If possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible; where the report includes an online element, being aware Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (2023) and Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings (2024)

24.20. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response, considering:

24.20.1. The victim's wishes regarding how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as reasonably possible regarding how an investigation will be progressed and what support they are offered, balanced against the school or college's duty to protect others.

24.20.2. The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether harmful sexual behaviour was displayed,

24.20.3. The ages and developmental stages of the children involved.

24.20.4. Any power imbalance between the children such as differences in age, maturity, or social status. Consider if the victim has a disability or learning difficulty.

24.20.5. Whether the alleged incident was isolated or part of a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature).

24.20.6. That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate relationships between children.

24.20.7. Importance of understanding intrafamilial harm and support for siblings if needed, any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school,

24.20.8. Wider contextual concerns, including links to child sexual exploitation (CSE) or child criminal exploitation (CCE),

24.21. The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns – at this point, Risk

is to be assessed and referrals to Police and social care considered as necessary.

24.22. When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or deputy) will make an immediate risk assessment.

24.23. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

24.24. Risk assessments should be recorded (written or electronic), uploaded to CPOMS and should be kept under review.

24.25. The risk assessments should consider:

24.25.1. the victim's safety and support needs,

24.25.2. potential other victims,

24.25.3. the alleged perpetrator(s);

24.25.4. the wider school community, including staff and pupils, and any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms

24.25.5. the location and time of the incident, with steps to improve safety in that area.

24.25.6. The school's risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Professional assessments should be used to inform the school approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and updating their own risk assessment.

24.26. The DSL and appropriate staff will engage with the children or young people involved as appropriate to their learning and communication needs.

24.27. Parents and carers should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process in order to best support the child or young person unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child or young person at risk of harm.

24.28. The DSL should consider the potential for intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.

24.29. A referral should be made to children's social care and/or the Police immediately if there is a concern that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process.

24.30. Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the Police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the Police remains. The Police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

24.31. Where there are images or videos of the abuse, Staff are not to view or forward illegal images of a child. It may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the Police for inspection.

24.32. To maintain confidentiality, the school should only involve essential staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

24.33. The victim may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if it can be justified to be in the public interest, for example, to protect children from harm and to promote the welfare of children. Ultimately, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

24.34. Where an allegation of sexual harassment or sexual violence is progressing through the criminal justice system, schools and colleges should understand the importance of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately. Relevant information can be found in: CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses.

24.35. The DSL will ensure they do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.

24.36. The school will consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities as part of the risk assessment process and will liaise with agencies accordingly should additional risks arise.

24.37. There are four likely scenarios for the school to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. Any combination of scenarios may need to occur. It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that where necessary relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. Likely scenarios:

- 24.37.1. Manage internally.
- 24.37.2. Universal services and community based Early Help assessment.
- 24.37.3. Referrals to Family Help – including targeted Early Help and local authority.
- 24.37.4. Reporting to the Police (Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to local authority children's social care).

24.38. For further guidance see part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

24.39. It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school or college should decide on a course of action. Consideration should be given as to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

25. Appendix 4 - Procedures for staff responding to safeguarding concerns

Guidance for staff and volunteers on suspecting or hearing a disclosure of abuse / Responding to a cause for concern

25.1. Action staff must take - A member of staff, agency/supply staff or volunteer suspecting or hearing a disclosure of abuse (including child on child abuse and online safety concerns):

25.1.1. Must listen carefully to the child or young person and keep an open mind. The member of staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place;

25.1.2. Must not ask leading questions, i.e. a question which suggests its own answer;

25.1.3. Must reassure the child or young person but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will ensure that the correct action is taken;

25.1.4. Staff are not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

25.2. Staff must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation or concern within CPOMS. This record should be made within 24 hours. The record should include:

25.2.1. the date and time;

25.2.2. the location that the conversation or concern took place;

25.2.3. a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern including the child's voice where possible;

25.2.4. details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;

25.2.5. a note of any actions taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

25.2.6. The CPOMS record must clearly outline those involved using full names for pupils and full names and roles of professionals and family members.

25.2.7. The CPOMS record should be factual and not contain the opinion of the staff member.

25.3. The CPOMS record should not contain information relating to staff investigations or suspensions beyond the initial concern relating to the child.

25.4. Injuries or physical descriptions should be recorded using a body map and described in as much detail as possible.

25.5. Photographs should not be taken unless this is requested by appropriate external agencies such as the Police, medical professionals, or Children's Social Care. Any photographs taken for this purpose should be taken on a National Autistic Society device, shared via secure methods (such as encrypted email), and deleted once shared.

25.6. Records of safeguarding concerns should not be edited or amended by other staff. Where records are unclear, missing information, or contain spelling or factual errors, the original record should remain unedited with a separate record of the subsequent updates or revisions.

25.7. Where a concern is significant, such as regarding injury to pupils or staff, serious incidents, allegations against staff, and any external referral, contact should be made directly with appropriate staff such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Principal. The Director of Education and Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team should then be informed. Recording a concern on CPOMS is not a substitute for this reporting process.

25.8. If there is an immediate Child Protection matter, staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) verbally, as soon as possible and follow up with a CPOMS log.

25.9. If any other forms of evidence are gathered by any other means, for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing or via school computers, these must be safeguarded and preserved and passed directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.

25.10. All suspicions or disclosures of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, unless it is an allegation against a member of staff in which case the procedures set out in Appendix 4 should be followed.

25.11. If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or young person a referral should be made to children's social care immediately and Police where required.

25.12. Anybody can make a referral. If the child or young person's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration.

25.13. Weekly 7-day report monitoring will be undertaken to review all entries and follow up actions into CPOMS, conducted by the Principal and DSL.

Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead

25.14. On being notified of a concern, disclosure or suspicion of abuse, the action to be taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider:

25.14.1. The local inter-agency procedures of the Local Safeguarding partnership;

25.14.2. Responsibilities outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;

25.14.3. Where relevant, local information sharing protocols relating to Channel referrals;

25.14.4. The nature and seriousness of the concern or disclosure. Information regarding a serious criminal offence, including the identification of someone who may already be engaged in illegal terrorist activity, will always be referred to local authority children's social care services and the Police;

25.14.5. The child's wishes and feelings, and how this concern has impacted them, however this is communicated. This should include communication with the pupil in a way accessible to them, but could also include observations of their behaviour or presentation;

25.14.6. Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.

25.15. If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult with the National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team.

25.16. As soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral to the local authority children's social care services will be made without delay (and in any event within 24 hours).

25.17. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will confirm the referral in writing to the local authority children's social care services within 24 hours. Paragraph 62 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) states that: "Within one working day of a referral being received, a local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and make a decision about next steps and the type of response required." If no response or acknowledgment is received within this timeframe, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the local authority children's social care services again.

25.18. Whether or not the school decides to refer a particular concern to the local authority children's social care services or the Police, the parents and pupil will be informed of their right to make their own complaint or referral to local authority children's social care services or the Police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

25.19. In circumstances where a pupil has not suffered and is not likely to suffer significant harm but may be in need of additional support from one or more agencies, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will review the support available from universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help.

25.20. Where relevant, the school will co-operate with the Channel Panel, the Police and/or children's social care in providing any relevant information so that each can effectively carry out its functions to determine whether an individual is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The school will respond to requests for information from the Police promptly and in any event within 48 hours.

25.21. In circumstances where it has been identified that it may be necessary to conduct a search of a pupil/pupil for a prohibited item (as outlined in the Behaviour Policy), parents/carers will be contacted prior to conducting the search. In circumstances where it may be necessary to contact the Police for support/guidance in relation to a search, parents/carers will again be notified and where necessary an appropriate adult will be nominated in support of this child – in accordance with guidance outlined in Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (2022) and PACE Code C 2019.

26. Appendix 5 - Dealing with allegations against staff, the Principal, trustees or volunteers

The school's procedures

26.1. The school's procedures for dealing with allegations made against staff will be used where the member of staff (including agency/supply staff), the Principal, a Trustee or volunteer has:

26.1.1. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child or young person;

26.1.2. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person;

26.1.3. Behaved towards a child / young person or children / young people in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if he or she works regularly or closely with children or young people.

26.1.4. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

26.2. Any allegations not meeting these criteria (known as the 'Harms Threshold') will be dealt as a 'low level' concern in accordance with section two of part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Local Safeguarding partnership procedures. Advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO) will be sought in borderline cases.

26.3. All allegations must be dealt with as a priority so as to avoid any delay.

26.4. Allegations against a staff member who is no longer employed by the school and historical allegations will be referred to the LADO and where necessary the Police.

26.5. The school will report any allegations regarding external organisations using our premises to the LADO and Police as appropriate.

Reporting an allegation against staff, the Principal, a Trustee or volunteer

26.6. Concerns, allegations, or complaints about any member of staff or volunteer should be raised with the Principal in the first instance.

26.7. Concerns, allegations, or complaints about the Principal or a Trustee/School's Governance Group member should be reported directly to the Director of Education and Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team, if appropriate, without first notifying the Principal.

26.8. All staff can report whistleblowing concerns internally by contacting Whistleblowing@nas.org.uk .

26.9. Additionally, all staff have access to SafeCall as an alternative independent method to raise a concern about a member of staff confidentially via phone: 0800 915 1571 or email: nas@safecall.co.uk .

26.10. Where appropriate, the Principal may delegate to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another senior leader to deal with and/or investigate concerns.

26.11. The Principal or DSL should notify the Director of Education and Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team.

26.12. A discussion will then take place as to necessary next steps, such as:

26.12.1. Whether the concern meets the harm threshold to report to LADO

26.12.2. Whether it will be treated as a low level concern

26.12.3. Whether advice should be sought from HR regarding suspension and/or risk assessment

26.12.4. Whether basic enquiries are needed (see below)

26.13. Before contacting the local authority designated officer (LADO), the Principal, DSL, or an assigned case manager (referred to hereafter as the 'investigating officer') will conduct basic enquiries to help to determine whether there is any

foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future Police investigation. The 'basic enquiries' should consider what facts can be established such as:

26.13.1. Was the individual in the school/at the alleged location at the time stated within the allegation

26.13.2. Did the individual or could the individual have come into contact with the pupil as alleged

26.13.3. Are there any witnesses

26.13.4. Was there any CCTV

26.14. The allegation and details of the basic enquiry will be discussed with the designated officer (LADO), within 24 hours of the allegation being raised.

Disclosure of Information

26.15. Where it has been alleged or identified that a member of staff or volunteer has harmed a child, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child, or if the situation is an emergency, children's social care and Police should be contacted as appropriate and the DSL must be notified.

26.16. Two key aspects to consider when an allegation has been made:

26.16.1. Looking after the welfare of the child – The DSL is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as described above.

26.16.2. Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation – the Principal or investigating officer should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action.

26.17. When to inform the individual of the allegation should be considered carefully on a case by case basis, with guidance as required from the LADO, and if appropriate local authority children's social care and the Police.

26.18. The parents or carers of the pupils involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. Key parties will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of the case, however, information provided to those parties will be dependent upon and subject to the laws and guidance on confidentiality, data protection and the advice of external agencies.

26.19. The reporting restrictions preventing the identification of a teacher who is the subject of such an allegation in certain circumstances will be observed.

26.20. Where the investigating officer is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staff's family, they should discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the DSL to make a referral to children's social care regarding the safety of these children.

26.21. Where it is clear that an investigation by the Police or children's social care is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial assessment decides that is the case, the LADO should advise of the next steps with the investigating officer.

26.22. Where it is clear that an investigation by the Police or children's social care is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial assessment decides that is the case, the LADO should advise of the next steps with the Principal and/or DSL.

26.23. Where the initial discussion with the LADO leads to no further action, the Principal and/or DSL and the LADO should:

26.23.1. Record the decision and justification for it;

26.23.2. Agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

26.23.3. Agree how this will inform any internal investigation and how it will be communicated to the Investigating Officer.

Further action to be taken by the school

26.24. A school has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. The school will act in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the school's employment procedures.

26.25. Whilst schools are not the employers of agency or supply teachers/staff, they should ensure all allegations are dealt with properly. The school will work alongside supply agencies and the LADO to ensure all allegations and concerns in respect of supply teachers/staff are fully investigated.

26.26. See relevant HR policies for further information regarding the investigation process, next steps and potential disciplinary actions.

Management of low level concerns

26.27. As part of the whole school approach to safeguarding, the school will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including agency/supply, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

26.28. The term low level concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms threshold. However the concern may indicate that the adult/staff member (including agency/supply, volunteer or contractors) may have acted in a way that:

26.28.1. Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work,

26.28.2. Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

26.29. Low level concerns should be reported to the Principal. The Principal may delegate to the DSL, where appropriate, to investigate low level concerns. Where a low level concern is raised about the Principal, it should be reported directly to the Director of Education and Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team.

26.30. Staff are not expected to determine for themselves whether a concern is low level or not. Any concern must be reported to the Principal who will make this assessment in collaboration with other internal and external professionals and in full knowledge of any previous concerns.

26.31. The Principal will confidentially record all low level concerns, the context in which they arose and action taken. The Principal will record the name of the individual who raised the low level concern unless they wish to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

26.32. The Principal should collect as much information as possible by:

26.32.1. speaking directly with the person who raised the concern;

26.32.2. to the individual involved and any witnesses;

26.32.3. review any documentation or additional information as necessary.

26.33. Low level concern records should be reviewed regularly so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. This may then need raising with LADO, should further concerns arise.

26.34. For further guidance regarding Low Level concerns, please speak with HR, the Director of Education and Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team.

Ceasing to use staff

26.35. If the school ceases to use the services of a member of staff or volunteer because they are unsuitable to work with children or young people, a settlement/compromise agreement will not be used and there will be a prompt and detailed report to the Designated officer (LADO), Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and relevant professional regulator, such as the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the school.

26.36. If a member of staff (or volunteer) tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide their services, any allegations will still be followed up by the school in accordance with this policy and a prompt and detailed report will be made to the local authority designated officer (LADO) and where necessary to the Disclosure and Barring Service and relevant professional regulator.

26.37. Where a teacher has been dismissed, or would have been dismissed had they not resigned, separate consideration will be given as to whether a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) is required.

26.38. In the case of any Early Years and Foundation Stage provision at the school:

26.38.1. The School will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on the premises of any Early Years and Foundation Stage provision (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and will provide details of the action taken in respect of those allegations.

26.38.2. These notifications will be made as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the allegations being made.

Unsubstantiated, false, or malicious allegations

26.39. Where an allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Principal will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with the School's policies.

26.40. Whether or not the person making the allegation is a pupil or a parent (or other member of the public), the school reserves the right to contact the Police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

Record keeping

26.41. Details of allegations found to be malicious will be removed from personnel records.

26.42. For all other allegations, full details will be recorded on the confidential personnel file of the person accused.

26.43. An allegation proven to be unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious will not be referred to in employer references. In accordance with part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious will also not be included in any reference.

26.44. The school will retain all safeguarding records and relevant personnel records for so long as reasonably required. The school will ensure that all records are created, retained, shared and destroyed in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Further details can be found in the Data Protection policy and procedure.

27. Appendix 6 - Missing pupil procedures

If a pupil goes missing on school premises

27.1. In the event of a child or young person missing it will become the priority of all staff to support with finding them as swiftly and calmly as possible. It is essential that the remaining children and young people are appropriately supervised whilst this is happening and are not put at risk or are disturbed.

27.2. The member of staff who has noticed the missing child will inform the onsite manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The manager / DSL will alert the Principal. Disaster procedures will be invoked and a Master of Ceremonies (MoC) identified.

27.3. Reception and office staff will be alerted to support and to act under the direction of the MoC. They will act as a point of contact for receiving information about the search for the missing student. They will contact the Caretaker. All key staff to be contactable to each other through work mobile phones, walkie talkies. The MoC to be kept updated immediately of any developments.

27.4. The Caretaker will immediately check the security of all exit points and perimeters and will rectify any breaches immediately. The Caretaker will then report back to Reception for the next directions from the MoC, such as supervising a key exit point.

27.5. All available staff (who are not supervising other children) will conduct a coordinated and thorough sweep search of the school premises inside and out as directed by the MoC, including areas the children do not normally access such as offices, locked rooms, walk in cupboards, staff toilets.

27.6. If the child is not located then the search should spread ever outwards of the area immediately outside of the school premises. All staff offsite need to be accounted for and to have a contactable mobile phone. As able staff should also revisit the internal sweep search, as directed by the MoC.

27.7. **If the student has not been found after 10 minutes, the MoC will direct then that parents/carers should be notified. The Police 999 must be notified**. The administrative team will work with the class teacher to ensure that there is key information to share with the police to help find the child, such as name, DOB, gender, physical description, including clothing, recent photos. Information about the child's needs such as danger awareness, communication levels, levels of functioning, sensory needs, medical needs ready to be shared through Pupil Profiles and other documents. Other relevant information to be ready to be shared, such as any other related historical events, the child's possible motivation for absconding; such as interest in local parks, train stations, emotional state.

27.8. The incident should be relayed to other important agencies: If the student has an allocated Social Worker, then they should be informed of the disappearance. If the student is a Looked After Child, then the Social Worker should be kept informed.

27.9. The **Director of Education and Children's Services** and **NAS Safeguarding Team** must be informed once key agencies have been informed.

If a pupil goes missing on a school trip

27.10. The trip leader must ensure the safety of the remaining pupils.

27.11. The trip leader/organiser, in discussion with other teaching staff will be responsible for making decisions relating to the trip.

27.12. One or more adults should immediately start searching for the missing pupil.

27.13. Regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving a venue. Pupils should be readily identifiable, usually by wearing their uniform.

27.14. The school must be informed if a pupil is missing and cannot be found.

27.15. If the pupil has not been found within 10 minutes, the Police must be called by dialling 999. Any medical, communication, learning needs or particular vulnerabilities must be disclosed to Police or other agencies.

27.16. **Parents/carers should be notified.**

27.17. The incident should be relayed to other important agencies: If the pupil is a looked after child and/or the pupil has an allocated Social Worker, then they should be informed of the disappearance. The **Director of Education and Children's Services** and **National Autistic Society Safeguarding**

Actions after a missing incident

27.18. When the child is found, members of staff will care for and talk with the child, bearing in mind that they may be unaware of having done anything wrong or, alternatively, may also have been afraid and distressed and may now need comfort.

27.19. If hospitalisation is required, a suitably experienced (i.e. not on Probation) member of staff must go in the ambulance.

27.20. Once the child has been safely located, the child's parents/carers, relevant professionals, and the **Director of Education** and **Children's Services and National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team** should be informed as promptly as possible.

27.21. After any incident of a missing child, a full incident report must be made on CPOMS, giving full details of how and when the incident occurred.

27.22. After the incident, the incident will be reviewed in line with the Incident Management Policy QS-0001 to identify learning and actions needed, as well as any review of policy and procedure.

27.23. Any lessons learned will be used to inform future risk assessments, as appropriate.

27.24. The National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team will offer a 'Post-Incident reflection' or debrief with involved staff including the Principal and DSL.