Safeguarding Policy

Policy Update Summary

POLICY	
Safeguarding	Date of review: November 2025
School: Pallister Park Primary	Date of Meeting: November 2025

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS APPROVED POLICY	
Policy updated to comply with KCSIE 2025 (effective September 1st 2025). Updates; • Online safety now includes misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories • Reference to generative AI guidance added • Child on child abuse terminology updated • KCSIE 2025 references updated throughout	
Report provided by: H Adams	Last updated Autumn 2025

Pallister Park Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Introduction

The main principles of 'Working together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' are fundamental to this policy, namely:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well being

In terms of "Staying Safe" at Our Children 1st MAT we acknowledge the above statement and endeavour to provide as safe an environment as possible within which children and young people may learn. We recognise that providing this safe environment includes the need to:

- Prevent unsuitable people working with children and young people
- Promote the safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice

Aims

Our aim is to do all we can to protect and safeguard the well being of our pupils. Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Our pupils have the right to expect us to provide them with a safe and secure environment. We acknowledge that teachers and other staff in our school are in a unique position to identify and to help abused and vulnerable children. We also recognise that the protection of our pupils is a shared community responsibility.

Principles

Our policy applies to all in Our Children 1st MAT, namely pupils, staff, governors and volunteers. There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring that we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our pupils
2. Raising pupil awareness of child protection issues and equipping pupils with the skills they need to keep them safe
3. Developing, and then implementing, procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse, and training staff to use these procedures effectively
4. Supporting vulnerable pupils and those in difficult circumstances, as well as supporting those pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed protection plans
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and thrive.

We recognise that school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where our pupils feel safe and secure, and where they are encouraged to talk and are listened to seriously
- Ensure that our pupils know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty or concerned about one of their peers
- Include opportunities in the Curriculum for pupils to develop the skills to recognise abuse and to stay safe, and also to include material to help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life.
- Ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish working relationships with families and with colleagues from other agencies.
- Safeguarding staff will challenge and 'think the unthinkable'

We recognise that it is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that all elements of this policy are actively and consistently reflected in our practice. We will systematically evaluate and review the policy.

The Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team at Our Children 1st Academy consists of the following people;

Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Mrs H Adams
Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding including Child Protection and LAC	Mrs J Thackstone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs L Felgate
Vulnerable Pupil Support Team	Mrs L Felgate and Mrs M James
Designated LAC Teacher	Mrs R Cacioppo

The Safeguarding Team have monthly Internal Child Protection Reviews (ICPR) to discuss current caseloads for children on CP, LAC and other areas of need. Social Services, and Health are represented and individual cases are reviewed and procedures are evaluated to ensure that everyone is acting according to protocols.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- the school complies with legislation related to child protection
- the school has a Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy and that procedures are in place that safeguard and promote the wellbeing of pupils in our school
- this policy is reviewed annually
- the school is using safe recruitment procedures and that appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers
- the school is aware of its duties re PREVENT/Channel referrals in conjunction with the police/LA, in particular that the school community has "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"
- Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (http://www.teescpp.org.uk)

The named trustee for Safeguarding and Looked After Children is responsible for maintaining:

- regular contact with the school's DSL
- awareness of current responsibilities and requirements in relation to child protection by attending appropriate professional development activities
- The role of the Nominated Trustee for Safeguarding is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the MSCB Guidelines are complied with and to support the school in this aspect. Trustees or Local Governors must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.
- The DSL and the Headteacher provide an annual report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior member of staff responsible for:

- the provision of leadership and vision in respect of child protection

- the practical implementation of the child protection policy in ensuring that child protection procedures are followed within the school and that appropriate referrals are made to the proper Social Care Services and other agencies
- the provision of training to all staff employed within the school so that they are aware of signs of abuse, what they need to do if they think that a pupil is being abused and how they can protect themselves from an allegation
- ensuring that the DSL and the safeguarding team have received the appropriate training
- the co-ordination of all activities related to child protection and children in care, including record keeping, school representation at child protection conferences and other related meetings, supporting pupils at risk, liaison with other professionals, and the monitoring of welfare and academic progress
- liaison between the safeguarding team and the leadership team and governors
- attending child sexual exploitation training
- maintaining awareness of PREVENT/Channel referrals in conjunction with the police/LA guidance
- monitoring effectiveness of child protection policy and procedures and updating police yearly
- attending PREVENT training/implementing recommendations including re Channel referrals.

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- supporting the DSL and DDSL in all aspects of the role
- ensuring that the DSL and the safeguarding team have received the appropriate training
- ensuring that all members of the school community are aware of and comply with our child protection policy
- Notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the Child Protection register
- ensuring the safe recruitment of all staff (including supply staff and volunteers)
- making parents aware of the academies policy via website
- dealing with any allegations against members of staff or volunteers
- creating a safe environment for pupils at the school
- ensuring that the designated person has current child protection training.

All staff are expected to:

- know the names of the DSL and members of the safeguarding team
- understand and comply with the school's safeguarding policy
- have read and understood 'part one' of 'Keeping children safe in education'
- deal with any bullying incidents that may occur, following proper procedures.
- refer e-safety concerns.
- behave in accordance with our Staff Conduct Policy
- be aware of our obligation to pay "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"

Pupils, parents/carers, supply staff and volunteers are expected to be aware of and comply with the school's child protection and conduct policies.

Procedures - General

This policy, and all action relating to it, is in line with the following guidance:

- Keeping Children safe in Education 2025
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Working together to improve school attendance 2024
- PREVENT duty guidance
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education
- Mental Health and Behaviour in schools

Staff will be kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings, the staff bulletin and awareness training. All new staff will attend a training session on child protection awareness as part of their induction. Where other adults are working in the school alone with pupils, the Head Teacher or the Deputy Head will ensure that they are aware of the contents of these policies (copies of policies can be found on school network and one drive). Any trainee teachers will receive a training session on child protection awareness as soon as possible after their arrival. We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (http://www.teescpp.org.uk) and guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills.

Supporting pupils

We support our pupils in a range of ways for many reasons;

- Child Protection
- LAC
- Bereavement
- Young Carers
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Counselling

We try to help pupils understand what is and is not acceptable behaviour towards them and how to speak up if they have worries. We also encourage pupils to speak up about concerns they may have for their peers.

Our school will endeavour to support pupils through:

1. The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.

2. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.

3. The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.

4. A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued.

5. Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.

6. A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.

7. The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable Vulnerable Support Team, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations and work with individuals or groups of children where appropriate.

8. Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

9. Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Procedures – Concern about a pupil

Anyone who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation of abuse or who suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the DSL or one of the Safeguarding Team; in their absence the matter should be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher or the most senior member of staff in school. This should be followed with a written record within 24 hours, using as far as possible the pupil's own words. It is important to remember that any member of staff can refer their concerns to children's social care directly. Staff must take further action if they feel the school has not acted appropriately or robustly to safeguard. This may involve reporting to the Chair of Governors or direct to LADO, Social Care or Police.

If a child alleges abuse or neglect the member of staff should;

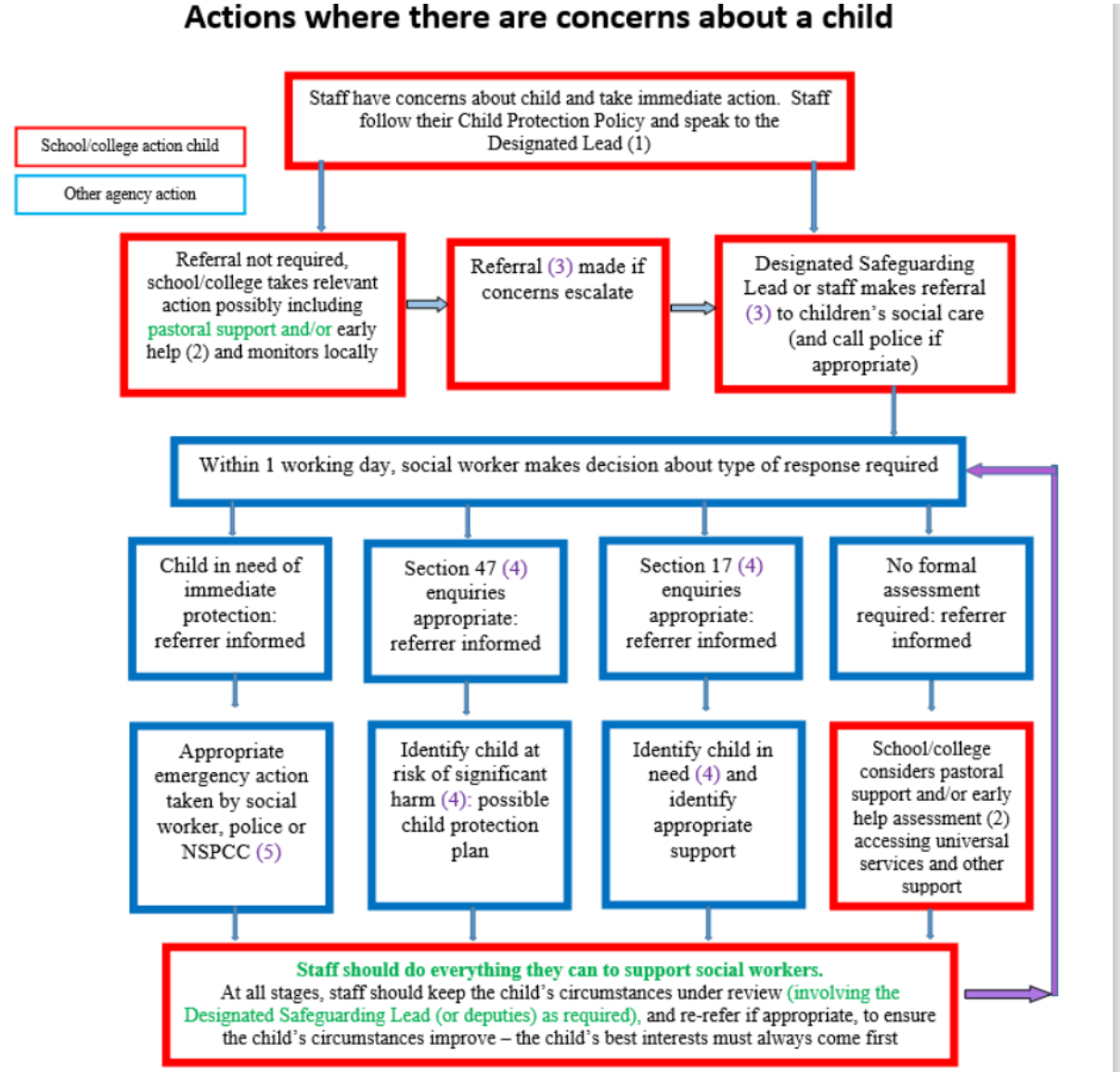
- Take the child to a place where they MUST be listened to.
- Respect the child's point of view.
- Do not over question the child.
- Do not use leading questions but clarify information where necessary.
- Allow the child to write down the information or use some other form of communication if this makes the child feel more comfortable.
- Be honest about your responsibility and explain what you must do and do not promise confidentiality.
- Immediately inform:

  Head Teacher – H Adams,

  Designated Safeguarding Lead – L Felgate (or another member of the VPST)
- Written records of the events, conversations and observations which led to the concerns must be made.
- All reports must be dated and signed.
- A written record must be kept of all action taken.

The DSL (or one of the safeguarding team) will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or an allegation of abuse to the relevant investigating agency by telephone or e-mail and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Local Safeguarding Children Board (http://www.teescpp.org.uk). Any referral will be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

- If the DSL (or one of the safeguarding team) is unsure about whether a formal referral should be made or has a general concern about a child's health or development, advice should be sought from local social care, the NSPCC or the MSCB.
- We will inform parents/carers of our actions **unless it is our view that so doing could place the child at greater risk of harm** or could impede a criminal investigation.
- We will inform parents and carers about our duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents may request a full copy of this policy.
- Members of the safeguarding team may use a My Family Plan or an Early Help Assessment for families about whom we have concerns and where there is likely to be multi-agency working.
- In addition to working with the DSL, staff may be asked to support Social Care/Police to take decisions about individual pupils.
- We will listen and take seriously any disclosure or allegation of abuse and any concern expressed about the safety and well-being of our pupils. We will consider the 'unthinkable' and challenge when required.
- Inter-agency working will operate within the statutory guidance. This includes providing a co- ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified, and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide support to children subject to child protection plans. We will allow access for Children's Social Care and the Police, where appropriate, to conduct a Section 17 or 47 assessment.



1. In cases which also involve a concern or allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of KCSIE 2018.
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
4. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
5. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Procedures – Allegation against a member of staff

Where the allegation is against a member of staff, the Head Teacher must first be informed.

We have adopted and follow Middlesbrough Council's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy.

What is a low-level concern? The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at KCSIE 2025. A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

• is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
• the LADO does not consider the behaviour meets the 'risk of harm' threshold for a referral

Managing Low Level concerns in relation to all staff in Schools & other educational settings, including teachers, supply staff, other staff, volunteers, & contractors; in accordance with your schools Code of Conduct for staff

Training and support

The Head Teacher, DSL and DDSL will undertake the necessary Child Protection training and that this is updated at intervals recommended by the LA. The DSL will ensure that all members of the safeguarding team have adequate training.

The DSL (or a member of the safeguarding team) will offer child protection awareness training as part of the induction package for all staff and teaching trainees. She will also raise awareness of child protection issues as necessary at briefings. This training should raise awareness of child protection issues, clarify the actions to be taken if abuse is disclosed, alleged or suspected and also encourage staff to keep themselves as safe as possible from an allegation being made against them. Such training must be 'regularly' updated; however at Pallister Park every member of staff has refresher training at the start of the new school year, as well as on-going briefings throughout the year.

Confidentiality

All staff need to understand that the only purpose of confidentiality is to benefit the pupil. No one should guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as any child protection concern must be reported to the designated child protection coordinator (or one of the safeguarding team) and may require further investigation by the appropriate authorities.
Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection issues on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

Records and Monitoring

Accurate records are essential to good child protection practice.
Any one receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs of possible abuse must make an accurate record within 24 hours of reporting the incident, noting what was seen or said, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. This record must be signed and dated.

File notes are kept for any pupil on child protection plan (CPP) or for any pupil monitored for child protection reasons. These records are kept in a locked cupboard and electronically on a secure area of the school communications system.
If a pupil transfers from the school, any child protection notes will be forwarded to the pupil's new school marked "confidential" and for the attention of the receiving school's designated Child Protection Coordinator. A signature of receipt will be requested. Local schools' files will either be collected or hand-delivered.

Guidelines for Staff

Private meetings with pupils

Staff and volunteers should be aware that private meetings with individual pupils may give rise to concern. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one to one meeting is necessary. However, where possible, such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access, or with the door open, or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people, and another pupil or adult should be present or nearby. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff should ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.
Meetings with pupils away from the school premises should only be arranged with the specific approval of the Head Teacher.

Physical contact with pupils

Physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, parent or observer. Touching pupils, including well intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to serious questions being raised. As a general principle staff should not make gratuitous physical contact with their pupils. It is particularly unwise to attribute touching to their teaching style or as a way of relating to pupils.
Any form of physical punishment of pupils is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. If is particularly important that staff understand this both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the school.

Where physical contact may be acceptable

There may be occasions where a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is, and what is seen to be by others present, normal and natural and does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance he/she should seek the advice of the Head Teacher.

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include: showing a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment; demonstrating a move or exercise during games or PE and contact activities at extra-curricular sessions. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self-injury, damaging property, or causing disruption. In such cases only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be to restrain the pupil. Where an employee has taken action to physically restrain a pupil he/she should make a written report of the incident.

Please see our Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Staff who have to administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that other children or another adult are present if they are in any doubt as to whether necessary physical contact could be misconstrued.

Wherever possible staff who have to help children with toileting difficulties should be accompanied by another adult, and pupils should, wherever possible, be encouraged to change themselves. It is accepted that there will be some situations where pupils will present particular problems for staff and the emphasis will be on what is reasonable in all the circumstances.

Relationships and attitudes

All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with pupils. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and pupils will be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and any sexual activity between a member of staff and a pupil under 18 years of age may be a criminal offence.

All staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils and appropriate to the age and gender of the pupils, and care should be taken that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanours and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff of either sex are dealing with adolescent boys or girls.

From time to time staff may encounter pupils who display attention-seeking behaviour, or profess to be attracted to them. Staff should aim to deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately, but must ensure that their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. In these circumstances, the member of staff should also ensure that the Head Teacher or a senior colleague is aware of the situation.

Where conversation of a sensitive nature may be appropriate

Many staff have a pastoral responsibility for pupils and in order to fulfil that role effectively there will be occasions where conversations will cover particularly sensitive matters. Staff must, in these circumstances, use their discretion to ensure that, for example, any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion.

Other staff in school may, from time to time, be approached by pupils for advice. Pupils may also appear distressed and staff may feel the need to ask if all is well. In such cases staff must judge whether it is appropriate for them to offer counselling and advice or whether to

refer the pupil to another member of staff with acknowledged pastoral responsibility for the particular pupil.

Inappropriate comments and discussions with pupils

As with physical contact, comments by staff to pupils, either individually or in groups, can be misconstrued. As a general principle staff must not make unnecessary comments to and/or about pupils which could be construed to have a sexual connotation. It is also unacceptable for staff to introduce or to encourage debate amongst pupils in class, or elsewhere, which could be construed as having a sexual connotation that is unnecessary given the context of the lesson, or the circumstances. At the same time it is recognised that a topic raised by a pupil is best addressed rather than ignored.
Systematic use of insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic comments are also unacceptable.

Extra-curricular activities

Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in extra-curricular activities, or a residential setting such as a ski trip, outdoor education camp or extended visit away from home. Typically, a less formal approach than usual maybe appropriate in these settings, but that can be open to misinterpretation. In any event, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school.

Reporting incidents

Following an incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued he/she should discuss the matter with the Head Teacher. Where it is agreed with the Head Teacher the member of staff or volunteer should provide a written report of the incident. A detailed written report should always be made if a member of staff has been obliged to restrain a pupil physically, or where a complaint has been made by a pupil, parent or other adult.

Children missing from education

A pupil missing from education for eight sessions or more is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Should a pupil go missing from school the Independent Education Welfare Officer will be informed in line with our Attendance Policy. The EWO will inform the Designated Lead and consider further actions/support should it be required. The Local Authority will be informed of any pupil removed from our roll, via a referral for out of school registration, so that the LA can identify and safeguard children missing from education.

Pupils on the CP register

The number of pupils on a child protection plan varies. There are also other pupils about whom we have child protection concerns who are not on a child protection plan.
We support pupils in various ways by:

- following the guidance set out in any child protection plans
- ensuring they know and are comfortable about whom they can approach for help or if they have specific concerns

- monitoring their welfare carefully, including talking to them regularly about their well being
- attending any child protection meetings held on their behalf, including speaking on their behalf at such meetings should they request it
- monitoring their attendance carefully and reporting any unexplained absence to social care
- monitoring their academic grades carefully to try to ensure they are making good progress in school
- enlisting the support of and liaising with other agencies as appropriate
- checking that they have access to all elements of school life, including visits and other activities
- informing their Teacher that they are on a CPP without breaching confidentiality so he/she knows to register immediately any concerns however minor with the DSL

Looked After Children

We have a Designated Lead and Governor responsible for Looked After pupils. We keep a list of pupils who are looked after by the local authority. In the light of the research that shows that these pupils fare less well at schools than their peers and to narrow this gap, we monitor their progress and wellbeing carefully by:

- being involved in and following the guidance set out in the pupil's personal education plan (PEP)
- arranging for one of our safeguarding team (or for another teacher to whom the child relates well) to take a particular interest in the pupil's welfare and to talk to them regularly
- offering in school support such as anger management, assertiveness or social skills training as appropriate
- targeting pupil premium specifically to support children in care.
- attending any liaison or review meetings held on their behalf, including speaking for them or acting as their advocate at such meetings should they request it, and keeping in touch with social workers and/or carers
- monitoring their attendance carefully and reporting any unexplained absence to social care and the Educational Welfare service
- monitoring their academic grades carefully to try to ensure they are making good progress in school making full use of LA "tracker" on line systems
- informing their head of year that they are on the looked after register without breaching confidentiality so he/she knows to register any concerns speedily to the safeguarding team
- being careful not to accept any under achievement just because the child is 'looked after'
- looking out for difficulties with homework or resources that may be a result of their being in care and giving them help to organise and manage their work and by providing the resources needed
- enlisting the support of and liaising with other agencies as appropriate
- checking that they have access to all elements of school life, including visits and other activities, and by giving these pupils the opportunities to take part in those self esteem projects/residentials organised by the school as and when appropriate.

In addition, we also keep a record of those pupils who are looked after by someone other than a parent, Adopted or on Special Guardianship plans. We offer them a support package (chosen from the above) appropriate to their particular circumstances.

Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are place in residential schools, children's homes or hospitals are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Our Academy recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well but are aware that safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that the child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. However, where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this will the DSL and the DSL will notify Social Care of the circumstances.

Young Carers

It is the responsibility of the designated child protection coordinator (or a deputy) to keep a record of those pupils who play the part of a major carer for a family member. However, such families do not often publicise their situation for fear of social care involvement. We offer a support package to these pupils appropriate to their individual situation. This package would contain elements of the support offered to pupils looked after by the local authority.

Disabled Pupils

Disabled children may be less able to recognise or understand that they are being abused. Communication difficulties may make it harder for them to disclose abuse and/or dependency on their care giver may mean they have no-one to tell. Professionals may focus on meeting the needs of the child's impairment, however at Pallister Park Primary we will always try to ensure that the voice of the child is heard/sought.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse represents one quarter of all violent crime. It is actual or threatened physical, emotional, psychological or sexual abuse. It involves the use of power and control by one person over another. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, religion, mental or physical ability. Domestic abuse can also involve other types of abuse.

We use the term domestic abuse to reflect that a number of abusive and controlling behaviours are involved beyond violence.

Slapping, punching, kicking, bruising, rape, ridicule, constant criticism, threats, manipulation, sleep deprivation, social isolation, and other controlling behaviours all count as abuse.

Living in a home where domestic abuse takes place is harmful to children and can have a serious impact on their behaviour, wellbeing and understanding of healthy, positive relationships. Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of significant harm and staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of a child suffering or witnessing domestic abuse.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any child in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the DSL) within a timely manner the next day following the incident. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass.

OE Parents Poster (operationencompass.org)

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. CSE can happen online and offline and all staff should be aware of the link between online safety and vulnerability to CSE.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually exploited should be passed without delay to the DSL. Our Children 1st Academy is aware there is a clear link between regular school absence/truanting and CSE. Staff should consider a child to be at potential CSE risk in the case of regular school absence/truanting and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents to assess this risk.

The DSL will seek advice from our Safeguarding Children's Board on all occasions when there is a concern that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually exploited or where indicators have been observed that are consistent with a child who is being or who is at risk of being sexually exploited and follow the advised process of action. If a child is in immediate danger the police should be called on 999.

Our Children 1st MAT is aware that a child often is not able to recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and does not see themselves as a victim. As a consequence the child may resent what they perceive as interference by staff. However, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other type of abuse.

Our Academy includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PHSE and SRE curriculum. Pupils will be informed of the grooming process and how to protect themselves from people who may potentially be intent on causing harm. They will be supported in terms of recognising

and assessing risk in relation to CSE, including online, and knowing how and where to get help.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police.

The duty applies to all persons in Our Children 1st MAT who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, however the DSL should be informed.

If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101. The report should be made by the close of the next working day.

School staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators of FGM. Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per Our Children 1st MAT child protection procedures. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.
There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of

human rights. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage which is common in several cultures. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party.

Honour-based Violence

Honour based violence (HBV) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code.

Honour based violence might be committed against people who;

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion;
- want to get out of an arranged marriage;
- want to get out of a forced marriage;
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying

Our policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents which is shared with and analysed by the governing body. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse.

If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are seen to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PHSE education.

Racist Incidents

Any repeated. racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of racist incidents.

Radicalisation and Extremism

The Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2015) under section 26 of the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Radicalisation is defined as 'the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist group'

Extremism is defined as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised; adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous.

Our Children 1st MAT is clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follows the Department for Education guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism

Our Children 1st MAT seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements. School staff receive training to help identify early signs of radicalisation and extremism.
Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

The school governors, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include: the use of school premises by external agencies, anti- bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures.

If the matter is urgent call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline, 020 789 321.
In non urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

E-Safety

Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social media sites such as facebook, twitter, Instagram and snapchat.

Unfortunately, some adults and other children use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts or emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexual behaviour such as webcam photography or face-to- face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material such as pornographic websites or those which promote extremist behaviour, criminal activity, suicide or eating disorders

Our Children 1st has an **E-Safety policy** which explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and how we respond to online safety incidents.

Pupils are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum and all staff receive online safety training which is regularly updated. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever-evolving. We are aware of the four categories of risk;

content- exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content including extremism, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories

contact- being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users including peer pressure, advertising and adults posing as children

conduct- online behaviour that increases likelihood of harm including sharing of explicit images, online bullying

commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams

The school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to reduce these risks.

Child on Child

Our Children 1st recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for students.

The Academy’s Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Antibullying Policy, Section 5 of KCSIE 2021 and DfE guidance on sexual harassment and violence between children in schools are used to guide our approach to dealing with reports in a consistent and robust way.

Most cases of students hurting other students will be dealt with under our Academy's Behaviour and Discipline policy, but this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns.

This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students in the Academy at risk
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes) See appendix 2 for more information about peer-on-peer abuse.

Peer-on-peer abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of Academy and online. Peer-on-peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, 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

- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content. If staff have any concerns about peer-on-peer abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in this policy, as appropriate.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex

- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children

- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same Academy. If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up

- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in this policy, as appropriate.

Sharing of nude/semi-nude images

- Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

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

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

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

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

Further review by the DSL:

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. They will hold interviews with the students involved (if appropriate).

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

Informing parents/carers.

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done by the DSL.

Recording Incidents

All incidents of Peer on Peer (Child on Child) abuse will be recorded on the Academy's CPOM system.

Our Children 1st Academy aims to reduce the likelihood of peer on peer abuse through;

- the established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness;
- high expectations of behaviour;
- clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour;
- providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops pupils' understanding of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour, consent and keeping themselves safe;
- systems for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, valued and believed;
- robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils and those identified as being at risk.

Research indicates that young people rarely disclose peer on peer abuse and that if they do, it is likely to be to their friends. Therefore, our Academy will also educate pupils in how to support their friends if they are concerned about them, that they should talk to a trusted adult in the school and what services they can contact for further advice.

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations of peer on peer abuse in any form should be referred to the DSL using the Academies child protection procedures as set out in this policy. Where a concern regarding peer on peer abuse has been disclosed to the DSL(s), advice and

guidance will be sought from Children's Social Care and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed the Police will be contacted.
Working with external agencies the school will respond to the unacceptable behaviour. If a pupil's behaviour negatively impacts on the safety and welfare of other pupils then safeguards will be put in place to promote the well-being of the pupils affected and the victim and perpetrator will be provided with support.

All incidents of this nature should be treated as a safeguarding concern and in line with the UKCCIS guidance 'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people'.
The DSL will record all incidents of youth produced sexual imagery, including both the actions taken, actions not taken, reasons for doing so and the resolution in line with safeguarding recording procedures.

Mental Health and Behaviour

We are sometimes aware of pupils who may need mental health support and will discuss our concerns with teachers, parents and outside agencies where appropriate. Our VPST will be able to provide initial support and evaluation of the needs of the individual to ensure referral to the appropriate agency.

Other vulnerable pupils

Members of the Safeguarding Team (VPST) are often aware of pupils who are vulnerable for other reasons. It is their responsibility to ensure that these pupils receive support either from a teacher in school to whom the pupil relates or from an external agency. The pupil's teacher will be informed of the situation. This situation might be a temporary one or may be on-going. Parents/carers are informed of the situation wherever appropriate.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)

As a school, we believe that respect for ourselves and others is a fundamental right and responsibility of/for all. It is the duty of all staff to ensure that every member of the school community feels valued, irrespective of their sexual/gender orientation, race or religion. Diversity is celebrated and valued at Pallister Park School.

Safer Recruitment

We comply with recommendations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education document.

Links to documentation;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- Generative AI: Product Safety Expectations: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (statutory): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance
- RSHE Guidance (July 2025): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-rse-and-health-education