

Safeguarding Policy

AREA:	Connex Group
AUDIENCE:	All stakeholders
REVIEW FREQUENCY:	Annually
DATE ISSUED:	1 st September 2024
LAST REVIEW DATE:	04.12.24
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	September 2025
OWNED & REVIEWED BY:	Director of Education
APPROVED BY:	Chair of BE Board of Trustees
LAST APPROVAL DATE:	September 2024

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1. Important contacts

CONNEX GROUP		
Headlands Site		
DSL	Mark Wiseman	07918 497 095
DDSL	Alyson Mazotta	07387 531 137
DDSL	Tori Carless	07785 638 052
DDSL	Charlie Mapson	07385 411 138
DDSL	Nikki Williams	07825 044 509
Shaw Farm Site		
DSL	Christie Rees	07918 555 746
DDSL	Mark Wiseman	07918 497 095
DDSL	Gen Aylott	n/a

2. Policy Scope

This policy is applicable to all of the provisions that sit within Brunel Academies Trust or Brunel Education and includes:

- All children and young people under the age of 18 are in the scope of this policy.
- All learners above the age of 18 are also in the scope of this policy by respect of the following laws and statutory guidance:
 - government funded post 16 Education; 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers, who are now required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE) following the enactment of The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021.
 - free schools as these are legally a type of academy
 - providers of post 16 Education as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended): 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers.
 - the FE and Training sector which includes
 - Art, Design & Performing Art Colleges.
 - Employer Providers.
 - FE Colleges.
 - Independent Training Providers.
 - Institutes for Adult Learning.
 - Local Authority Adult Community Education Providers.
 - National Specialist Colleges.
 - Sixth Form Colleges.
 - Specialist Designated Colleges.
 - Third Sector Adult Community Education Providers

- All children, young people and adults in an independent setting, whether that be an independent school or specialist college are in scope through this policy by respect of the following:
 - Independent School Standards 2014, parts 2, 4, 6 and 8 which requires them to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE).

3. Whole Provision Approach

- The safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of Connex Group, which ensures that children and young people are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.
- All staff members working with children are encouraged to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.
- The safeguarding policy also links to the following policies and procedures
 - Behaviour
 - Attendance
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Whistleblowing
 - Managing Allegations and Low level Concerns
 - Health and Safety
 - Filtering and Monitoring
 - GDPR
 - Acceptable Use
 - PHSCE
 - Equality & Diversity

4. Definitions

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 as:

'Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'.

- Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.
- Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. **Appendix A** explains the different types of abuse.
- Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.
- Alleged perpetrator(s) and perpetrator(s) are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.
- This policy is developed in line with advice from local safeguarding partnerships who make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

5. Equality statement

- Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it.
- Connex is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.
- We give special consideration to children who:
 - Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions
 - Are young carers
 - May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
 - Have English as an additional language (EAL)
 - Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
 - Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
 - Are asylum seekers
 - Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
 - Are looked after or previously looked after
 - Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
 - Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

6. Roles and Responsibilities

At Connex safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

6.1 All staff

All staff will understand and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children and personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, such as children who are victims of abuse and some SEND children, may be needed. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff will make sure their approach is child centred.

Connex has an expectation that all staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by:

- Providing a safe environment in which children and young people can learn;
- Reporting any concerns about a child's welfare and always taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Fulfilling statutory responsibilities to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Working to protect children from maltreatment, to prevent the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Having a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment
- Understanding levels of need, identifying concerns early and providing help for children and young people, to prevent concerns from escalating to a point where statutory intervention would be needed i.e. Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (a child suffering harm, or likely to suffer significant harm).
- Being aware of the signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation and what to look for to identify children who need help or protection
- Understanding the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

- Being aware that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- Identifying child on child abuse and the fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- Following the process and principles for sharing information within the provision, which supports safeguarding.

6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior member of staff, who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) within the provision.
- The DSL carries a significant level of responsibility and they are given time, funding, resources and support to carry out the role effectively.
- During term time, the DSL will be available during Connex hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- When the DSL is absent, the deputies will act as cover.
- Outside of Connex hours, the DSL can be contacted via email or phone call.
- The DSL will:
 - Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
 - Have a thorough understanding of local multi-agency thresholds guidance
 - Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
 - Contribute to the assessment of children
 - Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
 - Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
 - Work with the virtual school head to ensure there is effective support and oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children in kinship care and those children with a social worker.
 - Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
 - Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school
 - Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues as appropriate
 - Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support

6.3 Local Governing Committees/Local Management Boards

- The governing board will directly or through its local governing committee, management board or equivalent:
 - Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
 - Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the principal to account for its implementation
 - Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
 - Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board.

- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:
 - Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
 - Reviewing the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards
- In addition, they will ensure:
 - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
 - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
 - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
 - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
 - That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another organisation is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll) the local governing body will:
 - Seek assurance that the organisation has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
 - Make sure there are arrangements for the organisation to liaise with Connex about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
 - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply
- All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

6.4 The principal

- The principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:
 - Ensuring the safety and welfare of all children attending the setting, including where children are placed with external or alternative providers
 - Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
 - Ensuring all staff understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
 - Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins Connex Group and via the Connex website
 - Ensuring there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
 - Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
 - Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns

7. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

- All staff should be aware that:
 - Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
 - Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- The DPA 2018 allows practitioners to share information without consent if there are concerns about the safeguarding of children and individuals at risk
- The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed about any concerns for their children (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 'Seven golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy)

8. Communication with parents or carers

- Where appropriate, all concerns about a child will be discussed with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspected concern or disclosure.
- Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.
- If it is thought that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, the local authority children's social care team will be contacted for advice.

9. Identification of those at increased risk, or have additional safeguarding needs

- Certain groups of children and young people within provisions are more likely to be identified as requiring extra support to meet their safeguarding needs; these could include:
 - Disabled children
 - Care experienced children
 - Young carers
 - Children who are bereaved
 - Children who are showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour
 - Children with mental health concerns
 - Children living in households where there is domestic abuse, mental health concerns and/or substance misuse
 - Children who are frequently missing from education care or home
 - Children with parents who are currently in prison or affected by parental offending
 - Children who at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - Children at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
 - Children missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
 - Children viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
 - Privately fostered children
- Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding concern.

10. Responding to concerns

- If a child is risk of significant harm, a referral to local authority children's social care should be made. In an emergency situation, social care and/or the police should be called **immediately** (see **Appendix A**) See also [When to Call the Police](#)
- Anyone can make a referral to children's social care. If a member of staff other than the DSL makes a referral, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.
- If a child is not in immediate risk of harm, all staff should share concerns with the DSL as soon as possible and the DSL will decide a course of action.

10.1 Referrals to children’s services

- If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children’s services or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support other staff members to do so.
- If any staff makes a referral directly, they must tell the DSL as soon as possible.
- The local authority will make a decision about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.
- If the child’s situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child’s situation improves.
- Connex will use the local safeguarding partnerships’ policies on resolution of professional disagreements relating to safeguarding and protection of children in all cases where escalation is required, to achieve the right outcome for children.

[Swindon Multi-Agency Process for the Resolution of Professional Disagreements Relating to Safeguarding Protection of children](#)

- Where a young person has reached the age of 18, the setting should inform the relevant children’s services team and then as directed make contact with the relevant adult services team for the locality for the setting.
- *Additionally, a log of referrals and dates must be maintained for independent nurseries, schools and colleges.*

See **Appendix E** for local authority contact details

10.2 Concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse
- Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs”. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting’, ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.
- Possible indicators that a child has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a child may be at risk, are set out in **Appendix F** of this policy.
- All teachers have a mandatory duty to report concerns about FGM. See [Mandatory reporting of FGM](#)
- This includes if a teacher:
 - Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
 - Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth
- The duty for teachers does not apply in cases where a child is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out.
- Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow safeguarding procedures.
- Cases should be referred to using the provisions safeguarding procedures. In an emergency situation, social care and/or the police should be called **immediately**
- Staff should not examine children

10.3 Concerns about radicalisation

- If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, concerns should be reported to the DSL who will decide a course of action.
- If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children’s social care (see ‘Referral to children’s services’ above). The DSL should be informed as practically possible after the referral.

- Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or [Channel](#), the government’s programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or the local authority children’s social care team.
- For non-emergency situations, the DfE has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a child or email to counter.extremism@education.gov.uk.
- In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if:
 - Someone is in immediate danger
 - Someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
 - Something is heard or seen that may be terrorist-related

10.4 Concerns about child on child abuse

- All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.
- Staff also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
- Most cases of children hurting other children will be dealt with under the provision’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:
 - Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
 - Could put children in the setting at risk
 - Is violent
 - Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol
 - Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

See **Appendix F** for more information about child-on-child abuse.

10.4.1 Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

- If a child makes an allegation of abuse against another child:
 - Staff must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
 - The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
 - The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)
 - The DSL will contact external agencies, if appropriate
- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator.

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

- Connex recognises the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.
- To achieve this, we will:
 - Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
 - Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards females, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
 - Ensure our curriculum helps to educate children about appropriate behaviour and consent
 - Ensure children are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems

- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
 - Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum
 - Support children who have witnessed sexual violence
 - Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police but will always consider how:
 - Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children’s social care to determine this

10.5. Concerns about sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’)

- If any member of staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), it must reported to the DSL immediately.
- Staff should reassure children that they will receive support and help from the DSL.
- Staff should not:
 - View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it (if it is already viewed the imagery by accident, this must be reported to the DSL)
 - Delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it
 - Ask the child/ren who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility)
 - Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child/ren it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
 - Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

10.6 Concerns about mental health

- Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- For mental health concern about a child speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.
- Refer to the Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

10.7 Concerns about attendance

- Schools have a statutory duty to make reasonable enquiries to establish a pupil’s whereabouts and to notify the local authority of any child who may be missing, via a CME referral process, at day 10 of unsuccessful enquiries. See **Appendix E** for local authority contact details

11. Managing disclosures

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue all staff should:

- Listen to and believe them
- Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you.

- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up the conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words and pass it on to the DSL.
- Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police directly and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

More advice about dealing with disclosures is in **Appendix D**

12. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

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

- To address this, our setting aims to:
 - Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of children, staff, volunteers and governors
 - Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
 - Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
 - Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

12.1 The four key categories of risk

- Online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:
 - **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
 - **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
 - **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
 - **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

Connex will:

- Educate children about online safety as part of the curriculum
- Train staff, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras as outlines in the Employee Acceptable Use policy
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk from the school's/colleges IT systems
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

13. Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

Connex recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges

- Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers.
- Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:
 - Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
 - Children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
 - The potential for children with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
 - Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
 - Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

14. Children with a social worker

Connex recognises that children with social worker will have additional needs and vulnerabilities and a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health

- The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children
- Where a child has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:
 - Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
 - The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

15. Looked-after and previously looked-after children (CLA, PCLA)

Connex will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- There is a designated teacher, Charlie Mapson, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role. As part of their role, the designated teacher will:
 - Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
 - Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

16. Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

Connex recognises that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can have additional safeguarding or welfare needs.

- All concerns should be reported to the DSL
- When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they will be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice.
- When supporting a gender questioning children, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a child may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs
- We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child).
- We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced by families and create a culture where children can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

17. Record-keeping

Connex will hold records in line with the trust data retention schedule.

- All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions, must be recorded in writing.
- This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc.
- If staff are in any doubt about whether to record something, it should be discussed with the DSL.

17.1 Recording Concerns

Concerns and referrals are recorded using CPOMS. All records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

17.2 Transferring Files and Records Retention

- Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the provision.
- If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the child's main file.
- To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:
 - **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
 - **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term
- The DSL will ensure this file is transferred within 5 days for an in-year transfer and within 5 days of the start of a new term.
- In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.
- The DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new education setting in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the provision.
- The provision will retain records for children where there is an existing safeguarding /child protection file or who have been withdrawn to be electively educated at home. These will be stored

confidentially until the child's 25th birthday and then disposed of in a confidential and secure manner.

18. Training

All staff will undertake safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

- **All staff working directly with children will read and understand Part One and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024.**
- **All staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection training on induction this will be refreshed annually.**
- **All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively**
- Whistle blowing procedures will be covered in whole staff training so that staff know what to do if they have concerns relating to safeguarding practice within the school
- The DSL and any deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years. Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually
- The Trust through the Principal will ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training will be regularly updated. Induction and training will be in line with advice from the local safeguarding partnerships
- Connex will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training
- The Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement of children in care will undergo appropriate training
- **All staff members will complete appropriate training, this will include Prevent training using quality assured provision such as the [Government Online Prevent E-training learning package](#). The DSL will also complete Prevent referral training and in turn will provide training, advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.**
- Online and internet safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach
- All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated.
- All proprietors of independent settings will receive training on safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated.

19. Safer Recruitment and Selection

Connex has a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in our school. At Connex we have robust recruitment procedures that deter or prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment with us, this includes volunteers who may work in our provision.

- Connex pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2024) including:
 - All job advertisements for positions in our provision contain safeguarding statements
 - Advert, job description, person specifications and application forms, include safeguarding information relating to regulated activity
 - The safeguarding policy and associated processes will be provided within the applicant pack
 - All applications including shortlisting will follow safer recruitment procedures and guidance within KCSIE 2024, which includes pre appointment vetting checks.

- As part of the shortlisting process, an online search will be completed for shortlisted candidates
- References will always be obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to Connex's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children.

19.1 Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

- All visitors will be required to verify their identity
- If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.
- Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.
- Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:
 - Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
 - The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)
- All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.
- We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise children or staff.

20. Managing allegations made against members of staff or volunteers

Connex will ensure that all staff and volunteers understand the importance of reporting concerns about adults working with children.

- All allegations will be managed in line with the statutory guidance in KCSIE 2024
- All staff should report any concerns relating to staff to the Principal without delay, the Principal will report all allegations that meet the harms threshold to the LADO within 24 hours of the allegation having been received.
- Where there are concerns/allegations about the Principal, this should be referred to the Trust CEO.
- Where an allegation is of a 'low level concern' and it is felt it does not meet any of the harms threshold then Connex will ensure KCSIE 2024 processes are followed.
- Advice will be sought from the LADO in any instances where it is unsure if the harms threshold has been met.
- Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with the Principal/CEO/Directors of Education/Trust Safeguarding Lead or LGC Chair or feel their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available.
- Staff can call 08000 28 0285 – 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk . Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

See Managing Allegations and Low Level Concerns Policy.

This policy is adopted by Connex (part of the Brunel Education) and will be reviewed every year or earlier if change to legislation.

This policy is adopted by the BE and will be reviewed every 1 year or earlier if change to legislation.

Signed:  CEO

Signed:  Chairman of the BE Board

Approval Date: September 2024

Appendix A: types of abuse

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

- › Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- › Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- › Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- › Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- › Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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

- › Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- › Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

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

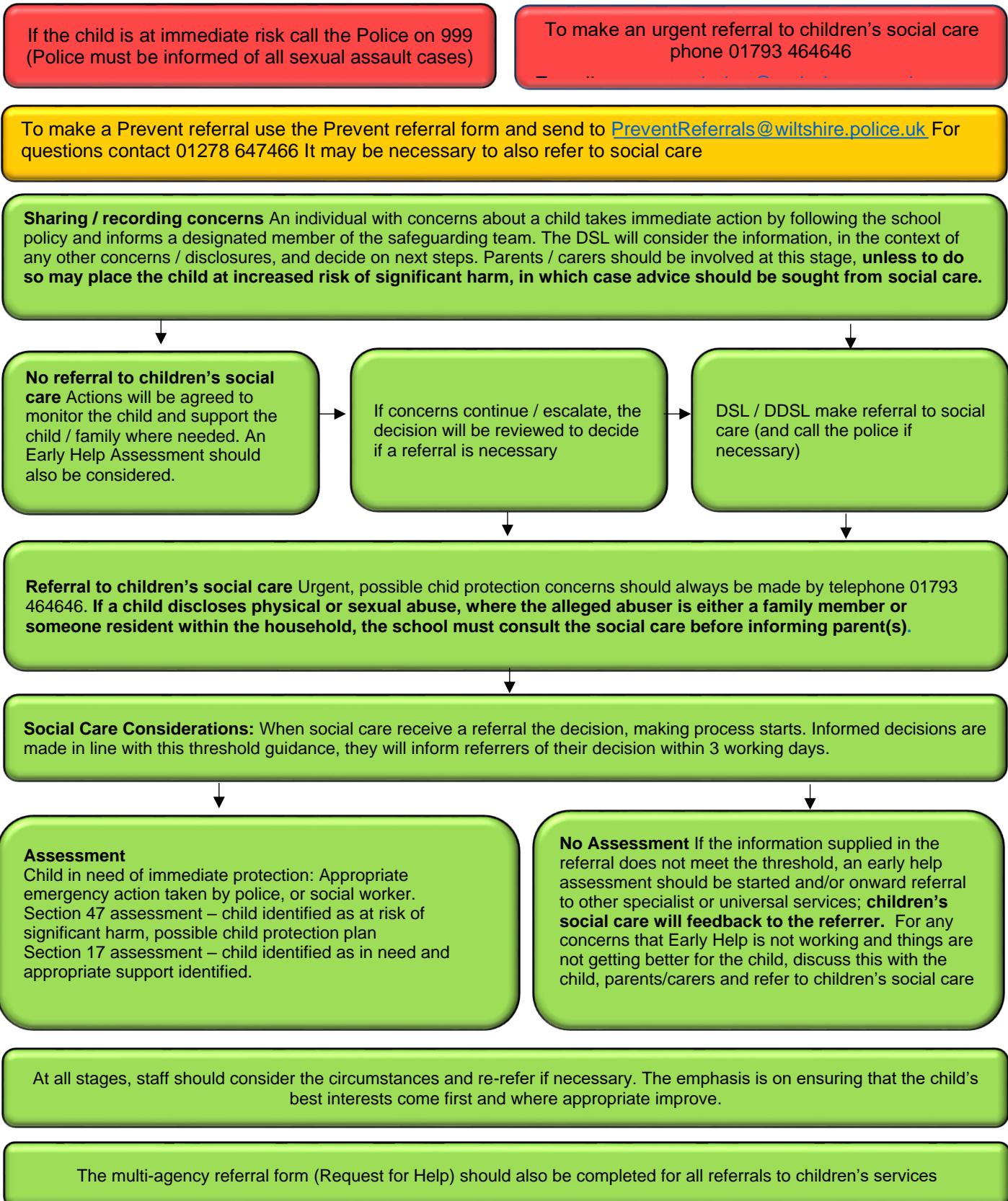
Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

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

- › Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- › Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- › Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- › Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Appendix B: If you have concerns about a child:



Appendix B: If you have concerns about a child

If you have a concern about an adult, raise your concerns immediately with the Principal will refer to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer).

The Name of the Principal is Mark Wiseman, 07918 497 095

If the Principal is not available, contact the Trust Safeguarding Lead and Head of People Services at the Trust.

If your concern is about the Principal, contact the CEO.

Jackie Fieldwick jfieldwick@brunel.org.uk 07827 296667

LADO DETAILS

LADO@swindon.gov.uk

For help and advice or if a member of staff feels their genuine concerns are not being addressed, general guidance can be found at:

Advice on whistleblowing <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Appendix D Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

When a child tells me about abuse they have experienced, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has said. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as possible afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. Add name, date and signature to this record. Alter this to add to CP recording system, ensure any handwritten notes are given to the DSL for filing
- Pass this record on as soon as possible, immediately if significant risk is identified, to the DSL

It is not staff's role to seek disclosures or investigate. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and ensure the child is supported through any disclosure process.

Appendix E: Local contact numbers

For Provision use only

CONNEX GROUP		
Headlands Site		
DSL	Mark Wiseman	07918 497 095
DDSL	Alyson Mazotta	07387 531 137
DDSL	Tori Carless	07785 638 052
DDSL	Charlie Mapson	07385 411 138
DDSL	Nikki Williams	07825 044 509
Shaw Farm Site		
DSL	Christie Rees	07918 555 746
DDSL	Mark Wiseman	07918 497 095
DDSL	Gen Aylott	n/a

SWINDON	
Contact Swindon (Children)	Telephone 01793 464646 E-mail: contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk Emergency Duty Service (EDS) outside office hours on 01793 436699
MASH Adviser	Louise Forrester LForrester@swindon.gov.uk
LADO	LADO@swindon.gov.uk
Safeguarding Adviser	SafeguardingEducation@swindon.gov.uk
Education Welfare Service	CME@swindon.gov.uk
PREVENT	Local Prevent team 01278 647466 PreventReferrals@wiltshire.police.uk communitysafetypartnership@swindon.gov.uk
Adult Social Care	01793 445500

Appendix F: specific safeguarding issues

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

This information is based on annex A of the UK Council of Internet Safety's [advice for education settings](#).

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

- **Sexually motivated incidents**

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- › Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- › Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- › Moved from a public to a private platform
- › Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes
- › Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits
- › Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images
- › **Financially motivated incidents**

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- › Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them

- › Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- › Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- › Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person
- › Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- › Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- › Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes
- › Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts
- › Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person

Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- › Are at risk of harm or neglect
- › Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- › Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- › Come from the families of service personnel
- › Go missing or run away from home or care
- › Are supervised by the youth justice system
- › Cease to attend a school
- › Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- › Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- › Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- › Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- › Misusing drugs and alcohol
- › Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- › Regularly missing school or education
- › Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- › Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- › Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the 2.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- › Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- › Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- › Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- › Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- › Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- › Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- › Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- › Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- › Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

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

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the 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.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Older children may also experience and/or be the perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This can include sexual harassment.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day.

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

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to local authority children's social care.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 9 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a child is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- › A child confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- › A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- › A family/child already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- › A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour

- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a child may be at risk of FGM include:

- › The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- › FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- › A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- › A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- › A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
 - Being unexpectedly absent from school
 - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the child about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- › Speak to the child about the concerns in a secure and private place
- › Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- › Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk
- › Refer the child to an education welfare officer, pastoral team, or school counsellor, as appropriate

Preventing radicalisation

- › **Radicalisation** refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence
- › **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:
 - Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
 - Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
 - Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points
- › **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 of terrorism 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.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our children to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a child is being radicalised can include:

- › Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- › Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- › Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- › Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- › Converting to a new religion
- › Isolating themselves from family and friends
- › Talking as if from a scripted speech
- › An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- › A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- › Increased levels of anger
- › Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- › Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions

- › Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- › Possessing extremist literature
- › Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a child, they will follow safeguarding procedures set out in this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- › Between 2 children of any age and sex
- › Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- › Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- › Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- › Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt
- › Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns
- › Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- › Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- › Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- › Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- › Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

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

Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- › Increased absence from school
- › Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- › Significant decline in performance
- › Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- › Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- › Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- › Being male
- › Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- › Having experienced child maltreatment
- › Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a child being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.