



# **CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**September 2026**

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## Section A: A culture of safeguarding; creating a safe and supportive environment

### 1.0 Policy statement

At Beckfoot Trust safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority. We are committed to ensuring that every child is protected from harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and thrive in a secure and supportive environment.

This policy reflects our statutory responsibilities under the latest version of:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers.
- Relevant DfE safeguarding and child welfare guidance

We adopt a whole-organisation approach to safeguarding, recognising that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy has been deliberately sequenced into three sections:

- A: creating a safe and supportive environment
- B: vulnerable groups, safeguarding risks and key indicators
- C: reporting, responding and recording to concerns

All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, must read this policy in conjunction with Part One of KCSIE and the local protocol. All schools will maintain evidence that staff have read and understood Part One, as part of induction and annual updates.

### 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to:

- all staff (teaching, non-teaching, supply and trainee teachers or apprentices)
- trustees/local school committee members
- volunteers and visitors
- contractors working with children

#### 2.1 Definitions used throughout this policy.

- **staff** - all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity
- **children** - includes everyone under the age of 18 in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education. However, our duty of care remains in place in full until a child completes their educational provision with us. If we have safeguarding concerns about a student who is over 18, we define them as a vulnerable adult. When a student turns 18, their legal protection falls under the Care Act 2014, adults at risk. In such cases, our overarching principles do not change in relation to safeguarding all our students.
- **families** - birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers, adoptive parents, and LA (Local Authority) corporate parents.

This policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding related policies, which are set out in Appendix 1: Related trust policies.

### 3.0 Overarching principles

#### 3.1 Our safeguarding practice is underpinned by the following key principles:

- **Child-centred approach**  
The welfare of the child is paramount. We listen to children, take their views seriously, and act in their best interests always.
- **Culture of vigilance**  
We maintain an open, transparent safeguarding culture where concerns are identified early and acted upon promptly.
- **Early help and prevention**  
We prioritise early identification of need and provide support before concerns escalate, in line with *Working Together*.
- **Shared responsibility**  
All staff understand their role in safeguarding and are empowered to act.
- **Multi-agency collaboration**  
We work effectively with safeguarding partners (local authority, police, health and others) to protect children.

#### 3.2 Our commitments

We will:

- **Provide a safe environment**
  - Create a secure, respectful, and inclusive environment where children feel safe both in person and online.
  - Actively promote emotional wellbeing and resilience.
  - Implement effective behaviour policies in line with DfE guidance.
- **Recognise and respond to risk; ensure all staff are trained to identify signs of:**
  - abuse and neglect
  - child-on-child abuse
  - child sexual and criminal exploitation
  - domestic abuse
  - online harm and inappropriate content
  - mental health concerns
  - radicalisation and extremism (Prevent duty)
  - respond to concerns immediately and appropriately, following local safeguarding procedures.
- **Strengthen safeguarding practice (KCSIE focus)**  
We recognise emerging and strengthened expectations within KCSIE, including:
  - **Attendance as a safeguarding issue** – we monitor and act on persistent absence and patterns of concern.
  - **Online safety as a safeguarding priority** – including filtering, monitoring, and education.
  - **Child-on-child abuse awareness** – including sexual harassment, violence, and harmful behaviours.

- **Safeguarding beyond the school gates** – understanding contextual risks in the community.
- **Clear reporting systems** – ensuring all concerns (no matter how small) are recorded and acted upon.
- **Ensure effective leadership**
  - Appoint a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and trained deputies with appropriate authority and time.
  - Ensure the trust board/leadership holds safeguarding as a key priority and provides effective oversight.
- **Safer recruitment and workforce culture**
  - Follow strict safer recruitment procedures to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children.
  - Maintain a strong staff code of conduct and professional boundaries.
  - Provide regular safeguarding training, updates, and supervision.
- **Information sharing and record keeping**
  - Maintain clear, accurate, and secure safeguarding records.
  - Share information appropriately in line with data protection law and safeguarding principles.
  - Act without delay where information indicates a risk of harm.

## 4.0 Contextual safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding recognises that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside of the home and can occur between children. These risks, often referred to as 'extra-familial' harm can take place in a range of environments, including school, online, and within the wider community. Extra-familial harms include, but are not limited to:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- child criminal exploitation (CCE), including county lines
- serious youth violence
- child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- bullying, including cyberbullying
- radicalisation and extremism

We recognise that children's experiences of harm are not limited to their home environment, and that safeguarding practice must consider the full context of a child's life

### 4.1 Our approach to contextual safeguarding

In accordance with KCSIE, we will:

- **understand and respond to extra-familial harm** by considering wider environmental risks, not solely the family context
- **recognise child-on-child abuse as a safeguarding issue**, which must never be dismissed as "banter" or part of growing up
- **work with multi-agency safeguarding partners** to coordinate responses and share intelligence about risk
- **share information appropriately and without delay** where concerns about contextual safeguarding arise
- **assess risk in peer groups, locations and environments**, including online spaces

- **adopt a whole school/setting approach**, ensuring safeguarding is embedded across policies, staff practice, and curriculum
- **ensure children's voices are central**, and that they are supported to report concerns

This section should be read alongside KCSIE, and in conjunction with school safeguarding protocols, to provide more information about contextual safeguarding.

## 5.0 Safer recruitment

We are committed to ensuring that our recruitment and selection processes help to deter, identify and reject individuals who may pose a risk to children. All recruitment processes will reflect KCSIE, current DBS requirements and regulated activity legislation, ensuring that appropriate pre-employment checks are completed in line with safeguarding and legal obligations.

We will ensure that:

- job descriptions and person specifications make clear the safeguarding responsibilities of the role
- appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on all staff, supply staff and volunteers. These checks include:
  - verification of identity
  - enhanced DBS check (with barred list check where appropriate)
  - verification of right to work in the UK
  - professional qualifications (where applicable)
  - employment history and references
  - prohibition, direction, and section 128 checks (where required)
- references are obtained before interview where possible, scrutinised appropriately, and any concerns are resolved
- at least one person on any appointment panel has completed safer recruitment training
- our trust carries out an online search check as part of our due diligence of shortlisted candidates. This helps to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school uses to explore with the applicant as part of a separate safeguarding interview. We inform shortlisted candidates that online searches are done as part of our due diligence checks
- we ensure that our volunteers are appropriately checked and supervised when in school (as per the removal of supervision exemption for volunteers (Crime and Policing Act 2026). We check the identity of all contractors working on site and request DBS checks where required by the latest keeping children safe in education guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day
- when using supply staff, we will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that staff they provide have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children. Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children.
- Our trust maintains the single central record of recruitment checks undertaken in each of our schools.
- all relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification from childcare guidance and their obligations to disclose to us relevant information that could lead to disqualification.
- our recruitment and selection policy and procedures can be accessed on our website.

## 6.0 Safer working practices

- As reflected in KCSIE, we emphasise a culture of vigilance, accountability, and professional curiosity across and amongst all staff.
- Together, these practices help create a safeguarding environment where children feel safe, staff act consistently, and risks are identified and managed at the earliest opportunity.
- School staff must cross reference relevant policies listed in Appendix 1 and use internal 'how to ...' documents, available on the safeguarding SharePoint, to support implementation of this section.
- Schools must ensure the trust code of conduct is adhered to, including expectations around professional boundaries, use of technology and social media, and appropriate physical contact.
- Robust safer recruitment and ongoing supervision processes must be complemented by regular safeguarding training that reflects emerging risks (such as online harm and peer-on-peer abuse).
- Leadership ensure that all staff are aware of the importance of reporting low-level concerns to the Headteacher both by regular reminders and visible posters.
- Headteachers understand the need to record and address low-level concerns promptly to prevent escalation, alongside maintaining transparent reporting systems that encourage staff to raise concerns without fear of reprisal (see further detail in section 54).

## 7.0 Site security

Staff are committed to providing a secure environment where children feel safe and protected, with effective measures in place to manage access to the site. This includes:

- controlled entry systems
- robust visitor identification and supervision procedures – school protocols detail specific arrangements locally
- clear protocols for collection at the end of the school day
- regular risk assessments are undertaken to identify and reduce potential hazards across all areas of the site, including classrooms, outdoor spaces, and any off-site provision
- staff are vigilant in supervising pupils and are trained to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns, following established reporting procedures
- It is the responsibility of all staff health and safety arrangements, emergency procedures, and safeguarding practices are consistently applied to create a safe, well-maintained environment that supports pupils' welfare
- deliberate practice of evacuation, invacuation and lock down procedures to minimise risk in the event of an emergency

## 8.0 Sharing safeguarding information

- All staff understand that the welfare of the child is paramount, and this takes priority over considerations of confidentiality.
- Information about children will be handled sensitively and shared on a need-to-know basis only; however, staff must never promise to keep secrets where a child is at risk of harm.
- Concerns will be recorded accurately and shared promptly with the DSL, who will decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, and when, including with external agencies where appropriate.

- The school ensures that records are stored securely and in line with data protection requirements, while recognising that data protection legislation does not prevent, but rather supports, the sharing of information to safeguard children in a timely and proportionate manner.
- All safeguarding records are stored securely, with access restricted to authorised personnel, ensuring both confidentiality and compliance with statutory requirements while enabling effective multi-agency working.
- All staff are trained to understand their responsibilities in maintaining confidentiality while ensuring that children receive the protection and support they need.
- If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Data Protection Lead.

## 9.0 Storing information

- Sensitive information, including safeguarding concerns and records, is kept confidential and stored in a secure electronic MIS system, with access restricted to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and authorised safeguarding staff only.
- Records are clear, accurate, and stored separately from the main pupil file to ensure confidentiality.
- The school follows data protection legislation, including the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, but recognises that these do not prevent the sharing of information where it is necessary to safeguard children.
- In line with our records management and retention procedure, safeguarding records are retained and transferred securely when a pupil moves school, ensuring continuity of support.
- Regular audits are conducted to ensure that data storage practices remain compliant, effective, and aligned with KCSIE guidance, maintaining a balance between protecting sensitive information and ensuring that it is accessible to those who need it to safeguard children effectively.
- Our trust references the ICO guidance 'For Organisations' which includes information about our obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.
- This section should be read in conjunction with the trust's data protection policy.

## 10.0 Partnership with families

The trust uses the term 'family help' in line with working together and local authority arrangements. References to early help should be interpreted accordingly. Successful outcomes for children depend on strong partnership working between families and the staff working with them. Staff should take a child-centred approach to meeting the needs of the whole family. In the context of a child-centred approach, families need to understand what is happening, what they can expect from the help and support provided, what is expected of them and be supported to say what they think. This is particularly important when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, whether the harm is from inside or outside the home including online. Working collaboratively will mean families have the best chance of making changes, and staff can make fair and accurate decisions about how to support children and keep them safe. While collaborative relationships between staff and families are important, the wishes and feelings of the child and what is in their best interest remain central to decision-making.

Children are clear about what they want from an effective safeguarding system: vigilance, understanding and action, stability, respect, information and engagement, explanation, support, advocacy and protection. (WTTSC p13).

The four principles below should be read by staff in conjunction with the family engagement section of the One Trust Contract to underpin work with families:

**10.1 Staff should build strong, positive, trusting, and co-operative relationships.**

For example: approaching families and their wider family networks and communities with empathy, respect and compassion avoiding reinforcing family shame, suffering, and blaming, using strength-based approaches, working with families to identify what is working well and how their strengths could support them to effect positive change.

**10.2 Verbal and non-verbal communication should be respectful, non-blaming, clear, inclusive, and adapted to a family's needs**

For example, staff should ensure that all materials provided to children, parents, carers, and families are jargon free, developmentally appropriate and in a format that is easily understood. Where appropriate, material provided to children and families should be made accessible and translated into their first language if necessary.

**10.3 Staff should empower families to participate in decision-making to help, support and protect children**

For example: creating a culture of “no surprises”, such as, making families aware of who will attend meetings and discussions, if the child will be invited to participate and the format of the meeting giving families adequate preparation at every stage, relevant information, a safe and appropriate environment for participation and suitable access arrangements signposting families to sources of help and support available locally or through the local authority.

**10.4 Staff should involve families (or in some instances local communities) in designing processes that affect them, including those focused on safeguarding children.**

For example: value family contributions, expertise and knowledge reflecting them in service design and continuously seek feedback from parents, carers, family networks, children, and local communities to inform service improvements. Staff use feedback from families to reflect on their own practice.

**10.5 The trust has a graduated approach to family engagement.**

- **The trust partnership plan** should be used in conjunction with triggers on behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding and attendance protocols as well as in alignment with the school SEND intent documents to identify when early intervention with families prior to any external agency involvement would be beneficial.
- **Regular ‘team around the child’ (TAC) meetings** in school support non-siloed working and a collaborative working together approach to early intervention, where required.
- **Appropriate staff will receive training** on how to write and evaluate partnership plans, as part of the cycle of assess, plan, do, review.

## **11.0 Partnership with external partners**

Strong multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working is vital to identifying and responding to the needs of children and families. The following expectations (Working Together) have been developed to underpin this multi-agency working. They apply to all agencies and practitioners involved in safeguarding and protecting children. Specifically, these include police, local

authorities, health services, probation services, youth offending services, education providers and childcare settings, and voluntary and third sector organisations. The term practitioners used here refers to all those working in these services and settings. Multi-agency expectations for direct practice are as follows:

- **collaborate:** practitioners working with the same child and family share information to get a complete picture of what life is like for the child. Collectively, they ensure the child's voice is at the centre, and the right support is provided
- **learn:** practitioners learn together by drawing on the best available evidence from their individual fields and sharing their diverse perspectives during regular shared reflection on a child's development, experiences, and outcomes
- **resource:** practitioners build strong relationships across agencies and disciplines to ensure they support and protect the children with whom they work
- **include:** practitioners recognise the differences between, and are confident to respond to, circumstances where children experience adversity due to economic and social circumstances and acute family stress, and situations where children face harm due to parental abuse and neglect
- **mutual challenge:** practitioners challenge themselves and each other, question each other's assumptions, and seek to resolve differences of opinion in a restorative and respectful way

We will ensure that any organisation or individual working with our pupils shares our commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

- Appropriate due diligence will be undertaken prior to engagement, including clarification of safeguarding responsibilities, safer recruitment checks where applicable, and confirmation that partner organisations have robust safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place.
- Where services are commissioned or delivered on behalf of the school, there will be clear written agreements setting out expectations for safeguarding, information sharing, supervision, and reporting concerns.
- staff will remain vigilant when pupils are working with external partners (on site or off site) and will ensure that any safeguarding concerns are promptly recorded and passed to the DSL.

## 12.0 Attendance and safeguarding

We recognise that good attendance is integral to safeguarding and promotes pupils' safety, wellbeing and achievement. In line with KCSIE and *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, leaders maintain a culture of high expectations and take a whole school approach to attendance, ensuring it is rigorously monitored, analysed and acted upon.

- **Absence**—particularly persistent, severe or unexplained absence is treated as a potential safeguarding concern, and staff are expected to demonstrate professional curiosity, responding promptly to patterns or changes.
- **Clear systems** are in place for recording, reporting and escalating concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.
- School work proactively and in **partnership** with parents/carers, the local authority and external agencies, following a staged approach of support, early help and statutory intervention where required.
- Particular attention is given to **vulnerable pupils** and those at risk of being children missing education (CME), ensuring timely, coordinated and decisive action. This reflects a strong

safeguarding culture where attendance is everyone's responsibility and where barriers to attendance are identified and addressed swiftly to ensure that pupils are safe and able to learn.

The DSL will be alerted to any attendance concerns, particularly where there are known safeguarding risks. Non-attendance or sudden withdrawal from school can be indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other risks such as female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, or trafficking. Our trust schools will always consider the context of a child's absence and will work with external agencies, including the education welfare service and social care, as necessary.

### **12.1 Children severely absent from or frequently missing education**

We recognise that children absent from education are at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) and poor educational outcomes.

Schools will:

- monitor attendance rigorously, including home visits, to maintain a culture of vigilance
- identify persistent absence, severe absence and patterns of concern
- investigate unexplained absences promptly
- escalate concerns to the DSL without delay
- work collaboratively with families, the local authority and other agencies
- comply with statutory requirements regarding children missing education and removal from roll

Attendance concerns will always be considered within a safeguarding context and not solely as an attendance matter. Attendance intervention will always focus on identifying and addressing underlying barriers before enforcement measures are considered.

More information about how attendance and concerns relating to safeguarding are managed can be found in our trust policies on attendance, medical needs, allergy and anaphylaxis, anti-bullying, behaviour, and other related school protocols.

### **12.2 Children missing education (CME)**

We recognise that all children are entitled to an education and that a child being absent from education can be both a symptom and cause of safeguarding concerns. Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of under-achievement, exploitation, abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), radicalisation, involvement in serious violence and poor mental health outcomes.

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, can be a warning sign of:

- neglect or abuse
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- child criminal exploitation (CCE), including county lines
- serious youth violence
- radicalisation
- forced marriage

- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- mental health concerns
- trafficking and modern slavery
- family breakdown or homelessness

Schools will maintain a culture of vigilance and professional curiosity where pupils who are absent from education, frequently absent, or whose whereabouts are unknown are viewed through a safeguarding lens. Schools will:

- monitor attendance and absence patterns rigorously
- identify children who are persistently absent, severely absent, or at risk of becoming missing from education
- undertake reasonable enquiries where a child fails to attend school and their whereabouts are unknown
- escalate concerns promptly to the DSL
- work closely with parents/carers, local authorities and partner agencies to establish the whereabouts and welfare of children
- make referrals to children's social care where safeguarding concerns are identified.
- notify the local authority when removing a child from roll in accordance with statutory requirements
- ensure safeguarding records are transferred promptly and securely when a child moves to another school
- maintain accurate admission and attendance registers

The DSL will ensure that children who are missing education, or at risk of becoming missing education, receive appropriate safeguarding support and that all actions are clearly recorded and reviewed.

Schools will always consider attendance concerns within the context of a child's lived experience and wider safeguarding vulnerabilities. Schools must notify the local authority when:

- a pupil is deleted from roll
- a pupil fails to attend as expected following admission
- a pupil's whereabouts is unknown in accordance with the education (pupil registration) regulations

### **12.3 Elective home education (EHE)**

We would expect the family's decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

Schools must follow the trust's EHE process and inform the local authority of all deletions from the admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a family has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, schools must work together with the local authority and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with families where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the families have considered what is in the best interests of each child. 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. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan, we will support the local authority who will need to review the plan, working closely with families.

### 13.0 Staff induction and training

We recognise that effective safeguarding is underpinned by high-quality, regular training for all staff. In line with KCSIE, all staff, including temporary staff, volunteers, trustees and local school committee members, receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which is updated at least annually, alongside regular briefings to ensure knowledge remains current, relevant and responsive to local and national priorities.

Training enables staff to recognise signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and emerging risks, to understand their responsibilities, and to know how to respond appropriately to concerns. Staff are also trained in the school's safeguarding systems, including the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), reporting procedures, early help processes, and expectations around professional curiosity and information sharing.

Leaders ensure that training is comprehensive, effective and promotes a strong safeguarding culture where all staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The DSL and deputies receive enhanced training, including inter-agency working, and provide ongoing support, updates and challenge to staff to ensure safeguarding practice remains vigilant, proportionate and child-centred.

#### **Staff safeguarding training includes, but is not limited to:**

- child protection and safeguarding procedures (including recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation)
- the staff code of conduct and safer working practices
- the role of the DSL and how to report concerns, including low-level concerns
- Early help and multiagency working
- online safety, including filtering, monitoring and risks such as grooming, exploitation and exposure to harmful content
- child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment
- serious violence, criminal exploitation and county lines
- PREVENT duty and recognising radicalisation and extremism
- attendance as a safeguarding issue, including children missing education (CME)
- safeguarding risks for vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, looked after children and young carers
- mental health awareness and indicators of possible safeguarding concerns
- domestic abuse, honour-based abuse, forced marriage and FGM (as appropriate to role)
- Whistleblowing procedures and maintaining a safeguarding culture
- information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality
- local safeguarding partnership procedures and contextual safeguarding risks within the community

Staff caring for 0–5-year-olds receive safeguarding training appropriate to the age of the children being cared for. The early years leads and practitioners are trained in line with the criteria set out in Annex C of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework. This training will be renewed every two years.

New staff and volunteers receive a safeguarding briefing during their induction which covers this child protection and safeguarding policy, our code of conduct for employees, how to report and record concerns, emergency evacuation procedures, health and safety issues, and information about the DSL and deputy DSLs. A record of training and reading receipts of key policies is stored on Every compliance software on individual staff records. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher in each school to ensure all statutory documentation is read and understood.

We recognise that trainee teachers, student teachers and those undertaking initial teacher training (ITT) have a safeguarding responsibility and must be appropriately inducted, trained and supported. All trainee teachers will:

- receive safeguarding and child protection induction.
- be informed of the identity and role of the DSL and Deputy DSLs.
- receive access to relevant safeguarding policies and procedures.
- understand how to report and record safeguarding concerns.
- be familiar with professional boundaries and safer working practices.
- understand whistleblowing procedures and the reporting of low-level concerns.

Where trainee teachers are employed through another provider, our trust will obtain appropriate assurances regarding safeguarding checks and suitability to work with children.

All trainee teachers must follow the procedures outlined in this policy and report safeguarding concerns without delay.

Our trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction and regular updates sufficient to enable them to fulfil their strategic safeguarding responsibilities. This equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges and assure themselves that there is an effective whole-trust approach to safeguarding. Our safeguarding trustee receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the Safeguarding Leads and contribute to the delivery of high-quality safeguarding across the trust.

Individual schools are expected to hold a record of all staff training, audits and retraining. Training content is informed by Part One, Part Two and the relevant annexes of KCSIE, ensuring that staff have a secure understanding of both statutory responsibilities and the additional safeguarding risks outlined in Annex B.

## **14.0 Online safety, filtering, monitoring and acceptable use**

We recognise that the online world presents both opportunities and risks for children and young people. Online harm can take many forms, including cyberbullying, grooming, exposure to inappropriate content, online exploitation, and misinformation. We are committed to educating and protecting our pupils from these risks as part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

Online safety risks can be categorised into four areas of risk.

**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.

**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.

**Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos including those generated using AI e.g. deepfakes, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.

**Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Types of online harm may include cyberbullying, misogyny, trolling, or online harassment, making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, online grooming or radicalisation, access to harmful content, including self-harm or extremist material or exploitation through gaming or social media platforms.

Our trust recognises the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies across education and wider society. While AI offers opportunities to enhance teaching, learning and administration, it also presents emerging safeguarding risks. Our trust is committed to ensuring that:

- the use of AI does not compromise the safety and wellbeing of pupils
- safeguarding principles apply equally to AI-enabled and digital environments
- staff always exercise professional judgement in using AI or encouraging its usage
- staff will remain alert to how students may use AI, especially in ways that could impact online safety, data privacy, or wellbeing. This includes emerging risks such as AI-generated bullying - for example, the creation of fake images (deepfakes), harmful content using chatbots, or AI-edited videos designed to harass, humiliate, or target individuals

In line with KCSIE, online safety is a whole school responsibility embedded within safeguarding culture, leadership oversight and the curriculum. Our trust is committed to ensuring that all children are protected from harmful online content, contact, conduct and commerce while being equipped with the knowledge and skills to use technology safely and responsibly.

Our trust ensures that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place which are effective, proportionate and regularly reviewed. Our trust will undertake and document a formal annual review of filtering and monitoring arrangements, with governance oversight. This forms part of a wider safeguarding approach and do not replace staff vigilance or professional curiosity. Leaders and trustees maintain strategic oversight of online safety, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance, and that arrangements are responsive to emerging risks.

KCSIE and filtering and monitoring standards place specific governance expectations on boards. trustees will:

- review filtering and monitoring effectiveness
- receive assurance reports
- understand risks
- ensure appropriate resourcing

Each school promotes a culture of safe and responsible technology use through clear acceptable use expectations for staff, pupils and visitors. Online safety is reinforced through education, partnership with parents/carers and continuous review of practice, reflecting a strong safeguarding culture in which risks are proactively managed.

Each school will consider and closely monitor online safeguarding arrangements for children accessing education remotely or through alternative provision.

## **14.6 Procedures (implementation and practice)**

### **Filtering and monitoring systems**

- Our trust ensures that all schools have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. In line with DfE IT standards, Beckfoot Trust has keystroke monitoring in place through Smoothwall.
- Filtering systems are configured to block access to harmful and inappropriate content while allowing legitimate educational use.
- Monitoring systems actively identify and flag safeguarding concerns, enabling timely response.
- Systems are reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness and appropriateness to risk, age and context.
- Named staff are responsible for day-to-day management, with leadership oversight.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- Central leaders and senior leaders provide strategic oversight of online safety.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) receives and responds to online safety concerns.
- Staff understand their responsibility to remain vigilant, and report concerns promptly.

### **Staff training**

- All staff receive regular online safety training as part of safeguarding training.
- Training includes recognising risks such as grooming, exploitation, cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content and radicalisation.
- Staff understand how to report concerns and escalate issues without delay.

### **Reporting and responding to concerns**

- Any online safety concern is treated as a safeguarding concern and reported in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Concerns identified via monitoring systems are reviewed promptly and escalated to the DSL.
- Appropriate action is taken, including referral to external agencies where required.

### **Curriculum and pupil education**

- Online safety is taught through a broad and balanced curriculum, including RSHE.
- Pupils are taught how to:
  - stay safe online
  - manage risk and recognise harm
  - protect personal information
  - seek help and report concerns

### **Acceptable use**

- Clear acceptable use agreements are in place for pupils, staff and visitors.
- Expectations are regularly communicated and reinforced.
- Breaches are addressed in line with behaviour and safeguarding policies and may trigger safeguarding action.

### **Partnership with parents and external agencies**

- Schools work with parents/carers to promote safe use of technology beyond school.
- The school engages with external agencies where online risks present safeguarding concerns.

### **Review and quality assurance**

- Online safety arrangements, including filtering and monitoring, are regularly reviewed through audit and risk assessment.
- Leaders ensure continuous improvement in response to technological developments and emerging safeguarding risks.

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with our trust online safety and IT use policy, where specific roles and responsibilities are detailed in accordance with KCSIE and DfE guidance.

## **15.0 Cyber security and safeguarding**

We recognise that cyber security is a critical component of safeguarding and child protection. In line with KCSIE, we acknowledge that evolving technological risks, including misuse of digital platforms, cyber-attacks, and AI-generated content such as deepfakes can present significant harm to children and young people.

We are committed to implementing appropriate technical controls, including effective filtering and monitoring systems, secure data management, and robust user access protocols, alongside educating pupils and staff on safe online behaviours.

All staff are expected to understand the safeguarding implications of cyber incidents, including risks of exposure to harmful content, data breaches, and online exploitation, and to report concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Users are expected to:

- review the privacy settings for your social media, professional networking sites and app accounts
- know who to report any unusual activity to. If you're not sure, ask your line manager or IT team
- check your device is set to receive updates automatically
- set a strong password and switch on two-factor authentication, if available
- check that the password for your work account is unique
- report to the IT team if it's not possible to follow security advice, process or policy

Leadership will ensure ongoing review of cyber security measures to maintain resilience and compliance with department for education standards, recognising that safeguarding extends to both physical and digital environments.

## **16.0 Mobile phones, smart devices and safeguarding**

We recognise that mobile phones, smart devices and wearable technology present both opportunities and safeguarding risks. Potential safeguarding risks may include:

- cyberbullying and online harassment
- grooming and exploitation

- exposure to harmful, illegal or inappropriate content
- sharing of self-generated intimate images
- deepfake and AI-generated content
- unauthorised filming, photography or recording
- online fraud, scams and financial exploitation

Schools maintain clear expectations in accordance with the requirement of all schools to be smartphone-free environments by default. School behaviour protocols detail acceptable use agreements and local protocols within each trust school.

Any safeguarding concern involving a personal device will be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures and relevant legislation.

## **17.0 Toilets, changing facilities and safeguarding**

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils have access to safe, dignified and appropriate toilet and changing facilities. Schools will:

- maintain appropriate supervision arrangements
- protect the privacy, dignity and welfare of all pupils
- respond promptly to any safeguarding concerns arising within toilet or changing areas
- treat incidents involving harassment, bullying, child-on-child abuse, voyeurism or inappropriate behaviour as safeguarding concerns
- undertake risk assessments where appropriate
- consider the needs of pupils with SEND, medical needs or individual safeguarding plans

Any concerns relating to unsafe behaviour, privacy or dignity should be reported immediately in line with safeguarding procedures.

## **18.0 Safeguarding in sport, physical education and enrichment activities**

We recognise that sport, physical education and enrichment activities provide valuable opportunities for pupils whilst also requiring robust safeguarding arrangements. Schools will ensure:

- appropriate supervision ratios
- effective risk assessments
- safer recruitment and vetting requirements for adults working with pupils
- safe use of changing facilities
- clear reporting procedures for concerns or disclosures
- appropriate professional boundaries and conduct by adults

Safeguarding responsibilities apply equally to curriculum activities, extra-curricular provision, educational visits, residential activities, competitions and activities delivered by external providers.

KCSIE confirms schools can lawfully group pupils by biological sex for sport where physical differences would create a safety or fairness issue, and that for some sports this must always apply (no exceptions).

Where sport requires single-sex grouping for safety, this will always apply. Where a pupil makes a request relating to how they participate in sport in connection with their gender identity, this will be considered in line with our trust's approach to requests for support with social transition.

Any concern arising during sporting or enrichment activities will be managed in line with this policy and local safeguarding procedures. Section 25.4 – children who are questioning their gender identity, details how to handle a pupil's request to participate differently.

## **19.0 Early years foundation stage framework**

We recognise that safeguarding in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) requires particular attention due to the age and vulnerability of the children. We are fully committed to creating a nurturing, safe, and responsive environment that promotes the physical, emotional, and developmental wellbeing of all our youngest pupils. Beckfoot Trust is committed to ensuring that all children in our nursery, reception, and two-year-old provision are safe, healthy, and able to learn and develop in a secure environment. To achieve this, we ensure:

- A safe and secure learning environment where children are visible, supervised, and always listened to.
- A named person responsible for safeguarding in the early years setting.
- At least one member of staff with a current paediatric first aid certificate is always present on site.
- A qualified first aider accompanies children on all off-site visits.
- Each child has a designated key worker to provide consistent care and maintain effective communication with parents and carers.
- Routine monitoring of health and safety practices to promote the ongoing safety and welfare of all children.
- Staffing ratios and staff qualifications and training comply with statutory requirements and are sufficient to meet the individual needs of each child.
- Staff will be aware of the intimate care policy and leaders will ensure that this can be followed.

The setting will ensure that all staff, volunteers and students receive appropriate training and guidance on safer sleep practices, allegations management and intimate care as part of their induction and ongoing safeguarding training. Training will be proportionate to staff roles and responsibilities and will be refreshed regularly to ensure knowledge remains current and aligned with EYFS requirements and local safeguarding procedures.

Staff will receive training on safer sleep procedures, where applicable, including the importance of placing babies on their backs to sleep, providing a firm and flat sleep surface, maintaining safe sleeping environments, appropriate room temperatures, avoiding hazards such as loose bedding and pillows, and undertaking regular checks of sleeping children. Staff must be able to demonstrate safe sleep practices and follow the setting's procedures at all times.

All staff will receive training on the management of allegations against adults working with children, including recognising concerns, understanding their duty to report allegations promptly, following the setting's reporting procedures, maintaining confidentiality, and understanding the role of the local authority designated officer (LADO). Staff will also be made aware of the setting's whistleblowing procedures and their responsibility to act where concerns arise.

Training on intimate care will ensure that staff understand how to provide care in a manner that safeguards children's dignity, privacy and wellbeing. This will include guidance on consent, appropriate professional boundaries, record keeping, risk assessment, and recognising and reporting any safeguarding concerns that arise during the provision of intimate care.

The designated safeguarding lead and school leaders will monitor staff understanding and implementation of these procedures through supervision, observations, safeguarding discussions, audits and refresher training. Any identified gaps in knowledge or practice will be addressed promptly through additional support and training.

More specific detail about EYFS arrangements is included in local safeguarding protocols for schools across our trust with EYFS provision.

## **20.0 Post-16 settings**

We acknowledge that in our schools with post-sixteen provision there will be occasions where students will turn eighteen and therefore legally become adults. We recognise that although 18-year-olds are legally adults, they may still be vulnerable and require safeguarding support, particularly within an educational setting. We maintain our duty of care and apply the same robust safeguarding principles to all students, regardless of age.

Any concerns about the welfare of an 18-year-old will be addressed with the same level of seriousness and in line with our safeguarding procedures, with additional consideration given to their legal rights as adults. Schools will also ensure they are aware of and use local adult safeguarding arrangements where necessary.

## **21.0 Children educated in alternative provision**

We recognise that pupils placed in alternative provision (AP) may be at increased vulnerability to harm and therefore require enhanced safeguarding oversight. Schools retain full responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils, even when they are educated off-site. School leaders will reference the new national standards for non-school alternative provision. The school will ensure that all AP providers have robust safeguarding arrangements in place, including safer recruitment procedures, a designated safeguarding lead, appropriate staff training, and effective child protection and online safety policies.

Prior to any placement, the school will carry out due diligence checks and obtain written assurance that safeguarding requirements are met. This includes confirmation of staff vetting, safeguarding policies, health and safety standards, and arrangements for managing child-on-child abuse, including emerging risks such as those linked to technology and online harm.

School leaders will maintain regular oversight of each placement through ongoing communication, review meetings, and monitoring of attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, and progress. In accordance with KCSIE expectations, safeguarding information will be shared appropriately between settings to ensure a coordinated approach, and the school's DSL will remain responsible for managing concerns, making referrals, and ensuring timely intervention. Children's individual risks will be assessed prior to placement and reviewed regularly, recognising that those in alternative provision may face

additional safeguarding risks, including exploitation, peer-on-peer abuse, and disengagement from education.

Trust and school leaders will also ensure that leadership and governors maintain strategic oversight of AP arrangements, including regular review of safeguarding standards and immediate action where concerns arise. Placements will be reviewed at agreed intervals to ensure they continue to meet the pupil's needs and that safeguarding arrangements remain effective. This reflects the strengthened focus within KCSIE on accountability, multi-agency working, and safeguarding in non-traditional and off-site educational settings

Our trust has processes and procedures in place to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded. School leaders should make the appropriate checks on the registration status of the alternative provider which include:

- obtaining written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff and that the provider have declared that they have safer recruitment practices in place
- regular communication with the provider to ensure awareness of any staff changes or risks
- undertaking quality assurance of provision and curriculum of the provider, including accurate records of all sites attended by the child
- receiving daily attendance reporting from the provider and assurance that any unauthorised or unexplained absences are investigated and minimised
- reviewing placements at least every half term to ensure safety and suitability immediately terminating placements where safeguarding concerns arise

At Beckfoot Trust, all placements are approved by the CEO prior to commencement to ensure alternative provision beyond the trust is the most appropriate provision in the short-term.

School leaders should reference our trust 'How to ... Alternative Provision' to ensure appropriate protocol is followed.

## **22.0 Work experience**

Work experience placements are an extension of the school environment and that safeguarding responsibilities always remain in place. The school retains responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils during off-site placements and will ensure that appropriate checks and risk assessments are completed prior to any placement.

Before a placement is agreed, the school will undertake robust checks to ensure that the employer provides a safe and suitable environment. This includes consideration of health and safety arrangements, supervision, safeguarding awareness, and the nature of the work being undertaken. Where pupils may be in environments that present higher levels of risk (including lone working, contact with adults in unsupervised contexts, or access to online systems), a specific safeguarding risk assessment will be completed.

The school will ensure that employers are provided with clear information regarding safeguarding expectations, including appropriate conduct with young people and procedures for reporting concerns. Pupils will be prepared for placements through guidance on personal safety, professional

boundaries, and how to raise concerns. Particular attention will be given to online and cyber risks, in recognition of the increasing role of technology and the evolving risks highlighted within KCSIE, including exposure to harmful content or misuse of digital systems.

The designated safeguarding lead retains oversight of all work experience placements and will ensure that any safeguarding concerns arising during placements are reported, recorded, and acted upon in accordance with school procedures. Information will be shared appropriately with placement providers where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. The school will maintain contact with pupils and providers during the placement and will review the placement if any concerns arise.

The school recognises that pupils undertaking work experience may be more vulnerable due to new environments and relationships. Therefore, safeguarding arrangements will be regularly reviewed, and immediate action will be taken if any risks are identified. This approach reflects the strengthened emphasis within KCSIE on safeguarding in off-site provision, risk assessment, and multi-agency responsibility for protecting children

The school will not proceed with, or will immediately cease, any work experience placement where safeguarding standards are deemed insufficient or where risks to the pupil cannot be effectively controlled.

## **23.0 Lettings and use of trust premises for non-school activities**

Our trust recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend to any use of the premises by external organisations or individuals. In line with KCSIE, which strengthens expectations around the use of school or college premises for non-school activities, schools will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for all lettings.

Where activities are not directly supervised or managed by the school, the school will seek assurance that the provider has suitable safeguarding and child protection policies, safer recruitment practices, and appropriately trained staff, including a designated safeguarding lead where required. The school will also ensure that clear agreements are in place outlining safeguarding expectations, including appropriate conduct, supervision arrangements, and procedures for reporting concerns.

The school retains responsibility for responding to safeguarding concerns that occur on its premises. Any allegations or incidents involving children during lettings will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate. External providers will be required to report any safeguarding concerns to the school promptly, and information will be shared to support a coordinated response.

The school will undertake proportionate risk assessments for lettings, considering the nature of the activity, the age of participants, and any potential vulnerabilities. Leadership and governors will maintain oversight of lettings arrangements to ensure that safeguarding standards are consistently applied and reviewed. This reflects the strengthened emphasis within KCSIE on safeguarding accountability, information sharing, and risk management in all contexts where children may be present.

Our trust reserves the right to refuse or terminate any lettings agreement where safeguarding requirements are not met or where risks to children cannot be effectively mitigated.

## 24.0 Roles and responsibilities

| Contact Name                                                   | Email                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Yvonne Sinclair, the safeguarding trustee (c/o Jo Whittleston) | jwhittleston01@beckfoottrust.org |
| Claire Robbins, the executive member for safeguarding          | crobbsins01@beckfoottrust.org    |
| Tonia Pugh, Trust Lead Safeguarding Practitioner               | tpugh01@beckfoottrust.org        |
| Chris Burland, Head of environment, Estates and Facilities     | cburland01@beckfoottrust.org     |

This policy is accompanied by a local school protocol that outlines the leadership of safeguarding in the school, including the designated safeguarding lead, deputy designated safeguarding leads and headteacher.

### 24.1 Role of the headteacher in safeguarding

The headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are effective within the school. While the designated safeguarding lead leads day-to-day safeguarding practice, the headteacher is responsible for creating a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and ensuring statutory requirements are met.

#### Key responsibilities of the headteacher

- **Promote a strong safeguarding culture**
  - Ensure that safeguarding is at the heart of school life.
  - Foster an environment where children feel safe, listened to and supported.
- **Ensure effective safeguarding arrangements**
  - Implement safeguarding and child protection policies.
  - Make sure procedures are understood and followed by all staff.
- **Support and empower the DSL**
  - Ensure the DSL has sufficient time, funding, training, resources and authority to carry out their duties effectively.
  - Appoint appropriately trained deputy DSLs.
- **Ensure safer recruitment practices**
  - Oversee recruitment processes that help prevent unsuitable adults from working with children.
  - Ensure appropriate vetting and pre-employment checks are completed.
- **Provide staff training**
  - Ensure all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training and regular updates.
  - Maintain staff awareness of safeguarding risks and reporting procedures.

- **Work with governors and safeguarding partners**
  - Report safeguarding issues to governors and support governance oversight.
  - Ensure effective partnership working with children's social care, health services, police and other agencies.
- **Manage allegations against staff**
  - Act as the case manager for allegations against staff, unless the allegation concerns the headteacher themselves.
  - Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and other agencies where required.

## 24.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

KCSIE Annex B sets out the specific responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and should be read alongside Part 2 of the statutory guidance. The DSL is the senior member of staff who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). Trust schools with EYFS settings must have specific training as set out in EYFS framework, Annex C. and a named early years DSL.

### Key aspects of the DSL role

- **Managing referrals**
  - Refer cases of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation to children's social care.
  - Support referrals to the police where appropriate.
- **Working with other agencies**
  - Act as the school's key safeguarding link with children's social care, health services, police and other safeguarding partners.
  - Participate in multi-agency meetings and support plans for vulnerable children.
- **Information sharing and child protection records**
  - Ensure child protection files are accurate, secure, up to date and transferred promptly when a child moves school.
  - Share information appropriately, lawfully and in the child's best interests.
- **Raising safeguarding awareness**
  - Ensure staff know safeguarding procedures, reporting routes and the school's child protection policy.
  - Promote a strong safeguarding culture across the setting.
- **Training, knowledge and skills**
  - Undertake regular safeguarding training and keep knowledge current.
  - Maintain an up to date understanding of local procedures, emerging risks, online safety, and safeguarding legislation.
  - Ensure safeguarding training is available and effective for staff.
  - Work with the central team to ensure that the trust's child protection policies, protocols and safeguarding essentials (ratified by the trust board) are reviewed annually and that the procedures are implemented
- **Supporting staff**
  - Provide advice and guidance to colleagues about safeguarding concerns.
  - Help staff understand thresholds for referral and appropriate action.

- Ensure appropriate supervision for DDSs.
- **Understanding the views of children**
  - Ensure that children's wishes, feelings and lived experiences are considered when decisions are made about their safety and welfare.
- **Holding and sharing information**
  - Maintain oversight of safeguarding records and ensure information is shared on a need-to-know basis to protect children effectively.

It is the responsibility of the headteacher within each school to ensure both the DSL and deputy DSLs are appropriately trained and that there must always be suitable safeguarding leadership available during school or college hours, with arrangements in place for out-of-hours activities where necessary. To ensure there is a robust system in place, and mitigate against a single point of failure, all trust schools have a safeguarding mailbox that is confidentially accessed all members of the safeguarding team and during holiday periods by select senior leaders of staff in school, including the headteacher of respective schools. School protocols detail further information.

### 24.3 The deputy designated safeguarding lead(s)

Our deputy DSL(s) is/are trained to the same level as the DSL and support(s) the DSL with safeguarding matters on a day-to-day basis. The ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL.

### 24.4 The safeguarding trustee

The safeguarding trustee provides strategic oversight and assurance that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place across our trust. They do not manage individual safeguarding cases but hold leaders to account for safeguarding practice and compliance with statutory guidance such as KCSIE.

Key responsibilities

- **Provide strategic oversight**
  - Ensure safeguarding is a priority at board level.
  - Monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across all schools within the trust.
- **Challenge and support leaders**
  - Hold the CEO, executive leaders and headteachers accountable for safeguarding performance.
  - Seek assurance that statutory duties are being met and acted upon.
- **Monitor compliance**
  - Ensure trust policies align with KCSIE and other safeguarding legislation.
  - Review safeguarding audits, reports, training compliance and risk management processes.
- **Seek assurance on safeguarding culture**
  - Ensure there is a culture where children are safe, listened to and supported.
  - Monitor how concerns, allegations and safeguarding incidents are managed.
- **Oversee safeguarding training**
  - Ensure trustees themselves receive appropriate safeguarding training.

- Gain assurance that staff, governors and safeguarding leads receive required training and updates.
- **Monitor safer recruitment**
  - Receive assurance that robust recruitment and vetting procedures are operating across the trust.
  - Ensure systems are in place to prevent unsuitable adults working with children.
- **Report to the trust board**
  - Act as the safeguarding link trustee and provide updates to the board.
  - Escalate concerns where safeguarding arrangements may be ineffective or non-compliant.

In summary, the safeguarding trustee's role is to provide independent strategic challenge, oversight and assurance that safeguarding arrangements are effective across the trust, while operational safeguarding responsibilities remain with headteachers, DSLs and executive leaders

## **24.5 The designated teacher LAC/PLAC**

The designated teacher will undertake responsibilities required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked After children guidance. Key responsibilities should include:

- PEP oversight
- liaison with virtual school
- promotion of educational achievement
- staff awareness

A more detailed description can be seen in Appendix 4.

## Section B: Vulnerable groups, safeguarding risks and key indicators

### 25.0 Children potentially at greater risk of harm

We recognise that some children have an increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and poor outcomes due to their individual circumstances or experiences. Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help and safeguarding support for children who may be vulnerable and should consider how best to identify, assess and respond to their needs. All concerns will be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures, taking account of the child's views, wishes and feelings.

All children are at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation. 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. However, some children may be more vulnerable to harm (both online and offline) due to a range of factors, including discrimination, isolation, or barriers to communication. To ensure all pupils receive appropriate protection, additional safeguarding support may be necessary for children:

- with SEND
- who are looked after children (LAC/CIC) / previously looked after children (PLAC)
- with a social worker
- Who are young carers
- who are persistently absent or missing from education
- who are privately fostered
- who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender identity
- experiencing mental health difficulties
- at risk of exploitation (criminal or sexual)
- who are victims of domestic abuse
- with family members in custody
- who misuse drugs or alcohol
- at risk of radicalisation
- who are parents
- who are pregnant
- who are homeless
- who have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- who been repeatedly removed from the classroom or experienced multiple suspensions.
- on a part-time timetable.
- at risk of being permanently excluded
- placed in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as female genital mutilation or forced marriage

These factors can overlap and increase a child's vulnerability. Staff should be aware that additional barriers may exist and recognise that such children may require early help, enhanced support, or safeguarding intervention.

## **25.1 SEND**

Children with SEND may be more vulnerable to safeguarding risks and may find it harder to recognise, communicate, or report abuse. Staff must be vigilant, listen carefully, and ensure safeguarding education and support are adapted to each child's individual needs.

- Children with SEND are recognised as being at greater risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation and may face additional barriers when reporting concerns.
- Schools must ensure safeguarding arrangements are tailored to individual needs and vulnerabilities, rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Safeguarding education should be age and stage of development appropriate, fully inclusive, and accessible for children with SEND.
- Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to a child's disability or additional needs can sometimes mask signs of abuse, harm, or exploitation, so concerns should be explored carefully.
- Schools should have clear procedures and support pathways for disabled children and those with SEND, ensuring their voices are heard and understood.
- Effective communication methods should be used so that children with SEND can report worries and participate in safeguarding processes.

Individual safeguarding protocols detail specific arrangements within our schools, where appropriate, to ensure the voice of the SEND child is at the centre of all safeguarding practice.

## **25.2 Looked after children (LAC/CIC), previously looked after children (PLAC) and children with a social worker**

We recognise that looked after children, previously looked after children and children with a social worker may be particularly vulnerable to poor outcomes and safeguarding risks. Staff should be aware that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect.

The designated safeguarding lead and designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children will work closely with carers, social workers, virtual school heads and other relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children. Staff will take account of known vulnerabilities, experiences and support needs when making decisions about safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing.

Children with a social worker may have increased vulnerability and require additional educational support due to safeguarding/ welfare needs, family circumstances or adverse experiences. The DSL will hold relevant information and use this to inform decisions relating to safeguarding and the promotion of the child's welfare.

## **25.3 Private fostering**

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative for 28 days or more. Staff should inform the DSL if they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. The school has a duty to notify the local

authority (LA) so that the arrangement can be assessed and monitored appropriately. The DSL will inform the LA of any changes of safeguarding concerns without delay.

## **25.4 Children who are questioning their gender identity**

Schools should take a careful, safeguarding-led approach when supporting children who are questioning their gender. They must not initiate action but respond appropriately where a child or parent requests support. Where a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not request any change to how they are treated, staff should speak to the DSL. There is no reason to break that confidence, or to inform parents, unless a related safeguarding risk arises.

Staff should show professional curiosity and recognise that children questioning their gender may have additional vulnerabilities, including mental health needs or experiences of bullying. Schools should promote a flexible, inclusive environment and take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

Decisions about any social transition must:

- be made case-by-case, with the child's best interests as the primary consideration
- families should ordinarily be involved, and their views should carry great weight and be properly considered, with the DSL taking the lead only in the narrow circumstance where involvement would place the child at greater risk of harm.
- be carefully documented
- consider safeguarding, legal duties, and the impact on all children
- ensure a cautious approach, especially for younger children, recognising that social transition can have significant long-term implications and should not be rushed.

Schools must:

- comply with safeguarding, equality, and human rights law
- maintain accurate records of biological sex
- uphold rules around single-sex spaces and activities

Schools should also:

- provide ongoing review of decisions
- support children who may later change or reverse decisions (detransition)
- work closely with families, DSLs, and relevant professionals to ensure safe and appropriate support

This section reflects current DfE direction but is a fast-moving area, therefore trust schools will follow the most current DfE statutory and non-statutory guidance in force at the time.

## **25.5 Young carers**

A young carer is a child under the age of 18 who provides regular or ongoing care, practical support or emotional support to a family member due to illness, disability, mental ill-health, substance misuse or other additional needs.

Our trust recognises that young carers may experience additional pressures which can affect their wellbeing, attendance, attainment and wider safeguarding needs. Young carers may be vulnerable to anxiety, social isolation, fatigue and barriers to full participation in education. Schools will:

- identify young carers at the earliest opportunity

- consider the impact of caring responsibilities when assessing attendance, behaviour, attainment and wellbeing
- work in partnership with families and relevant agencies to ensure appropriate support is available
- ensure young carers know who they can speak to within school
- provide reasonable adjustments and pastoral support where appropriate
- consider whether caring responsibilities indicate a need for early help, family help or safeguarding intervention

Staff should remain alert to signs that a child may have caring responsibilities and report concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

## **25.6 Children and families in the court system**

We recognise that involvement in family or criminal court proceedings can significantly impact a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, behaviour and educational outcomes. Children may be affected by:

- family court proceedings
- care proceedings
- domestic abuse proceedings
- criminal proceedings involving a parent or close family member
- the imprisonment of a parent or family member

Children involved in, or affected by, court proceedings may experience trauma, loss, uncertainty, anxiety and emotional distress. Schools will:

- maintain a child-centred approach
- work collaboratively with families and partner agencies where appropriate
- consider whether additional wellbeing, pastoral or safeguarding support is required
- share information appropriately and lawfully
- consider whether early help, family help or specialist services may be beneficial.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will oversee safeguarding concerns arising from court-related issues and ensure appropriate support is provided.

## **25.7 Children with a parent or family member in custody**

We recognise that children with a parent or close family member in custody can experience significant emotional, social and practical challenges. These children may experience:

- emotional distress, grief or loss
- stigma or social isolation
- changes in living arrangements
- financial hardship
- increased caring responsibilities
- reduced attendance, engagement or educational attainment

Staff should consider whether such circumstances indicate a need for additional support, early help, family help or safeguarding intervention. The child's wishes, feelings and lived experiences will remain central to all decision-making

## **26.0 Safeguarding risks**

Safeguarding concerns can present in many forms and may be linked to factors both within and outside the home, including peer relationships, online activity, mental health, family circumstances, criminal or sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, and attendance concerns. Staff should be alert to indicators of vulnerability, exercise professional curiosity, and take prompt action where concerns arise. Staff must be committed to identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity, providing appropriate support, and working with children, families and partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils.

## **27.0 Abuse, neglect and exploitation**

All staff must be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and modern slavery, recognising that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the home, within the school or college, and online. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and remain vigilant in order to identify concerns at an early stage, enabling timely support and intervention for children who may be in need of help or protection.

Staff should understand that safeguarding concerns are rarely isolated and that children may experience multiple and overlapping forms of harm.

All staff, and particularly the designated safeguarding lead and deputies, should consider the risk of extra-familial harm, where abuse or exploitation occurs outside of the family environment. This can include, but is not limited to:

- sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation
- domestic abuse within teenage relationships (including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and stalking)
- child criminal and financial exploitation, including county lines
- serious youth violence
- radicalisation

Staff must also recognise the significant role of technology in safeguarding and wellbeing concerns. Abuse can occur both online and offline and often takes place concurrently across both environments. Children may also abuse other children through:

- abusive, harassing, or harmful online communication, including misogynistic or misandrist behaviour
- the non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos, including those created using artificial intelligence (e.g. deepfakes)
- the sharing of unwanted sexual or pornographic content

In all cases, staff must take concerns seriously and act in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

## 27.1 Indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse is any form of harm or maltreatment, including failing to prevent harm. It can occur in families, institutions, communities, or online, and may be carried out by adults or other children. Harm may include non-physical ill treatment, such as the impact of witnessing domestic abuse.

There are four main types of abuse.

- **Physical abuse:** deliberate physical harm, including hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, or deliberately causing or fabricating illness.
- **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional harm affecting a child's development, including verbal abuse, humiliation, silencing, inappropriate expectations, serious bullying (including online), and exposure to abuse.
- **Sexual abuse:** forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, including physical and non-contact abuse, grooming, and exploitation. This can occur online or offline and may be perpetrated by adults or other children.
- **Neglect:** the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or emotional needs, including lack of food, shelter, supervision, medical care, or emotional support, leading to serious harm to health or development.

## 28.0 Child-on-child abuse (including harassment, bullying and violence)

**All concerns should be taken seriously, recorded, and acted upon promptly.** Child-on-child abuse should never be dismissed as banter, friendship issues, or normal childhood behaviour. Immediate and ongoing support for the victim must be treated as if not more importantly than consequences and education for the perpetrator in line with the trust behaviour policy and school protocols.

Child-on-child abuse is a significant safeguarding concern that can occur in school, outside of school, and online. All staff must understand their role in preventing, recognising, and responding to such abuse and must report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that 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.

Staff should not assume that the absence of reports means abuse is not happening and must remain vigilant, particularly during times of increased risk (e.g. transitions and unsupervised periods). It is essential that staff challenge inappropriate behaviours and avoid dismissing them as banter, as this can contribute to a culture that normalises abuse.

Child-on-child abuse should be recognised as a safeguarding issue affecting both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and early intervention is key to preventing escalation.

It can take many forms, including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate relationships between children
- physical abuse and serious violence (including threats with weapons)
- sexual violence and sexual harassment (including online)
- coercion into sexual activity
- sharing of self-generated intimate images, including AI-generated content

- upskirting
- initiation or hazing-type behaviours involving harm or humiliation

We recognise that children who display harmful, abusive or inappropriate behaviours towards others may themselves be vulnerable and in need of safeguarding support. Whilst all incidents of harassment, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, misogyny, bullying, discrimination or abuse will be addressed appropriately, the needs and circumstances of the child displaying the behaviour will also be considered. A balanced safeguarding approach will be taken which supports and protects those who have experienced harm, whilst also assessing any unmet needs, vulnerabilities, trauma, adverse experiences or safeguarding concerns that may be contributing to the behaviour of the child responsible.

## 29.0 Physical violence and abuse

Physical violence and abuse can occur between children, from adults towards children, or within a child's home, community or online environment. The school recognises that any form of physical abuse is a safeguarding concern and will take all allegations, disclosures and concerns seriously. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also arise through child-on-child abuse, including assault, fighting, intimidation, initiation or hazing behaviours, and serious violence. The school will not tolerate violence or abuse in any form and will respond promptly to concerns, ensuring that children are protected, supported and referred to appropriate agencies where necessary. Staff will remain alert to indicators of physical abuse and serious violence and will act in accordance with KCSIE and local safeguarding procedures.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries or injuries with inconsistent explanations
- frequent bruises, burns, fractures or marks
- fear of particular individuals or reluctance to go home
- aggressive behaviour, violence towards others or involvement in serious violence
- possession of weapons or association with violent groups
- changes in behaviour, attendance or emotional wellbeing that may indicate abuse or harm

## 30.0 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex, both inside and outside of school, and online. Such behaviour is never acceptable and will not be tolerated or dismissed as banter, part of growing up, or harmless behaviour. All reports of sexual violence, sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour will be taken seriously and managed in line with statutory guidance, with the wishes of the victim carefully considered. Children who are victims will be supported and protected, whilst appropriate action will be taken to address the behaviour of those alleged to have caused harm. The school recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can have a significant impact on victims' educational attainment, wellbeing and safety, and is committed to maintaining a culture of respect, safeguarding and zero tolerance of abuse. Staff will respond to concerns in accordance with KCSIE and will work with appropriate agencies where necessary to safeguard children.

Examples include:

- sexual comments, taunting or jokes
- sexual harassment, including online harassment
- upskirting
- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos
- sexual assault
- rape and other forms of sexual violence
- harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children towards other children

We understand that children who perpetrate harassment, sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour may themselves have experienced abuse, neglect, trauma, exploitation or other adverse experiences. This does not excuse the behaviour, which will always be challenged and addressed, but it may be an indicator that the child requires additional safeguarding assessment, intervention and support.

### **31.0 Misogyny, violence against women and girls (VAWG)**

Harmful attitudes towards women and girls are recognised as safeguarding concerns that can contribute to a culture in which abuse, harassment, discrimination, and violence are normalised. These attitudes and behaviours may be exhibited by children, young people, or adults and can manifest both online and offline.

We recognise the potential impact of misogynistic language, sexist behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based discrimination on the safety and wellbeing of pupils. All concerns will be taken seriously and responded to in accordance with safeguarding procedures, behaviour policies, and relevant statutory guidance, with a focus on prevention, early intervention, education, and the promotion of respectful and healthy relationships.

Staff will receive safeguarding training and updates that enable them to recognise and respond appropriately to misogyny, violence against women and girls (VAWG), harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, gender-based abuse and harmful attitudes towards women and girls. Training will support staff to identify early warning signs, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, understand the impact of online influences and misogynistic content, and promote respectful relationships and a culture of respect and equality.

Examples of relevant training include:

- whole-school safeguarding/KCSIE updates
- child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)
- sexual harassment and sexual violence
- violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- RSHE and healthy relationships
- online safety, including misogynistic influencers, incel culture, pornography and AI-generated content/deepfakes
- equality, diversity and inclusion, including gender-based discrimination
- behaviour and culture training focused on challenging sexist and misogynistic attitudes early

## 32.0 Bullying and child-on-child abuse

We recognise that bullying, including cyberbullying, may be an indicator of child-on-child abuse and can cause significant harm to a child's physical and emotional wellbeing. Bullying may be motivated by prejudice, involve intimidation, coercion, humiliation, physical aggression, or online abuse, and may form part of a wider pattern of harmful behaviour between children. All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously, investigated promptly and addressed in accordance with the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures. Staff will remain alert to situations where bullying may indicate a broader safeguarding concern, including child-on-child abuse, child criminal exploitation, or emotional abuse.

Indicators include but are not exhaustive to:

- repeated bullying, intimidation, coercion or targeting of another child
- persistent unwanted behaviour causing distress or fear
- cyberbullying or online harassment
- prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour
- escalating physical aggression, threats or violence towards peers

The trust anti-bullying policy and school protocol should be used in conjunction with this policy to ensure effective practice and procedures.

## 33.0 Minimising risk of child-on child abuse

Schools must take a whole-school approach to preventing child-on-child abuse and create a culture where abuse is never accepted as "banter", "part of growing up" or harmless behaviour.

Key strategies (not exhaustive)

- **Promoting a positive safeguarding culture** where children feel safe, respected and confident to report concerns.
- **Teaching respectful relationships** through the curriculum, including consent, boundaries, online safety and healthy relationships.
- **Maintaining clear policies and procedures** that define child-on-child abuse and explain how concerns will be reported, recorded and managed.
- **Providing regular staff training** so adults can recognise indicators of abuse and respond appropriately.
- **Encouraging pupil voice** and ensuring children know who to talk to if they have concerns about themselves or others.
- **Supervising high-risk areas and activities** and responding quickly to emerging concerns or patterns of behaviour.
- **Supporting vulnerable groups**, including children with SEND, who may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting abuse.
- **Addressing online risks** such as cyberbullying, sexual harassment, image sharing, coercion and exploitation through education and effective filtering and monitoring systems.
- **Working in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies** to promote consistent safeguarding messages and early intervention where concerns arise.

### 34.0 Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CCE and CSE are forms of abuse where a child is coerced, manipulated, or deceived due to an imbalance of power into criminal or sexual activity. This may involve exchanges (e.g. for money, goods, status, or protection) or occur through violence or threats.

Exploitation can be carried out by individuals, groups, or organised gangs, and children may sometimes believe they are part of the group exploiting them.

Both boys and girls can be affected, and children may be moved or trafficked for the purpose of exploitation, which can constitute modern slavery.

Any suspected cases must be treated as a safeguarding concern, with appropriate child protection and modern slavery referrals made.

Child criminal exploitation involves children being coerced or manipulated into criminal activity, such as transporting drugs or money (e.g. county lines), shoplifting, vehicle crime, or involvement in serious violence.

Children can become trapped through threats, violence, and debt, and may be pressured into carrying weapons for protection. They must always be recognised as victims of exploitation, as children cannot consent to being exploited or involved in criminal activity.

CCE can affect both boys and girls, although experiences and indicators may differ. It is also important to recognise that children who are criminally exploited may be at increased risk of sexual exploitation.

CCE indicators can include all children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs or alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regular return home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse involving both physical and non-contact activities, including grooming, exploitation, and the creation or sharing of sexual images (including online).

CSE can occur over time or as a one-off incident, and may happen without the child's knowledge, particularly through the sharing of images or videos online.

It can affect any child, including 16- and 17-year-olds, and is often carried out by individuals known to the child or organised networks. Children may be coerced, manipulated, or groomed, and may not recognise they are being abused, sometimes believing they are in a consensual or trusting relationship.

Victims may also be misidentified or criminalised for actions carried out under coercion, highlighting the importance of recognising and responding appropriately to CSE.

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can children who:

- have older boyfriends
- suffer sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

We include the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation in our RSE and health education curriculum. It is often the case that the child does not recognise the coercive nature of the exploitative relationship and does not recognise themselves as a victim.

Victims of criminal and sexual exploitation can be boys or girls, and it can have an adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health.

All staff are aware of the indicators that children are at risk of or are experiencing CCE or CSE. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. Staff must always act on any concerns that a child is suffering from or is at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation.

### **35.0 Child-to-parent abuse (CPA)**

Sometimes referred to as adolescent-to-parent violence and abuse (APVA), is a safeguarding concern that involves a child or young person using abusive, controlling, coercive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a parent, carer or other family member. This abuse may be physical, emotional, psychological, verbal, financial or involve damage to property. The school recognises that CPA can have a significant impact on the wellbeing and safety of children, parents and families and may be associated with a range of safeguarding needs. Concerns relating to child-to-parent abuse will be taken seriously and considered within the wider context of the child's circumstances, with appropriate support, assessment and referrals made where necessary in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

### **36.0 County lines**

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where gangs and organised criminal networks use children and vulnerable adults to transport, store and sell drugs and money across different areas. Victims are often controlled through coercion, intimidation, violence, debt, or the threat of violence.

Children can be recruited through schools, communities and online platforms. County lines exploitation occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. All staff should be aware of the indicators of criminal exploitation, including:

- frequent missing episodes from home or school
- being found in areas away from home
- unexplained money, gifts or multiple mobile phones
- involvement in drug-related activity
- association with older individuals or known offenders
- serious violence or knife crime
- use of accommodation with no obvious connection to the child
- debt bondage to exploiters
- unusual activity involving bank accounts or finances

The main indicator of county lines involvement is increased absence from education, as children may be trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs or money.

As county lines is a form of criminal exploitation/modern slavery, identification should trigger both a standard child protection referral and a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral, completed by a designated 'First Responder', as per the Modern Slavery statutory guidance.

The 'first responder' will be the DSL (or DDSL in the DSL's absence) who will complete both referrals.

## 37.0 Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can involve a range of behaviours, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse, and may occur as a single incident or a pattern over time. Children can be direct victims or may experience the impact by seeing, hearing, or living with abuse, including within their own relationships (teenage relationship abuse). This can have long-term effects on their health, wellbeing, development, and learning.

Our trust schools participate in Operation Encompass, ensuring that the DSL is informed by police following any domestic abuse incident involving a pupil, so appropriate support can be provided.

All staff are aware of the impact of domestic abuse and must report any concerns immediately to the DSL.

## 38.0 Mental health

All staff should recognise that mental health concerns can become safeguarding issues and may indicate that a child is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. We recognise that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse experiences. While only appropriately trained professionals can diagnose mental health conditions, all staff should be alert to children whose behaviour, presentation or emotional wellbeing may suggest they need help or protection. Early intervention is important, and staff will work with the designated safeguarding lead to identify, assess and respond to concerns. The school promotes positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils and will provide appropriate support, referrals and access to external services where required. Concerns about a child's mental health will be considered alongside wider safeguarding issues and responded to in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Possible indicators may include:

- persistent sadness, anxiety or low mood
- withdrawal from friends, activities or learning
- significant changes in behaviour or attendance
- self-harm or suicidal thoughts
- excessive worry, distress or emotional dysregulation
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- risk-taking or harmful behaviours

Each trust school is committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and will work with families and external agencies to ensure pupils receive appropriate support when needed.

In many of our schools, specific localised support is in place for children with either:

- emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA)
- anxiety-driven attendance difficulties

We are aware that safeguarding vulnerabilities for such children requires additional support beyond the universal safeguarding and attendance offer. Further details about the graduated response to managing mental health is detailed in school child protection and safeguarding protocols.

All concerns relating to a child's mental health and wellbeing will be reported and managed in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Early identification allows for timely support and intervention.

If there are safeguarding concerns, staff must report to the DSL. In emergencies, they should seek immediate help (999 or A&E), and for urgent but non-emergency support, contact NHS 111 (mental health option).

At Beckfoot Trust, we believe firmly in fostering a culture of belonging to ensure no child is left behind. As part of our commitment to the promotion of positive mental health, all our schools have actions interwoven into school improvement planning linked to the Bradford Healthy Minds Chartermark.

## **39.0 Serious violence**

Serious violence is an ongoing safeguarding concern and can include physical assault, use or possession of weapons, and threats of harm, often linked to peer conflict or criminal exploitation. Any concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL, who will assess risk and take action, including de-escalation where needed.

Schools play a key role in protecting children, including both victims and those involved in violence, who may also be vulnerable. Staff should be alert to risk factors, particularly for pupils with disrupted education or previous offending, and recognise times of increased risk (e.g. after school).

Early intervention is essential, including access to trusted adults, emotional support, and targeted interventions such as mentoring or therapeutic support.

## **40.0 Preventing radicalisation**

Children may be vulnerable to radicalisation into terrorism and protecting them from this risk is part of a school's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

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

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

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.

There is no single indicator of radicalisation, but staff should be alert to changes in behaviour that may suggest a child is at risk. As with other safeguarding concerns, staff should use professional judgement, act early, and report concerns to the DSL, who may make a Prevent referral if appropriate.

All schools within the trust have a Prevent risk assessment that is updated at least annually.

#### **40.1 The Prevent duty**

All schools have a legal duty to help prevent children from being drawn into terrorism, known as the Prevent duty, under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

This duty forms part of wider safeguarding responsibilities and requires leaders, particularly the DSL, to understand and follow national guidance, including local procedures for making Prevent referrals.

Where concerns arise, referrals may be considered for Channel, a voluntary multi-agency programme that provides early support to individuals at risk of radicalisation.

Schools should also ensure appropriate information sharing, particularly when pupils move settings, to maintain continuity of safeguarding and support.

#### **41.0 Honour or faith-based abuse**

Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) includes practices carried out to protect perceived family or community honour, such as FGM, forced marriage, and breast ironing. It often involves multiple perpetrators and wider family or community pressure. All forms of HBA are abuse and must be treated and responded to as safeguarding concerns.

Staff must remain alert to the risks and indicators of HBA and report any concerns to the DSL, who will follow appropriate safeguarding and multi-agency procedures.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and is illegal in the UK. It has serious, long-term consequences. Teachers have a legal duty to report directly to the police if they discover that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18. In other cases (suspected risk), normal safeguarding procedures should be followed.

#### **42.0 Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

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 and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM is carried out on females of any age, from babies to teenagers to women. Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, including concerns expressed by girls about going on a long holiday during the summer break. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of FGM or who has suffered FGM, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Teachers are also under legal duty to report to the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a child under 18. In such circumstances, teachers will personally report the matter to the police as well as informing the DSL.

#### **43.0 Forced marriage**

Forced marriage is a criminal offence in England and Wales. It occurs when a person is made to marry without full and free consent, including through violence, threats, or coercion (physical, emotional, or psychological). It also applies where a person cannot consent, for example due to learning disabilities.

Since February 2023, it is also illegal to arrange or cause a child under 18 to marry, even if no coercion is used. This includes both legal and unofficial (non-binding) marriages.

Our schools have an important role in identifying and safeguarding children at risk.

## Section C: Reporting, recording and responding to concerns

### 44.0 Reporting concerns about children

All staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Any concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation relating to a child's welfare must be acted upon immediately and reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or, in their absence, a deputy DSL. Staff must never assume that another person has taken action.

Staff should:

- be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, online harm, child-on-child abuse or other safeguarding concerns
- listen carefully to children and take all disclosures seriously
- reassure children that they have been heard but never promise confidentiality
- record concerns promptly and accurately
- report concerns to the DSL as soon as possible on the same working day
- refer concerns directly to children's social care, the police or other appropriate agencies if there is an immediate risk of harm and inform the DSL as soon as possible thereafter

#### 44.1 Reporting using CPOMS – staff based in schools

Our trust schools use CPOMS as its electronic safeguarding recording system. All safeguarding and child protection concerns, disclosures, welfare concerns, behavioural incidents with a safeguarding element and child-on-child abuse concerns must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible and on the same working day. Accurate and timely recording is a key safeguarding responsibility for all staff. KCSIE requires concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions to be recorded and shared appropriately with safeguarding leads.

#### 44.2 Staff responsibilities

When a concern arises, school-based staff must:

- record the concern on CPOMS promptly, ideally immediately following the incident, disclosure or observation
- use clear, factual and professional language
- record the child's exact words where a disclosure has been made
- distinguish between what was seen, heard, reported and any professional opinion
- include dates, times, locations, witnesses and actions taken
- attach any relevant documents or evidence where appropriate
- alert the DSL and/or deputy DSL through the CPOMS notification system

School-based staff must not:

- keep separate unofficial records
- delay recording concerns until a later date
- investigate concerns themselves
- delete or amend records once submitted without authorisation from the DSL

#### **44.3 Reporting using central safeguarding concern: central staff or visitors without a CPOMS account**

Central staff or visitors without access to a CPOMS account to record concerns should use a safeguarding concern form detailed in the central safeguarding protocol.

The recording form should be easily accessible to central staff and visitors in paper form in all school reception areas. Central staff should always carry a paper copy when visiting schools and have the electronic form easily accessible from their desktop.

Central staff must:

- always record causes for concern the same day and email the form to the respective school DSL
- in the event of a serious concern, which presents immediate risk, record information before they leave the school site and ask to speak with the DSL (or headteacher if the DSL is unavailable)
- As with school staff, central staff should:
  - use clear, factual and professional language
  - record the child's exact words where a disclosure has been made
  - distinguish between what was seen, heard, reported and any professional opinion
  - include dates, times, locations, witnesses and actions taken
  - attach any relevant documents or evidence where appropriate
- Central staff must not:
  - keep separate unofficial records
  - delay recording concerns until a later date
  - worry about being late for another meeting to promptly record; safeguarding must always take priority
  - investigate concerns themselves

#### **45.0 DSL responsibilities in responding to a concern**

The DSL and deputy DSLs will:

- review CPOMS or record entries promptly
- assess risk and determine appropriate action
- record decisions, actions and outcomes on CPOMS
- ensure referrals to children's social care, family Help services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), police or other agencies are recorded and tracked
- maintain oversight of pupils for whom there are multiple or recurring concerns
- regularly audit CPOMS records to identify patterns, themes and emerging safeguarding risks
- ensure cases are opened and closed in a timely and effective manner with appropriate actions taken and logs made

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions must be recorded in writing. Records should be made as soon as possible after the event and should:

- be factual, clear and concise
- record the child's words verbatim where possible
- distinguish between fact, observation, opinion and professional judgement
- include the date, time, location and names of those involved

- record any action taken and by whom
- be signed, dated and uploaded to the school's safeguarding recording system, CPOMS

We recognise that a series of low-level concerns can form part of a wider safeguarding picture. Therefore, all concerns, no matter how small they may appear, must be recorded and reported.

Any staff member who believes that appropriate action has not been taken has a responsibility to escalate their concern in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures and our trust's whistleblowing procedures.

## **46.0 Sharing concerns with families**

The DSL will normally discuss safeguarding concerns with parents or carers and seek their involvement in planning support for their child. However, parents will not be informed where doing so would:

- place a child at increased risk of harm
- prejudice a police investigation or statutory assessment
- lead to the destruction of evidence
- place another person at risk
- conflict with advice provided by children's social care, the police or other safeguarding partners.

In such circumstances, the DSL will act on the advice of safeguarding agencies and prioritise the safety and welfare of the child.

## **47.0 Family help and early intervention**

Where concerns emerge that do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, the school may work with families and other professionals to facilitate family help or early help support. The aim is to address needs at the earliest opportunity and improve outcomes for children and families. The school may:

- contribute to assessments and support plans
- attend team around the family meetings
- share relevant information with consent where appropriate
- monitor progress and review outcomes alongside other professionals.

### **47.1 Record keeping**

Engagement with parents, carers and families, including meetings, telephone calls, advice offered, support provided and any decisions made, will be recorded on CPOMS. This ensures there is a clear chronology of actions taken and support offered.

## **48.0 Referrals to children's social care**

We recognise that all staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare. The DSL will usually lead on referrals to children's social care;

however, any staff member may make a referral if they believe a child is at risk of significant harm or if they consider that appropriate action has not been taken.

#### **48.1 When a referral may be made**

A referral to children's social care will be considered where:

- a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm
- there are concerns regarding abuse, neglect, exploitation, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, domestic abuse, criminal or sexual exploitation, or online harm
- early help or family help support has not improved outcomes for the child, and a higher level of intervention is required
- the threshold for statutory intervention is met

#### **48.2 Referral process**

The DSL will:

- gather and review all relevant information, including safeguarding records held on CPOMS
- consult with children's social care where appropriate
- make referrals promptly and without delay where there is a risk of harm
- ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are considered wherever possible
- record the reason for the referral, actions taken and outcomes on CPOMS

Where a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made immediately to children's social care and/or the police. Staff should not delay action whilst seeking additional information.

#### **48.3 Following a referral**

The DSL will:

- maintain oversight of the case
- attend and contribute to multi-agency meetings, strategy discussions, child protection conferences, core groups and other safeguarding meetings as required
- share relevant information with partner agencies in line with information-sharing principles
- monitor the child's welfare and educational outcomes
- record all actions, decisions and communications on CPOMS

#### **48.4 Professional challenge and escalation**

If the school disagrees with a decision made by children's social care, or believes that a child remains at risk, the DSL will appropriately challenge and escalate concerns in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures. The school will continue to advocate for the child and ensure they receive the support and protection they need.

### **49.0 Working with external professionals**

Trust schools will work proactively and collaboratively with other relevant external professionals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The DSL will ensure that referrals, consultations, information sharing and multi-agency working are undertaken promptly, appropriately and in the

best interests of the child. All contacts, actions and outcomes will be recorded on CPOMS to ensure a clear and robust safeguarding record.

Trust schools are committed to working collaboratively with other external professionals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Effective multi-agency working is essential to ensuring that children receive the right help at the right time and that safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately.

#### **49.1 Sharing information with external professionals**

To ensure that children and families receive coordinated and effective support, safeguarding and pastoral inclusion teams will liaise, as appropriate, with:

- children's social care
- family help / early help services
- the police
- local authority designated officer (LADO)
- health professionals, including school nurses, GPs, CAMHS and paediatric services
- educational psychologists
- attendance and inclusion services
- SEND teams
- youth offending teams
- virtual school heads
- domestic abuse support services
- specialist safeguarding and support agencies

#### **49.2 Referrals and multi-agency working**

Where concerns meet local thresholds, the DSL will make referrals to the appropriate service and will:

- provide accurate and relevant information from CPOMS and other safeguarding records
- participate in strategy discussions, child protection conferences, core group meetings, team around the family meetings and other multi-agency forums
- share information in a timely manner, in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements
- contribute professional opinions and evidence to assessments and planning
- support and advocate for the child's needs and best interest

#### **49.3 Recording professional communication**

All communications, consultations, referrals, meetings and decisions involving external professionals will be recorded on CPOMS by the DSL or relevant safeguarding staff. Records will include:

- date and time of contact
- name and role of the professional contacted
- advice provided
- decisions made
- actions agreed
- follow-up arrangements and outcomes

This ensures a clear chronology of safeguarding activity and supports effective case management.

#### **49.4 Professional challenge and escalation**

We recognise our responsibility to provide professional challenge where there are concerns that a child's needs are not being adequately addressed. Where disagreement exists regarding thresholds, decisions or interventions, the DSL will follow local escalation procedures and continue to advocate for the child's safety and welfare.

### **50.0 Management of child protection records**

The DSL is responsible for ensuring child protection records are:

- kept securely and separately from the main pupil file
- maintained in accordance with data protection legislation and information-sharing principles
- chronological, comprehensive and up to date
- accessible only to authorised safeguarding personnel
- transferred securely to a new setting when a child leaves the school, with confirmation of receipt obtained.

The DSL will ensure that records evidence decision-making, actions taken, outcomes and any multi-agency involvement. Records will support a clear understanding of the child's lived experience and safeguarding journey.

### **51.0 Information sharing**

We acknowledge that effective safeguarding depends upon timely and appropriate information sharing. Relevant information will be shared with safeguarding partners, children's social care, family help services, police and other agencies where necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Fears about sharing information must never stand in the way of protecting a child from harm. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 introduces new mandatory guidance to report child sexual abuse. This aspect of the policy will be reviewed once the duty and guidance take effect.

### **52.0 Monitoring and quality assurance**

The DSL will regularly review safeguarding records to ensure that:

- concerns are reported promptly
- records are of sufficient quality
- decisions are clearly evidenced, particularly with reference to the closing of cases
- patterns, trends and cumulative concerns are identified
- appropriate action and referrals are made in a timely manner

Any staff member who believes that appropriate action has not been taken has a responsibility to escalate their concern in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures and the trust's whistleblowing procedures

## 53.0 Supervision

Our trust is committed to providing effective safeguarding supervision for the DSL and safeguarding team. Supervision supports reflective practice, professional challenge, decision-making, staff wellbeing and continuous improvement. Through regular supervision, the trust seeks to ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain child-centred, robust and compliant with statutory guidance, including keeping children safe in education.

### 53.1 Purpose of supervision

Safeguarding supervision aims to:

- support the welfare and professional resilience of staff with safeguarding responsibilities
- provide a reflective space to discuss complex cases and decision-making
- ensure children remain at the centre of safeguarding practice
- monitor the quality of safeguarding records, referrals and interventions
- promote accountability, professional challenge and continuous improvement
- identify any emerging trends to inform the preventative curriculum and/or training and development needs for staff

### 53.2 Supervision arrangements

The DSL and deputy DSLs will receive regular safeguarding supervision. This will be provided internally by a suitably trained safeguarding professional.

Supervision will take place at least twice a cycle and more frequently where safeguarding activity, complexity of cases or staff wellbeing needs require additional support.

### 53.3 Content of supervision

Supervision may include:

- review of vulnerable children and open safeguarding cases
- consideration of the child's lived experience and voice
- discussion of referrals, interventions and multi-agency working
- review of CPOMS records and safeguarding chronologies
- evaluation of professional decision-making and risk assessments
- identification of emerging themes, patterns and trends
- reflection on the emotional impact of safeguarding work on staff
- planning future actions and reviewing outcomes

### 53.4 Recording supervision

A written record of supervision sessions will be maintained and stored securely. Records will include:

- date of supervision
- attendees
- summary of cases discussed
- decisions made
- agreed actions and timescales

- any identified training or support needs

Supervision records will be retained separately from pupil safeguarding files unless case-specific actions need to be recorded on CPOMS or within the child's child protection record.

### 53.5 Staff wellbeing

Trust and school leaders acknowledge that safeguarding work can be emotionally demanding. Staff involved in child protection and safeguarding activities will be provided with opportunities for support, debriefing and supervision to promote professional wellbeing and effective safeguarding practice. Staff can request additional supervision or support at any time where safeguarding matters have had a significant impact on their wellbeing.

## 54.0 Low level concerns about adults

We recognise the importance of creating a culture in which concerns about adults' behaviour can be raised openly and promptly. Any low-level concern regarding the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or supply staff member will be reported, recorded and managed appropriately. Low-level concerns will be reviewed for patterns of behaviour and retained in accordance with safeguarding and employment procedures. The trust understands that consistently identifying and responding to low-level concerns helps prevent harm and promotes a strong safeguarding culture.

A **low-level concern** is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct
- does not meet the threshold for a harm allegation
- may indicate that the adult is not maintaining appropriate professional boundaries
- could, if left unaddressed, develop into a more serious safeguarding issue

Low-level concerns may relate to behaviour inside or outside of work and can include, but are not limited to:

- being overly familiar with children
- favouritism towards a particular pupil
- inappropriate comments or jokes
- unnecessary physical contact
- contacting pupils through personal social media or messaging platforms
- behaviour that could be perceived as intimidating, offensive or unprofessional
- failing to follow safeguarding procedures or professional standards

### 54.1 Reporting low-level concerns

All staff should feel confident and supported to report low-level concerns about themselves or colleagues.

- Concerns about staff within a school should be reported in writing (or if initially verbally followed up in writing) to the respective Headteacher as soon as possible.

- Concerns should never be reported to the DSL (unless the DSL happens to also be the Headteacher) or reported on CPOMS.
- Where the concern relates to the headteacher, it should be reported to the chief executive officer (CEO)
- If the concern is about a member of the central team should be reported to the deputy CEO.
- If the concern is about the deputy CEO, it should be reported to the CEO
- If the concern is about the CEO, it should be reported directly to the chair of trustees.

Staff should not:

- dismiss concerns as insignificant
- assume that someone else will report them
- attempt to investigate concerns themselves
- discuss concerns widely with colleagues

## **54.2 Recording and responding**

The headteacher (or other above-named staff where appropriate) will:

- record all low-level concerns promptly and confidentially
- consider the context, nature and circumstances of the concern
- identify any patterns of behaviour over time
- determine whether the concern remains a low-level concern or meets the threshold for managing an allegation against a member of staff
- take proportionate action, which may include advice, supervision, additional training, management guidance or referral under formal procedures

Records of low-level concerns should be retained securely and reviewed regularly to identify trends or repeated behaviours that may warrant further action. A series of low-level concerns may collectively indicate a more significant safeguarding risk and should therefore be considered holistically

Further information is available in Appendix 3

## **54.3 Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about supply staff, contractors and volunteers**

If a safeguarding concern or allegation is made about a member of staff, supply staff, contractor or a volunteer, our set procedures must be followed. Our procedure can be accessed in Appendix 3: What to Do in the Event of an Allegation? and the full procedure for managing such allegations or concerns is set out in Part Four the latest addition keeping children safe in education.

Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff who no longer work at the school will be reported to the police.

## **55.0 Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague**

It is important that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about a colleague's practice. All such concerns should be reported to the headteacher, unless the complaint is about the headteacher, in which case concern should be reported to the CEO.

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

The trust's whistleblowing policy (available on our trust website) allows staff to raise concerns or make allegations and for an appropriate enquiry to take place.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who feel unable to raise concerns directly on 0800 028 0285 or [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## **56.0 Staff/pupil relationships**

Staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that it is a criminal offence for them to engage in any sexual activity with a pupil under the age of 18.

We provide our staff with advice regarding their personal online activity, and we have clear rules regarding electronic communications and online contact with pupils. It is considered a serious disciplinary issue if staff breach these rules.

Our code of conduct for employees (available on our trust website) sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members both upon induction and annually each September.

## **57.0 Implementation of this policy**

Implementation will be monitored through the trust's safeguarding assurance framework, audits, and key performance indicators.

### **57.1 Safeguarding reports and governance oversight**

The headteacher provides a termly safeguarding report to the local school committee (LSC) members. The report will evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, identify areas for development, summarise safeguarding activity during the reporting period, and provide assurance regarding compliance with statutory requirements. Externally commissioned reviews of safeguarding (as a minimum annually) are reported to the LSC

Each term, the trust board receive a report from executive leaders. The board challenges and scrutinises safeguarding practice as appropriate, and monitors safeguarding key performance indicators (KPIs), including trends, training compliance, attendance, filtering and monitoring data, child protection activity, staff recruitment checks, and the management of safeguarding concerns. This oversight supports continuous improvement to ensure the organisation remains inspection ready and able to demonstrate effective safeguarding governance. The summary of the externally commissioned annual review of safeguarding is reported to the audit and risk committee and fed back to the board. Safeguarding matters are reported on a termly basis to the audit and risk committee, including through the risk register.

## **Appendix 1: Related trust policies Appendix 1: Related Trust Policies**

Links to other policies are available on our trust website here [\*\*Policies – Beckfoot Trust\*\*](#)

Safeguarding students requires a whole-school approach, therefore this policy is related to and should be read in conjunction with our scheme of delegation and the following policies on:

- allergy and anaphylaxis
- anti-bullying
- attendance and punctuality
- behaviour
- care and control
- code of conduct
- complaints
- data protection
- disciplinary
- freedom of information
- intimate care
- looked after children
- medical needs
- online safety and IT use
- recruitment and selection
- references
- SEND
- whistleblowing

## Appendix 2: Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), 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 can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.

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. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

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. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content. It is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns.

### Abuse

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.

### Physical abuse

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

### Indicators of physical Abuse

The following may be indicators of physical abuse:

- bruises, bleeding, burns, bites, fractures or other injuries
- showing signs of pain or discomfort
- keeping arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- an injury that is not consistent with the account given

- symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- inexplicable fear of adults or over compliance
- violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- isolation from peers

### **Emotional abuse**

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

### **Indicators of emotional abuse**

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- the child consistently describes him/herself in negative ways
- over-reaction to mistakes
- delayed physical, mental or emotional development
- inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- self-harm
- drug or solvent abuse
- running away
- appetite disorders – anorexia nervosa, bulimia
- soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration ((for example rape or 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 is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Indicators of sexual abuse**

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- reluctance to undress for PE or swimming

- anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- bruises or scratches in the genital area
- reluctance to go home
- refusal to communicate
- depression or withdrawal
- isolation from peer group
- eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- self-harm
- substance abuse
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

### **Neglect**

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

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

### **Indicators of neglect**

The following may be indicators of neglect:

- constant hunger or stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- frequent tiredness
- frequently dirty or unkempt
- poor attendance or often late
- poor concentration
- illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- failure to achieve developmental milestones or to develop intellectually or socially
- responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- the child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers

## Appendix 3: What to Do in the Event of an Allegation?

### Introduction

All our schools train regularly on what to do if you are concerned about a member of staff's conduct or if you receive a disclosure from a child. Low-level concerns are defined in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, as any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work and/or does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but is not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

### Sharing low-level concerns

For our culture of openness and trust to prevail, all staff should share any low-level concerns they have. Serious case reviews and safeguarding practice reviews have often evidenced how low-level concerns felt and/or expressed by staff relating to individuals who were later found to have sexually abused children at a school were not recorded. When they are not recorded, they cannot be studied for patterns of behaviour.

It is critical that staff understand their role in recognising and reporting low-level concerns to minimise and eradicate the risk of opportunities being missed. All staff should immediately report low-level concerns so that behaviour can be investigated and managed appropriately.

All low-level concerns should be reported to the headteacher. Concerns about the headteacher should be reported to the CEO. Staff do not need to determine whether their concern meets the threshold set out in this appendix is a low-level concern. This will be determined by the headteacher or CEO as appropriate once the issue is reported.

### Responding to low-level concerns

The headteacher or CEO or DCEO, as appropriate, will review the concern to confirm that it is not a more serious issue that should be dealt with as an allegation. An issue reported as a low-level concern would be dealt with as an allegation where it meets the threshold set out in this appendix or there is a pattern of low-level concerns expressed about the individual or wider staff practices generally. If necessary, the concern will be discussed with the LADO to determine whether it should be dealt with as an allegation.

The headteacher or CEO will discuss the concern with the individual who raised it and will investigate it as appropriate. If the concern has been raised via a third party, evidence will be collected by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern, the individual involved and any witnesses (unless it has been raised anonymously).

Most low-level concerns are likely to be minor and can be dealt with by means of management support or additional training. Where necessary, action may be taken in accordance with the disciplinary policy.

## Low-Level Concern about a staff member not employed by Beckfoot Trust

A low-level concern is a concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including behaviour that does not meet the harm threshold but could indicate an emerging pattern of unsafe or unprofessional behaviour. This applies to contractors, volunteers, supply staff and agency workers. In the event of a low-level concern, the procedure below should be followed:

- **Reporting from staff**  
Any staff member who has a low-level concern about a contractor should report it to the headteacher (or other nominated leader in line with the school's procedures) promptly.
- **Record the concern**  
The concern should be documented clearly, including what was observed, when it occurred, and any actions taken.
- **Assess the level of concern**  
The headteacher should consider whether the behaviour:
  - remains a low-level concern
  - demonstrates a pattern of concerning behaviour
  - meets the harm threshold and therefore requires management under allegations procedures and possible referral to the LADO
- **Liaise with the staff member's employer (if applicable)**  
If the staff member is employed by an external company, the school should inform the respective employer and work collaboratively on appropriate action while maintaining safeguarding priorities. This enables the employer to take appropriate steps in accordance with their own policies and statutory guidance.
- **Take appropriate action**  
This might include guidance, supervision arrangements, additional training, restricting duties, removal from site, or escalation to formal safeguarding procedures if necessary.

## Allegations made in school

Just as with children and concerns, nobody should ever feel that a concern is too small. If you have any concerns, speak to the right person as listed below:

- In school, any allegation about staff should be reported to the headteacher unless it concerns the headteacher in which case it should be reported to the CEO.
- If it is an allegation about a member of the central team, the allegation should be made to the DCEO
- If it is an allegation against the DCEO, it should be referred to the CEO
- If it is an allegation against the CEO, it should be referred to the chair of the trust (by emailing Jo Whittleston (see section 24 above).

The headteacher or DCEO/CEO will conduct basic enquiries to establish the facts. If the allegation meets any of the following criteria, they will refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer on the same day if the employee has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- Behaved towards a child, or children, in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children

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

The fourth bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside the school that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children. This is known as transferable risk.

The headteacher, through consultation with the designated safeguarding lead and the CEO/DCEO, will decide whether or not the member of staff should continue to work with children during the investigation (see disciplinary policy).

We will be mindful of the need to safeguard and protect children's welfare whilst also providing effective support and protection to the individual subject to the allegation.

Suspension will be considered in any case where there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of harm or it is necessary to carry out a thorough and fair Investigation. Suspension is not a sanction.

### **Supply teachers and volunteers**

Whilst we are not the employer of supply teachers, we will ensure that any allegation against a supply teacher working in any of our schools is dealt with properly and in line with guidance. We would follow the same process in liaising with the LADO as well as informing the agency. We will discuss the appropriate action for the agency and the school to take. Depending on the situation, this may be suspension of services whilst an investigation ensues, or redeployment if this is considered safe. In this case, we will take the lead in working with all appropriate agencies and also carrying out the investigation. All agencies are informed of our process for managing allegations and supply staff are trained on our policies and procedures before entering the classroom. Although not in employment from an agency, we would also deal with any allegation against a volunteer in the same way in terms of investigation and involvement with external agencies such as the policy and the local authority.

### **Record keeping**

It is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made is retained in the member of staff's confidential personnel file. This summary should include:

- details of how the allegations were followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken
- decisions reached including whether information will be referred to in any future reference

A copy should be provided to the member of staff concerned. The summary should be retained, at least, until the member of staff has reached normal retirement age (or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer).

### **Allegations made to the police or children's social care**

If an allegation is made to the police, it should be reported to the headteacher who, in turn, should inform the LADO (unless it concerns the headteacher, in which case it should be reported to the CEO).

If the allegation is made to children's social care, the person who receives it should report it to the LADO.

### **Initial consideration**

The LADO will discuss the matter with the headteacher and obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The headteacher should also consider whether there is evidence / information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is patently not false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, the LADO will immediately refer to children's social care and ask for a strategy discussion to be convened immediately.

If there is no cause to suspect significant harm is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the LADO should immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion should also involve the school and any other agencies involved with the child.

Even in the case where an allegation appears to be less serious, it is important that the LADO is informed. An allegation may be considered so serious that there will be immediate referral to children's social care and / or the police.

### **Action following initial consideration**

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, the employer must deal with the matter. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the headteacher will institute appropriate action within three working days.

If a disciplinary hearing is required, and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within as soon practically possible without undue delay in line with our trust guidelines.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action, the headteacher and the DSL will discuss with the LADO who will undertake the necessary action. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for the disciplinary investigation to be conducted by a person who is independent of the school.

The investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the headteacher within 10 working days. On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation, the headteacher and CEO should consult the LADO within 2 working days to decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed. If such a hearing is required, it should be held as soon practically possible without undue delay.

Where children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children need protection, the headteacher/ CEO/DCEO should take account of any relevant information obtained during those enquiries when considering disciplinary action. The LADO should continue to liaise with the school to monitor progress of the case and provide advice / support when required / requested.

In the case of the allegation being made against a supply teacher, a contractor, or a volunteer from a voluntary organisation, the school may not be involved in disciplinary procedures but will be involved and cooperate in an investigation. This investigation will reach a decision whether to continue to use the person's services, or to recommend the person for work with children in the future, and whether to report to the DBS and the Teachers' Regulation Agency.

### **Supporting those involved**

Parents / carers of a child, or children, involved should be advised of any allegation/s as soon as possible except where a strategy discussion is required or police / social care need to be involved, in which case the school will not tell parents until it has been agreed what information can be shared. Parents / carers should also be kept informed regarding progress on the case and should be informed of the outcome in confidence where there is a criminal prosecution or a disciplinary hearing. The deliberations and information considered in reaching a decision will not normally be disclosed. The school should also inform the person who is the subject of the allegation and provide regular updates on the status of the case to that person. If the police or children's social care are involved, the headteacher will not do this until advised to do so by these agencies.

Any child / children making an allegation against a member of staff will be offered a 'support person' from within the school who is impartial to the formal proceedings. Where the allegations are unfounded, the school will not necessarily take the view that the allegations were false. Behaviour may have been

misinterpreted. In this case, the LADO should refer the matter to children's social care to determine whether the child concerned needs support from external services or may have been abused by others. The school will continue to provide support to the child / children in these circumstances.

Any member of staff facing an allegation will be offered a 'support person' who is impartial to the investigation and, where appropriate, other support such as a referral to occupational health / life coaching. The support person will keep the employee informed of progress of the case and other related matters.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort must be made to guard confidentiality and to protect against any undue publicity.

### **The outcome of allegations**

The outcome of an investigation falls under five categories.

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation on the balance of probabilities.
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject to the allegation.
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

### **Resignations and 'compromise agreements'**

Allegations must be investigated even in situations where an employee tenders their resignation or ceases to provide services. The individual will be given the opportunity to engage with the investigation. A 'compromise agreement' will not be used in the case of allegations.

### **Case subject to police investigation**

If a criminal investigation is required, the police will aim to complete their enquiries as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation and will keep the progress of the case under review.

A target date for the case review will be set. The review will include the progress of the investigation in consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). If the police and / or CPS decide not to charge the individual with an offence, decide to administer a caution, or the person is acquitted by a court, the police should, wherever possible, aim to pass all information they have, which may be relevant to a disciplinary case, to the employer within three working days of the decision. In those cases, the employer and the LADO should decide how to proceed.

If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the headteacher will institute appropriate action within three working days.

If a disciplinary hearing is required, and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

Any case in which children's social care have undertaken enquiries, which are relevant to a disciplinary case, these should also be passed to the school.

If the person is convicted of an offence, the police must inform the employer straight away so that appropriate action can be taken.

### **Referral to DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) / Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)**

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where we think that an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if a person otherwise poses a risk or harm to the child. If, upon conclusion of the case, the school ceases to use the person's services or the person ceases to provide his / her services, the school should consult the LADO regarding whether a referral is required. If so, it should be made within 1 month. Additionally, a decision should be made with regards to TRA referral.

### **Dealing with false or malicious allegations**

Where there is clear evidence that an allegation was deliberately invented or malicious, the headteacher will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the student who made it.

Advice should be sought from the police regarding whether any action might be appropriate against the person responsible if he / she was not a student.

### **Recording low-level concerns**

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and will include details of the concern, the context and action taken. The records will be kept confidential and held securely by the Headteacher and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

Records of low-level concerns will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If patterns are identified, the headteacher will decide on an appropriate course of action and will refer the matter to the LADO where the behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the threshold for an allegation set out in Appendix 3 of this policy.

### **References**

Low-level safeguarding concerns will not be included in references except where they have met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, in which case they should be referred to.

## Appendix 4: Who Must Do What

### Beckfoot Trust Fundamental Principles

Our safeguarding culture is built on; hyper-vigilance, forensic monitoring, and highly professional relationships – the last one, about professional relationships could be taken to mean ‘we trust people’ when what we actually want to do is test things out.

All leaders understand and constantly communicate that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

We start with the assumption that ‘it could always happen here’.

- Nothing is too small to report (about a member of staff or child).
- Low level concerns about a colleague must never be ignored and must be reported to the head who must decide whether to just record, follow up, or seek advice from the LADO (even if low level a pattern may emerge).
- It could always happen here (and is more likely to if we are not vigilant).
- You can never be too risk averse with safeguarding children.
- Safeguarding is our primary statutory duty, nothing trumps it.
- We don’t just want to be compliant; we want to be extremely competent and have a culture of safeguarding where everyone knows it is their responsibility to keep children safe.
- We don’t do things just for Ofsted (as important as they are as a regulatory agency), it is for our children and always in their best interests.
- The main areas of safeguarding are hyper vigilance and reporting, securing early help, the preventative curriculum, training for staff, IT safety and safer recruitment.
- The head has the statutory duty to keep children safe and although they may delegate responsibility for aspects of safeguarding, they are always accountable.

### Ofsted and safeguarding

Safeguarding is a fundamental part of every ofsted inspection. Ofsted expects schools and education providers to demonstrate an **effective safeguarding culture**, where children's welfare is prioritised and staff take appropriate action to keep pupils safe.

During an inspection, Ofsted will typically review:

- the school's safeguarding policies and procedures
- recruitment checks, including the single central record (SCR).
- staff safeguarding training and knowledge of their responsibilities.
- how concerns about children are recorded, managed and referred.
- The work of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
- whether pupils feel safe and know who to talk to if they have concerns.
- online safety, attendance, behaviour, and protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation

### Safeguarding culture

Ofsted states that schools should have an **open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first**. Inspectors focus on whether leaders and staff make the right decisions to keep children safe, rather than looking for minor technical errors.

## Impact on Inspection Outcomes

If safeguarding is found to be ineffective, this can significantly affect the overall inspection judgement. Inspectors evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements through a range of evidence, conversations and records.

### Key safeguarding areas schools should be ready to evidence

- safer recruitment and DBS checks
- staff induction and regular safeguarding training
- child protection records and referrals
- DSL effectiveness
- attendance monitoring
- mental health and wellbeing support
- online safety and filtering/monitoring systems
- managing allegations against staff
- working with external agencies and early help services

These areas align with Ofsted's safeguarding expectations and keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) guidance

### The preventative curriculum

- All of our schools invest time in the preventative curriculum. This is age-appropriate and flexible enough to respond to contextual issues.
- Each school has a relationships and sex education policy, and we have a trust-wide behaviour policy which is adapted by each school, sexual harassment and violence is part of the consequences pyramid.
- All schools must be aware of the children that are more vulnerable to harm.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Named member of the executive

- Works to the direction of the CEO and DCEO in driving forward the strategic direction of safeguarding in our trust
- Holds all members of the central team and Executive to account by ensuring safeguarding is a priority and features regularly as an agenda item and training item at all leadership meetings
- Works with the DCEO on scoping the annual external safeguarding audit
- Ensures leaders are regularly trained on all aspects of safeguarding, commissioning external trainers as necessary
- Supports the named member of the central team by reviewing policies and co-constructing the collective efficacy team meeting agendas
- Ensures safeguarding is given priority in The Trust Contract
- Ensures all Directors and central team leaders lead annual training on role specific child protection and professional conduct training
- Approves any training providers/external audit company
- Sources supervision for designated safeguarding leads if this is required as a whole trust
- Is the policy owner for key safeguarding policies

- Oversees the completion of the annual safeguarding report to trustees, including the summary of the annual audit and subsequent action plan
- Line-manages the named member of the central team (see below)

### **Named member of the central team**

- Providing frontline expertise for the executive in order to keep strategy grounded and relevant.
- Advises on the updates to trust policies annually or as necessary and produces a recorded training session for all central staff and for DSLs to use or supplement as necessary
- Leads the collective efficacy team (CET) of every school DSL (a minimum of four times a year (more if there are any changes) and in line with the expectations in The Trust Contract
- Ensures attendance at the CET by all DSLs (following up with heads as appropriate)
- At the CET the named member of the SIT trains, updates and supports and identifies the need for any external training
- At the CET, DSLs may agree further alignment around best practice and safeguarding policies are consulted on at this meeting, as well providing responsive training in relation to contextual matters, or any in-year change to policy (local or national)
- Acts as a support and advice for other DSLs in relation to early help and referral
- Refers back to the executive headteacher any matter related to staff allegations

### **Headteacher (in every school)**

- Is either the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or appoints a member of the SLT (preferably no less senior than a deputy head) who has specific training that must be kept up to date - every 2 years minimum)
- Makes sure the DSL meets all aspects of the job description and person specification and is a suitable person to hold the position
- Completes the local Authority S175 (returns to deadline) and uses as the basis for the annual external safeguarding audit
- Ensures all staff have signed to say they have read Part 1 of KCSIE annually (Every)
- Holds monthly safeguarding meetings with the team with specific responsibility for all aspects of safeguarding (e.g. DSL, CBM, site assistant, HRO) including a site walk around and check on SCR with a view taken around any necessary changes to the preventative safeguarding curriculum and training (e.g. CPOMs referrals)
- Provides support for the DSL, recognising the emotional and physical demands of the job and sources supervision if necessary
- Appoints a deputy DSL to support the work of the DSL
- Ensures in larger schools that there are other named persons (there is no limit to this, and it is advisable to have several named persons in larger school and as many pastoral staff trained as possible)
- Undertakes named person training and commits to undertake specific child protection training for headteachers, including regular face to face safer recruitment training (every 3 years as a minimum)
- Ensures all staff and students know who the DSL and named persons are, that they are identified on the single central register, and this is also visible in the school for all
- All staff are trained either face to face by the DSL or by a video with formative questions every year on keeping children safe in education (usually reviewed annually by the DfE) at the start of the year

- Ensures all staff are given time and a deadline to read the KCSIE policy and Part 1 of the guidance as a minimum and sign on Every HR to say they have read and understood (the policy is always annually reviewed and updated if necessary to reflect KCSIE)
- Ensures all new staff receive training on how KSCIE and CP guidelines relates to their role specifically by their line manager, this is updated annually along with training on professional conduct
- Leads good practice by having ongoing training sessions (short or long) in relation to safeguarding and child protection throughout the year, particularly in relation to contextual safeguarding and all aspects of Prevent – this could be the context within the school (i.e. most frequent referrals) or in the wider community (e.g. right-wing extremism)
- Makes sure there is a big emphasis on the ‘preventative curriculum’ for all children and this is given adequate time, e.g. the risks young people face, e.g. political extremism of any kind (depends on the context), online risks, sexual violence and abuse and in particular staff are to be hyper vigilant at all times, particularly of the most vulnerable and to watch out for changes in behaviour
- Makes sure that families understand the school’s preventative curriculum and safeguarding procedures through website / workshops / blogs / newsletters.
- Is familiar with all safeguarding policies and How Tos and knows when to seek advice and refer to external agencies (e.g. the LADO and the Safer Schools Officer)
- Understands that the processes around HR and recruitment are a vital aspect of safeguarding and does not expect recruiters to take risks (e.g. how you interview, what checks you do, what proven training staff have)
- Supports an annual safeguarding audit and works with the central team if there are areas for improvement
- Sets deadlines for areas for improvement (AFIs) with the central team and welcomes re-audits where necessary
- Follows centrally written policies and procedures, although has their own How Tos re. site security and the preventative curriculum
- Uses CPOMs and the Collective Efficacy Team agreed categories
- Reports to their LSC on safeguarding, a minimum of three times a year and invites the DSL to attend at least annually
- Encourages LSC members to come into the school to learn more about safeguarding
- Understands that safeguarding has to be embedded in the culture, not a bolt on, it is about the most vulnerable being central to all decision making
- Makes sure that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and leads by example in relation to ‘it could always happen here’

## Head of HR

- Regularly carrying out spot checks on the SCR and feeding back any issues (with a deadline for update)
- Regularly carrying out spot HR file checks, reporting any AFIs to the HR Manager and recruitment team and giving a date for corrections (when follow ups will happen)
- Providing How Tos for all aspects of safer recruitment
- Is regularly Safer Recruitment trained
- Responsible for arranging safer recruitment training for central staff
- Creates How Tos so that there are standard processes for all aspects of safer recruitment

## **Deputy CEO**

- Monitors the auditing of the SCR, feeding back any issues to the head of HR, HR manager and cluster business managers (with a deadline for update)
- Monitors the auditing of HR file checks, feeding back any issues to the head of HR and HR Manager.
- Is regularly Safer Recruitment trained
- Responds to any trust wide issues that emerge from safer recruitment audits by producing training and supporting materials
- Ensures all central team colleagues receive training at least annually, on relevant aspects of keeping children safe, e.g. professional conduct, safer recruitment aspects, knowing who the DSL is in each of the schools they work in and other relevant contextual information
- Creates an annual planned programme of works that is agreed by the audit and risk committee and includes an annual safeguarding audit which focuses on all aspects of safeguarding (given the importance of safer recruitment, this may form part of a standalone audit)
- The framework for all compliance, with safeguarding at the heart
- Feeds into the annual safeguarding report to the trustees
- Works with the Director of Research and Transformation to assess the cyber security risk and its implications for safeguarding
- Ensures all AFIs from audits are followed up in a timely fashion and that updates are kept and reported to trustees
- Updating the trust risk register with regards to key safeguarding risks
- Oversees the process for any safeguarding complaint, ensuring the policy is met and referring to the CEO any Ofsted complaint, qualifying or otherwise

## **Senior Director of School Improvement and Professional Growth**

- Ensuring safeguarding is a priority for training of ITT, ECF
- Constantly considering the culture of safeguarding and being hypervigilant on school visits

## **Directors and leaders of operational functions are responsible for:**

- Ensuring safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that all colleagues understand that education and safeguarding children is 'the business that we are in'

## **Trust Operations Support Manager**

- Ensures all websites are compliant in relation to safeguarding
- Checks that all trustees are trained at least annually on safeguarding
- Supporting any whistleblowing process

## **Named trustee for safeguarding**

- Facilitates the trust approach to safeguarding, ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy
- Undertakes additional training for the role as and when necessary and works with the CEO and chair of the trust to ensure training for the board is undertaken and appropriate

- Is familiar with all the safeguarding policies and government guidance, particularly Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Meets with Ofsted in the eventuality of a trust-wide Ofsted
- Makes sure the trust board keeps safeguarding children as a priority agenda item at each meeting (e.g. item in the briefing, asking questions where necessary)
- Meets twice a year with the named executive, the named member of the central team to consider priorities and to feed back to the board if necessary
- Ensures the high-level exec summary is presented to the audit and risk committee
- Ensures safeguarding is a priority in the annual programme of works for internal audit
- Ensures safeguarding data is a priority for development for Beckfoot Trust
- Where possible, sits on disciplinary panels where there is a safeguarding element

### **Designated teacher for looked after children**

Our trust schools must appoint a designated teacher who should work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked-after. The designated teacher:

- must possess appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience.
- is responsible for ensuring the progress, attendance and well-being of children in care, or who have been previously looked-after.

### **The role of the designated teacher for looked after children**

Designated teachers should take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. This means making sure that all staff:

- have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked-after children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress
- are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour
- understand how important it is to see looked-after and previously looked-after children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status
- appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported
- have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, VSHs and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child; and
- for previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or carers who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.