



STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy applies to Littlegarth School ("the School"), which includes the EYFS setting. This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on the School website.

The safety and well-being of all our pupils at Littlegarth School is given the highest priority. Our business is to know everyone as an individual and to provide a secure and caring environment, so that every pupil can learn and live in safety. We expect respect, good manners and fair play to be shown by everyone so that every pupil can develop to his/her full potential and feel positive about him/herself as an individual. All pupils should learn to care for and support each other.

The purpose of this policy is to inform staff and others of the proper course of action if for any reason they believe a pupil

1. has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm
2. is in need of Early Help assessment and support from one or more agencies (including mental health and emotional support).

The school emphasises that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that anyone can make a referral to children's services, the LADO or the Police. In most circumstances however, concerns will usually be reported in accordance with these procedures through the Head and DSL.

AVAILABILITY

The policy is made available to parents and parents of prospective pupils on the website and a copy will be sent to parents and prospective parents free of charge on request from the school office.

GUIDANCE

The policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2025) ("KCSIE") **Littlegarth School: Safeguarding Policy** - September 2025
 - KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (September 2018)
 - KCSIE also provides links to various toolkits and additional advice and support
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (February 2024) ("WT")
 - WT refers to the non-statutory advice: *Information sharing* (July 2018)
- *Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales December 2023*. Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:
 - *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (June 2015)
 - *The use of social media for on-line radicalisation* (July 2015)
- *Relationships education, relationships, and sex education (RSE) and health education* (September 2021).
- *Children's Social Care National Framework* (December 2023)
- *Behaviour in schools* (September 2022)

- *Working together to improve school attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (February 2024)*
- *Keeping children safe in out of school settings (April 2022)*
- *Digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (March 2023)*
- *After school clubs, community activities, and tuition (safeguarding guidance for providers) (September 2023)*
- The Charity Commission guidance *Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees* (June 2022)]

This policy also takes into account the procedures and practice of Essex local authority] as part of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements set up by the MASH (Local Area Safeguarding Hub).

Local Safeguarding Partners:

Our policy and procedures for dealing with concerns about a child are in accordance with guidelines and procedures recommended by the Safeguarding Partners for Essex (www.escb.co.uk). Our policy applies to the whole School, including our Early Years Foundation Stage children.

Information about the Essex Partners and local procedures can be found at <https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2038/essex-masa-plan-2019-20-updated-280619-v1b.pdf>

EQUALITY ACT 2010

The School understands and recognises their obligations under the Equality Act and that the school must not discriminate against pupils because of a protected characteristic including sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, or sexual orientation. In the context of safeguarding, the School will consider how to support pupils with regard to particular protected characteristics in order to meet their specific needs. The School will also consider their duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

The School also complies with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, including putting special provision in place to support dialogue with children who may not be able to convey their wishes and feelings as they may want to. This might include, for example, those who have communication difficulties and those who do not speak English or for whom English is not their first language.

CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

The School has a duty to consider at all times the best interests of the pupil and take action to enable all pupils to achieve the best outcomes. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. The School adopts a 'whole school' approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school or college, and ensuring that, safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the School using this safeguarding policy for concerns about the safety and/or welfare of children. Parents may contact the ISI directly if they wish.

The School has arrangements for listening to children and providing early help through the child's class teacher, form teacher, Learning Support department, School counsellor and Pastoral Deputy Head.

ALL staff and volunteers must read:

- The school's safeguarding policy (this document)
- At least Part One of KCSIE 2025 (or, for staff that do not work directly with children, Annex A)
- Senior leaders and governors must read the whole document and staff involved with recruitment are asked to read Part 2.

All staff and volunteers must:

- Understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- Be prepared to identify children who could benefit from early help;
- Follow the agreed processes for any child who they are concerned about their welfare;
- Be aware of systems and processes that support safeguarding such as the safeguarding, behaviour, staff code of conduct/staff behaviour policies; children absent from education.
- Be aware of the role of the DSL
- Receive regular safeguarding training, including filtering and monitoring understanding
- Be aware that some children may not be ready or able to tell someone that they are being abused.

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

This information is all contained within this policy, or associated policies and documents referred to.

DEFINITION OF CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING AND SIGNS OF ABUSE

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect 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.

Where a child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so, action must be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of Early Help assessment and support, even if he/she is not suffering harm or are at immediate risk. We recognise that child on child abuse and/or bullying can be a safeguarding issue and follow the local guidelines for the threshold for involving external agencies. The school also actively promotes fundamental British values and has, in place, a policy with regard to 'prevent' duties and responsibilities. Relevant policies, such as anti-bullying, 'prevent' and safe use of information technology and social media are available on the school's website.

Procedure for dealing with and referring concerns about children in need or at risk:

If staff suspect or hear any allegation or complaint of abuse, exploitation, or neglect from a child or any third party, they must act immediately and follow the relevant procedure below. Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. Fears regarding sharing information under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation ("UK GDPR") must not be allowed to stand in the way of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and neither the DPA 2018 or the UK GDPR prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Parental consent is not required for referrals.

Guidance for reporting:

Usually the DSL will make referrals, but it is important to remember that anyone can make a referral, and it is important to not delay in waiting for the DSL / DDSL if they are not available. Make sure you have written your notes wherever possible, have the child's address, date of birth, sibling names to hand and give information in a factual manner and be ready to explain your reasons for making the referral. Write down everything you are asked to do by the agency you have been in touch with and follow their instructions, enlisting help if you need it. Remember – the child comes first. Afterwards, record the actions you have taken and inform the DSL.

Child in Need

If a child is considered a Child in Need (Section 17) then a referral will be made to the Essex Safeguarding Children Board by the DSL or DDSL, **but anyone can make a referral:**

<https://www.escb.co.uk/working-with-children/concerns-about-the-welfare-of-a-child>

0345 603 7627

Choose Option 2 (Social Care) then

Choose Option 4 (If You Are Concerned About A Child)

Essex Safeguarding Children Board will then make the decision as to whether the child is a Child in Need and put in place additional measures.

A 'Child in Need' (CIN) is defined under the Children Act 1989 as:

'a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled'.

Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Child at Risk

If you consider a child is considered 'at risk' (Section 47) then the DSL, DDSL, or any member of staff can make a referral to the Essex Safeguarding Children Board who will then make enquiries as appropriate; but anyone can make a referral:

<https://www.escb.co.uk/working-with-children/concerns-about-the-welfare-of-a-child>

0345 603 7627

If the child is classed as 'at risk' they may have a child protection plan put in place. If the child is in danger of immediate or significant harm (Section 47) then ESCB will take appropriate emergency action.

If you consider a child to be in immediate danger, you must phone the police on 999. You can alternatively phone social care or the NSPCC:

Essex Council (Social Services)– reporting concerns:

If the child you are concerned about is at risk of immediate harm, call 0345 603 7627 and ask for the priority line. This number is open Monday to Thursday 8:45 am to 5pm, and Fridays 8:45am to 4:15pm. For out of hours or bank holidays, call the Emergency Duty Team on 0345 606 1212.

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline – 0808 800 5000

[The Children Act 1989](#) defines 'harm' as "ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development". 'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; 'health' means physical or mental health; and 'ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical. As a result of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the definition of harm also includes "impairment suffered by hearing or seeing the ill-treatment of another".

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation, or other so-called 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and extra-familial harms like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

What will the ESCB do?

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required). If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

Procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns or disclosures in school

As an adult in the school, if you notice a sign of abuse or a child discloses something of a safeguarding nature to you then you need to write it down and report it as soon as possible, if not immediately to the DSL or DDSL. Safeguarding concerns are reported using the Engage database system wherever possible but can also be reported using the purple form found in the staff room and should be handed to the DSL / DDSL in person in this instance.

If the allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, the disclosure should be managed with two members of staff, one being the DSL or DDSL.

When completing the form:

- Use clear language and remain factual; keep handwriting legible
- Locate any injuries on the body map form
- Ensure key details about the pupil and about you are completed

If a child discloses information then:

- Reassure them that you are listening
- Take notes if you can, but if this puts them off talking then write down everything immediately afterwards making sure it is as the child presented it – in their words.
- Do not promise that you can keep it to yourself; make sure they know that you will need to tell someone else, but only those necessary
- Do not ask leading questions; do not ask questions using 'Why?', as this apports blame
- Use question starters such as ;How, When, Who What do get a factual response.
- listen carefully
- observe their behaviour
- reassure the individual that the allegation/complaint will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- ensure that the individual is not made to feel ashamed for making the report or given the impression that they are creating a problem by making the report
- be aware that the individual may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and speak to the DSL if they have concerns
- determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication

Terrorism Concerns

Should you be concerned that a child is being drawn into terrorism, you should use the usual safeguarding procedures. The school has a Prevent Risk Assessment and regularly trains staff on the Prevent Duty.

Early Help assessment

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may be in need of Early Help assessment. Any child may benefit from Early Help, but all staff should be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health, and care plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement as association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, or in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- Is misusing drugs and other alcohol themselves
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, and/or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- Is a privately fostered child
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage

Early help is support for children of all ages that improves resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Early help may be appropriate for children who have several needs, or whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable.

Some Early Help assessment can be provided via Essex Safeguarding Children Hub with the use of external agencies; equally the school has links with tutors, counsellors, external professionals to put parents in touch with but also can offer additional support in-house, such as opportunity for children to talk to a member of staff, have 1:1 or small group support or have alternative opportunities provided, such as lunch time clubs such as Wellbeing. The relationship between pupils, parents and staff is really important for ensuring that Early Help assessment is in place as needed. Early Help assessment is usually with the consent of parents. Early Help assessment is a means of providing support as soon as a problem emerges.

The school is committed to identifying the needs and working with parents and other agencies to support pupils who are in need of additional help.

For children who are in need of additional support, the DSL will use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) leading to inter-agency assessment and support from appropriate local services. This framework will only be used with the consent of parents. Early Help cases are kept under constant review and consideration will be given to a local authority assessment for statutory service if the child's situation does not appear to be improving, or is getting worse.

The following list, although not exhaustive, indicates the range of harm that can affect children. Many of these issues can be considered in the context of Early Help assessment and support to the children concerned or their families.

However, they may also be indicative of patterns of concern leading to child protection action in the context of actual or likely significant harm.

- bullying including cyberbullying – See Child on Child (Peer) abuse guidance;
- children missing education;

- *children missing from home or care;*
- *child sexual exploitation (CSE);*
- *witnessing domestic violence, alcohol or drugs misuse (please note that children must be recognised as victims of domestic violence in their own right)*
- *eating disorders;*
- *fabricated or induced illness;*
- *faith abuse;*
- *female genital mutilation (FGM);*
- *upskirting*
- *forced marriage;*
- *gangs and youth violence including 'County Lines'*
- *gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG);*
- *hate;*
- *honour based violence*
- *mental health issues;*
- *missing children and adults;*
- *Modern slavery*
- *private fostering;*
- *radicalisation;*
- *relationship abuse;*
- *self-harm;*
- *Child on Child (peer) abuse/banter/sexting;*
- *the vulnerability of pupils with SEN/D*
- *trafficking*
- *Cyber crime*

Still concerned?

If you make a referral to ESCB or complete a safeguarding form for the DSL and you are concerned that there has been no action, you should follow this up with the person you passed the information on to.

Everyone's Responsibility.....

All members of staff/volunteers and governors have a duty to safeguard our pupils' welfare and must therefore familiarise themselves and comply at all times with this policy. This includes a duty both to children in need and to children at risk of harm. All staff/volunteers who work with children should read at least Part 1 of KCSIE (September 2025). Those staff who do not work directly with children may read Annex A instead. School leaders must read the whole document, as must governors. They should be aware that incidents affecting the welfare of children can happen at any time and anywhere and are required to be alert to any possible concerns. In effect, safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility'.

Annex B provides, for example, details of the additional and specific harms that may affect children in different circumstances. These include sexual exploitation in all its forms (including upskirting), Female Genital Mutilation, risk of radicalisation, and children who are missing education who, as a consequence, are at greater risk of exploitation. The school is also aware of contextual safeguarding issues that may adversely affect the wellbeing of children. Issues include, for example, domestic violence, access to gangs, substance misuse and mental health issues. The School will as part of the wider assessment of children, consider whether environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The School will share as much information with Children's Social Care as possible as part of the referral process to enable consideration of all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Online Safety

Children can be at risk of harm both inside and outside of school, and online. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and understand what to look for for early identification of abuse and neglect.

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk online as well as face to face and in many cases, abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline and can be through messages, images and chat groups.

Safeguarding harm can also be done through misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories and staff should be aware of this.

Staff receive online safety training which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction, and on a regular basis (see filtering and monitoring section below).

In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The safeguarding governor checks that regular training, including online training, is taking place.

Teaching children how to keep safe

The governing body OR school proprietor ensures that all pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through the curriculum and PSHE to help children to adjust their behaviours, both inside and outside of School, in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation and extremism. This includes teaching pupils about the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet and the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults. The School recognises that a "one size fits all" approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND might be needed.

Internet safety (including when children are online at home) is an integral part of the School's IT curriculum. Children have regular online safety lessons as part of their curriculum. They are taught how to stay safe online during school activities, and also when online at home. These core messages are repeated at the beginning of every year. In addition, Year 5 children, have a separate iPad induction session which emphasises e-safety on these devices. Children are made aware that filtering and monitoring by the school on their iPads is 24 hours a day. More information can be found in the School's Online Safety Policy.

Indicators of 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: 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.

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

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

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible symptoms of abuse:

The NSPCC lists some of the signs and behaviours which may indicate that a child is being abused:

- repeated minor injuries;
- children who are dirty, smelly, poorly clothed or who appear underfed;
- children who have lingering illnesses which are not attended to, deterioration in school work, or significant changes in behaviour, aggressive behaviour, severe tantrums;
- an air of 'detachment' or 'don't care' attitude;
- overly compliant behaviour;
- a 'watchful attitude';
- sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child's age), continual open masturbation, aggressive and inappropriate sex play;
- a child who is reluctant to go home, or is kept away from school for no apparent reason;
- does not trust adults, particularly those who are close;
- 'tummy pains' with no medical reason;

- eating problems, including over-eating, loss of appetite;
- disturbed sleep, nightmares, bed wetting;
- running away from home, suicide attempts;
- self-inflicted wounds;
- reverting to younger behaviour;
- depression, withdrawal;
- relationships between child and adults which are secretive and exclude others.

These signs are not evidence themselves; but may be a warning, particularly if a child exhibits several of them or a pattern emerges. It is important to remember that there may be other explanations for a child showing such signs. Abuse is not easy to diagnose, even for experts.

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

Some areas of possible abuse are less likely in a school such as Littlegarth – partly from the demographic and partly due to the age of the children. Staff are aware of all forms of abuse and know to think that ‘it could happen here’, whilst being mindful of the more / less likely areas of concern.

Pupils with SEN/D

It is recognised that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. There can be barriers to identifying abuse and staff must be mindful not to dismiss the child’s behaviour, mood or injury as being part of their condition without further exploration. This means that extra care must be given to talk to the child or raise a safeguarding concern immediately should you be concerned about any aspect of a SEND child. Remember, you won’t see the whole picture, but must report your concerns.

SEND pupils are more prone to being bullied or being isolated by their peers but this must not be tolerated, in line with the school’s bullying policy. Additional care must be taken to ensure that an SEN child is not subject to child on child abuse and any concerns, however small must be reported. The form or class teacher here, as well as staff on duty are crucial to ensuring that child on child abuse does not happen at playtimes and that children have someone to talk to. More time and consideration must be given to allowing children with SEN time to speak out and their 1:1 SEN teacher may be their chosen avenue.

Some pupils with SEND or certain medical conditions are disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying without showing any outward signs. It is important for form teachers and 1:1 teachers to take time to speak with any SEN children in their class and to monitor any changes in their behaviour, reporting any small concerns.

Some pupils with SEND may have communication barriers to reporting abuse and form teachers along with 1:1 SEN teachers should ensure that alternative mechanisms are in place for children to speak out, such as drawing or using models or play equipment. Young children also benefit from this approach.

Some pupils with SEND may have difficulties with cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content / behaviours in school.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will need close liaison between the DLS and SENCo.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans or gender questioning (LGBTQ+).

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ+. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBTQ+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and is taught at an age appropriate level.

How should staff respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes being shared by pupils?

All members of staff in an education setting have a duty to recognise and refer any incidents involving nudes and semi-nudes and will be equipped with the necessary safeguarding training and support to enable them to recognise concerns.

For this purpose, 'sharing nudes/semi-nudes' means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by persons under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media (including Snapchat), gaming platforms, chat apps (including WhatsApp and iMessage) or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes may happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and/or via closed social media accounts. The images, videos or live streams may include more than one child. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

Many professionals may refer to 'nudes and semi-nudes' as:

- youth produced sexual imagery or 'youth involved' sexual imagery
- indecent imagery. This is the legal term used to define nude or semi-nude images and videos of children and young people under the age of 18.
- 'sexting'. Many adults may use this term, however some young people interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know' rather than sharing images
- image-based sexual abuse. This term may be used when referring to the nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Terms such as 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting' are also used to refer to specific incidents of nudes and semi-nudes being shared. However, these terms are more often used in the context of adult-to-adult

non-consensual image sharing offences outlined in s.33-35 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015, Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 and s.67A of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Terms such as 'deep fakes' and 'deep nudes' may also be used by adults and young people to refer to digitally manipulated and AI-generated nudes and semi-nudes. Any direct disclosure by a child will be taken seriously and staff will ensure the child is feeling comfortable and will only ask appropriate and sensitive questions, in order to minimise further distress or trauma to them.

If staff are notified or become aware of an incident of nudes or semi-nudes being shared by a pupil or of a pupil, they should refer the incident to the DSL as soon as possible.

The DSL will follow the DDMSC / UKIS guidance "*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*" (February 2024) when responding to a report of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes. This will include:

- Holding an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns.
- Carrying out interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).
- Informing parents and carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process in order to best support the pupil unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform them should be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.
- Carrying out a risk assessment to determine whether there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care through the MASH or equivalent will be made if any of the following points apply:

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

If none of the above apply, the School may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. All incidents relating to nudes and semi-nudes being shared need to be recorded, whether they have been referred externally or not. The decision to respond to an incident without involving the police or children's social care will only be made in cases where the DSL (or equivalent) is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to any child or young person involved and the risks can be managed within the School's pastoral support and disciplinary framework. Any decision in this regard will be made by the DSL (or equivalent) with input from the Head. The decision will be made and recorded in line with this Policy and will be based on consideration of the best interests of any child or young person involved. Any decision will take into account proportionality as well as the welfare and protection of any child or young person. The decision will be

reviewed throughout the process of responding to the incident. If doubts remain local safeguarding arrangements will be followed.

This guidance does not apply to the sharing of images of persons under 18 by an adult over 18 as this constitutes child sexual abuse. In the event that staff become aware of such an incident, they should notify the DSL immediately, who should always inform the police as a matter of urgency.

Guidance for children is that they should always tell an adult if they have received pictures of this nature, or have sent pictures, so that support and guidance can be offered and steps taken as appropriate to the situation.

Child on Child bullying or abuse

The different forms child on child abuse can take are:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment. ;
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Upskirting
- Initiation / haze type violence and rituals

The School takes a zero tolerance approach to child on child abuse and also recognises that even where there are no reported cases of child-on child abuse, this does not mean it is not happening. We recognise that passing off things as 'banter' or 'growing up' can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour. Whilst girls are more likely to be victims and boys the perpetrators, all child on child abuse is unacceptable and is taken seriously.

SEND pupils are more prone to being bullied or being isolated by their peers but this must not be tolerated, in line with the school's bullying policy. Additional care must be taken to ensure that an SEN child is not subject to child on child abuse and any concerns, however small must be reported. The form or class teacher here, as well as staff on duty are crucial to ensuring that child on child abuse does not happen at playtimes and that children have someone to talk to. More time and consideration must be given to allowing children with SEN time to speak out and their 1:1 SEN teacher may be their chosen avenue.

Staff know that all children are capable of abusing their peers (including online)

Minimising risk of child on child abuse:

Staff supervision : staff do inside and outside lunch and playtime duties where they are vigilant to pupils' behaviour, pupils are supervised in classroom in changing rooms on buses and younger pupils are supervised around school.

Preventative: we educate pupils in assemblies, PSHE and form time about The Littlegarth Way, kindness, respecting others, being yourself, knowing who to talk to and have talks from NSPCC and for Anti-Bullying week and Power2Inspire on disability sports (sport for all).

Deterrants: we use our behaviour policy for sanctions; we challenge inappropriate physical behaviour le..g pulling down trousers, grabbing bottoms, lifting up skirts)

Role Modelling : Year 6 are role models to the rest of the school, being chosen for positions of responsibility such as Head Boy or Girl, being Captains of Sport or being prefects for the playground or to a specific younger class. Staff are also role models to pupils in the way we treat each other.

Opportunities and pathways to speak out: Pupils are reminded regularly in assemblies and in class that they can talk to anyone in school. Small class sizes mean that pupils can have attention from their class teacher.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children:

We take our definition of sexual violence from the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#). In addition, we define sexual violence as 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can be between two children, or a group of children and can be of any age and sex. Both sexes may be affected, although girls are more likely to be victims of sexual violence, and boys are more likely to be perpetrators of sexual harassment. We recognise that Children with SEND are also more vulnerable.

We are aware that online sexual violence or sexual harassment can be more complex, such as images shared at another school or across the internet, upskirting or the victim being excluded offline as well as online. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. We recognise that sexual violence and harassment can occur both online and offline, both physically and verbally and is never acceptable. We make it clear that all forms of sexual violence and harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting; physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (this may cross a line into sexual violence) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- and online sexual harassment, which might include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting);
- inappropriate sexual comments on social media;
- exploitation;
- coercion and threats.
- Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wider continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to develop into inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage and is termed as HSB. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. When considering HSB, the stages and development of the children are critical

factors. Addressing inappropriate behaviours can be an important intervention that prevents further problematic, abusive and / or violent behaviours in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experience their own abuse and trauma and are offered appropriate support.

How Allegations of Child on Child Abuse will be dealt with:

Staff record instances on incident forms or safeguarding forms and pass to the DSL / DDSL immediately. These records are kept and details transferred to the central log. The DSL or DDSL, or form teacher, will investigate in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy. Victims and perpetrators will be supported in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Staff should respond to, and record any allegations in the same thorough, sensitive and caring manner as any safeguarding concern.

Children know that they can talk to any adult and may choose to disclose to any member of staff, who should then act upon the disclosure. Children are regularly reminded in PSHE and assemblies who they can talk to if they are worried about anything.

Staff will be available to support all involved.

Actions specifically for sexual violence and sexual harassment between children:

Children may find it difficult to speak out about the abuse so signs or actions that staff report are important as key indicators. If any information comes to light, even if hearsay, then the adult who hears it must report it as a concern so that it can be addressed.

It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

It is important that behaviour is addressed immediately. Addressing inappropriate behaviour the first time it occurs is an important intervention that helps prevent further behaviours in the future. Behaviour is addressed in line with our Anti-Bullying policy and parents are involved from the outset. The victim is spoken with sensitively by the DSL or DDSL (with another adult if possible) and reassured that they will be kept safe and are being taken seriously. They will not be promised confidentiality, but will share with only those necessary. They will be checked in with regularly afterwards until there is satisfaction that it is no longer a worry for the victim. Counselling will be offered if appropriate.

Any child who has been a victim of sexual harassment or violence will be closely monitored to ensure that they are not adversely affected and further actions put in place to ensure that this does not happen.

Should there be any indication that a child is themselves a victim of abuse themselves, this will be dealt with in line with our safeguarding policy.

Should the report include an online element e.g sharing nudes or semi-nudes then staff must not view the images or have the images forwarded to them. They must keep the device or location of the images safe.

Staff must be aware that children may have barriers to coming forward with reports of sexual harassment or violence and make opportunities during PSHE and form time for pupils to express themselves in their way. Teachers should also be mindful of any changes in pupils that may alert them to abuse.

All reports must be a written record and only recorded as the child presents them.

The DSL will refer to any local area thresholds for child on child abuse to ascertain if the abuse is to be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate Risk Assessment, which is kept under review. With sexual harassment, a RA is on a case by case basis and recognising the importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.

Sexual activity involving a child under 13 will always be referred to the police and social care.

When considering an initial response to a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will consider:

- The wishes of the victim in how they want to proceed
- The nature of the incidents and whether a crime has been committed (e.g. nudes are illegal to share)
- The ages and developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children
- If it is a one off or sustained pattern?
- That it could be within an intimate personal relationship
- What risks are to others or ongoing risks to the victim?
- Other related issues and wider context

The DSL and the school will always act in the best interests of the child

The School may:

- Manage the case internally
- Involve Early Help assessment
- Refer to Children's Social Care
- Report to the Police

Should the report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL should consider what help or support the child may need and if they are being abused by someone else. If the report is deliberately malicious then disciplinary action may be considered appropriate.

Ongoing support and safeguarding for the victim will be discussed with them.

Schools and colleges, as relevant agencies, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements.

Cases will always be reviewed for lessons learnt and practices to be strengthened.

Serious violence: indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime include increased absence from School, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All staff should be aware of the associated risks which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence (for example, being male, frequent absence from school or permanently excluded from school, experienced child maltreatment or having been involved in offending) and understand the measures in place to manage these.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE): CSE is a form of child sexual abuse (see above) which occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate

or deceive a child into taking part in sexual activity . It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any persons (male or female) under the age of 18 years (including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex) who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The below CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends, and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

CSE may occur alone, or may overlap with CCE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE): CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in any criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or (for the financial or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see below), forced to shoplift or pickpocket. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (especially when they are older children). It is important in these circumstances that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

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

CCE may occur alone, or may overlap with CSE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

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

County lines: County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK – no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults exploited to sell drugs and move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

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

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- that have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Modern Slavery: Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

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

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DdoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network, or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying, or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets, and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

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

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Mental Health

Children's good mental health is of paramount importance at Littlegarth. The setting itself has much green outdoor space for children to play and bright, spacious classrooms so children feel a sense of freedom. However, children's mental health can suffer and it is important that staff are aware of children's anxieties and mental health so that strategies can be put in place to help.

A concern about a child's mental health may come from the child themselves who can express how they are feeling, it may come from a parent or be noticed by staff. Some of the main symptoms of poor mental health are:

- poor concentration.
- being easily distracted.
- worrying more.
- finding it hard to make decisions.
- feeling less interested in day-to-day activities.
- low mood.
- feeling overwhelmed by things.
- tearfulness.

Staff who have a concern about a child, or who have had a conversation with a parent about their child will put strategies in place for the child and disseminate to other staff, this could include external counselling, buddy system in school, going to the mindfulness club, a quiet place to catch up with their teacher, being able to be involved in further activities. The class teacher will liaise with the parents. The SEN lead may be involved with further strategies. Should the concern be ongoing after initial interventions then the DSL will review the strategies and implement further assistance, which

may include additional support from external agencies or social services. The DSL is the senior mental health lead role; the School also has a qualified therapist.

IF STAFF HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH OF A CHILD THAT IS ALSO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN, IMMEDIATE ACTION MUST BE TAKEN FOLLOWING SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES AND REFERRING TO THE DSL / DDSL.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

The School is part of Operation Encompass and so receives reports from police / social services in relation to domestic abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (“FGM”)

All teachers (along with social workers and healthcare professionals) have a statutory duty to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils.

For the purposes of the mandatory reporting duty, a teacher is someone who undertakes teaching work as follows:

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
- delivering lessons to pupils;
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
- reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

These activities are not teaching work if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purpose of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the Head to provide such direction. The mandatory reporting duty will not therefore apply to supervised teaching assistants.

At Littlegarth the risk of any pupils having been the victim of FGM is very low. However, if staff members are alert to the possibility, and if they have concerns that FGM has taken place, they must report their concerns to the police and DSL.

Girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it might be conducted on them. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place include:

- a girl comes from a community that is known to practice FGM (typically between the ages of 5 and 8). The DSL/DDSL will be aware of these pupils.
- a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin
- a girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- parents state that they or a relative will take a girl out of the country for a prolonged period (typically the start of the summer holidays) to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.

Indications that FGM may have taken place include:

- a girl may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- a girl may spend longer than normal in the toilet due to difficulties urinating
- there may be prolonged or repeated absences from school
- a noticeable behaviour change
- a girl may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) gives the Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons. Specific guidance on FGM can be found in the government publication, Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation (2011).

So called 'honour based' abuse:

Encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

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

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. To give an example of indications that a girl has already been subjected to FGM:

- A pupil may have difficulty walking, sitting, or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A pupil may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems or spend longer than normal in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from School and/or noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the pupil's return.
- A pupil is reluctant to undergo medical examination.

Forced marriage:

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one 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. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, details of which can be found in the *Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage (last updated April 2023)*. Further information on forced marriage is available in guidance published on gov.uk and by the Forced Marriage Unit. School staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

Homelessness:

Being homeless, or at risk of homelessness presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The School should be aware of potential indicators of homelessness including household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and anti-social behaviour, as well as a family being asked to leave a property. If staff are made aware or suspect that a pupil may be at risk of homelessness they should talk to the DSL in the first instance. Whilst referrals to the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not and should not replace a referral to the LADO where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, in accordance with this policy.

Child abduction and community safety incidents:

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children and the court system:

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds available on the gov.uk website.

The guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. The School may refer some parents and carers to this service where appropriate.

Children with family members in prison:

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health.

The Prison Service will undertake a child safeguarding enquiry with children's social care for all sentenced prisoners to identify any who present an ongoing risk to children from within custody. Prisons will also decide on the level of contact, if any, they will allow between a prisoner and a child based on a child contact risk assessment.

The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Filtering and Monitoring

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, we should be doing all that we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system.

The governors have approved an appropriate filtering system and monitor this through the annual safeguarding audit. The IT Manager has the responsibility, on behalf of the DSL, for implementing appropriate filtering, monitoring and cyber security arrangements, and for working with the DSL or DDSL (The Head) to monitor effectiveness, as well as with the safeguarding governor.

To meet this duty, the Department for Education has published filtering and monitoring standards which set out that schools and colleges should:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems. • review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs Governing bodies and proprietors should review the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support schools and colleges in meeting this standard.

The IT Manager uses this government info in full (see links below) to ensure that the standards are at least as good as that required:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cyber-security-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

The IT Manager and Head of Digital Learning are mindful of the government's expectations and guidance when using generative AI in school.

The IT Manager and DSL / DDSL understand how to escalate concerns when identified through their own Level 3 training.

Governing bodies should consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

TRANSPARENCY

Littlegarth School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting Littlegarth School. Copies of this policy, together with our policies relating to issues of child protection are on our website and we hope that parents and guardians will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with the School. Allegations of child abuse or concerns about the welfare of any child will be dealt with consistently in accordance with this policy. Open communications are essential at all times as it is sensitivity to issues and taking necessary action that are vital elements in keeping our pupils safe.

RELATED POLICIES

The Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and information:

1. Code of conduct for staff and volunteers Policy
2. Low Level Concern Policy (Appendix 1)
3. Guidance on procedures if a pupil reports abuse or if abuse is suspected
4. Guidance on procedures when a member of staff, volunteer or Head faces allegations of abuse (Appendix 3)
5. Guidance for pupils on confidentiality issues (Appendix 4)
6. Littlegarth School Recruitment Policy.
7. Induction Policy (Appendix 2)
8. Social media policy
9. Child on child Abuse Guidance
10. Counter-Bullying (child on child abuse)
11. Behaviour
12. Missing Child Policy
13. Use of mobiles phones, cameras etc and images policy (see below)
14. PHSE Policy ("teaching children how to keep safe") This includes relationship, sex and health education. / Relationships Education Policy
15. Online Safety Policy
16. Whistleblowing
17. Safer recruitment
18. Visiting Speakers and Visitors Policy
19. Admissions Policy
20. Attendance Policy

SAFER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES (Please see separate policy too)

Our Recruitment Policy provides clear guidelines to ensure that recruitment procedures are consistent and place safeguarding at the centre of each appointment. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches are subject to the necessary statutory vetting checks before starting work. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be essential. A DBS certificate will be obtained for the candidate before appointment or where there are delays within the DBS service as soon as possible after starting work, subject to necessary risk assessments and a separate barred list check (which will always take place before the commencement of employment at the school). Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the school may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

Schools and colleges can use the DfE's Check a teacher's record: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-a-teachers-record>

to make prohibition, direction, restriction, and children's barred list checks. The service is free to use and is available via the DfE's web page. Users will require a DfE Sign-in account to log onto the service.

Further information about obtaining a DfE Sign-in account and using Check a teacher's record to carry out a range of 'teacher status checks including verification of qualified teacher status (QTS) and the completion of teacher induction or teacher probation can be found on GOV.UK.

Further to the DBS check, anyone appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure that they are not prohibited from teaching by order of the Secretary of State. Those undertaking management posts will be subject to prohibition from the management or governance of schools checks.

All governors, volunteers and contractors working during term time are also subject to the statutory DBS checks. Written confirmation is obtained that appropriate child protection vetting checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the School's pupils, at school or on another site.

The school undertakes a range of other checks depending on the role to be performed in the school, e.g. Section 128 checks for governors. These checks can be made via gov.uk. Qualifications are checked with regard to essential qualification requirements and details are noted in the school's central register of staff appointments (SCR). Online searches are also carried out after shortlisting, and applicants are made aware of this.

Should concerns emerge about the suitability of volunteers, existing staff member's or governor's suitability to work with children, it will carry out all relevant checks as if the individual were a new member of staff. In the case of allegations against staff the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted via Essex Children's Services (Contact details are included in this policy). Procedures for contacting the LADO in the event of concerns being raised are contained in this policy.

Organisations or Individuals using school premises

If an allegation is received relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), then

as with any safeguarding allegation, the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, including informing the LADO, are followed.

External agencies / groups using the premises complete a safeguarding checklist prior to hire and confirm their procedures align with the government's After School Clubs Safeguarding Guidance Sept 2023. This requires them to report safeguarding incidents to appropriate bodies.

Responsibilities

The role of the LADO is as follows:

The role of the LADO is set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2024)* and is governed by the Authorities duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Essex Safeguarding Partners Inter-Agency Policy and Procedures. This guidance outlines procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed.

The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- ☐ a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- ☐ enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- ☐ consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

The LADO is responsible for:

- ☐ Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers.
- ☐ Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.
- ☐ Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- ☐ Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom an allegation is made.
- ☐ Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.
- ☐ Recommending a referral and chairing the strategy meeting in cases where the allegation requires investigation by police and/or social care.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO is available to discuss any concerns and to assist the school in deciding whether there is a need to make a referral and/or take any immediate management action to protect a child.

The Role of the DSL:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and EYFS.
- Support staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties
- Liaise closely with children's social care and other services
- Liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- Ensure new staff receive induction training and staff receive regular training, including in relation to online safety teaching for children (where appropriate).
- To ensure that rationale is recorded on safeguarding forms so that clear reasons can be seen for actions taken.

Managing referrals:

- Of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority (LA) children's social care team as required, and support any staff who do so
- To the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern, and support any staff who do so
- To the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), if a person is dismissed or leaves due to risk or harm to a child
- To the police, where a crime may have been committed

Working with others:

- working with safeguarding partners:

- The LA (Essex Safeguarding Board)
- Clinical commissioning group (within the LA)
- Chief officer of police (within the LA)

- working with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

To liaise with:

- The Head – to inform them of issues, especially enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- The 'case manager' and the designated officer(s) at ESB – for child protection concerns involving a staff member
- The senior mental health lead and, where available, mental health support team – where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Staff – on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety); when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and as a source of safeguarding support, advice and expertise for all staff

taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by:

- Knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced
- Identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school

by:

- Making sure the school knows which children have or have had a social worker, understanding their academic progress and attainment and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for them
- Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these children reach their potential

The DSL will also promote supportive engagement with parents and carers in safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.

Raising awareness:

- Make sure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy and procedures
- Work with the governing board to make sure your school's child protection policy is reviewed at least every year, and that safeguarding procedures are updated and reviewed regularly
- Make sure the child protection policy is publicly available
 - And make sure parents are aware that your school may make referrals about suspected abuse or neglect
- Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information with teachers and school leadership staff about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing

Child protection files:

Responsible for making sure child protection files are kept up to date. They should also make sure files are only accessed by those who need to see them, and that any information sharing happens in line with the guidance set out in KCSIE.

Where a pupil leaves the school, to make sure their child protection file is transferred securely to their new school as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term), transferring it separately from the main pupil file and getting a confirmation of receipt.

The Head is the DDSL and assumes the above responsibilities in the absence of the DSL, however the DSL retains lead responsibility for child protection.

REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES and role of governors

This policy is reviewed by governors annually, and is signed off by the Chair of Governors annually. An annual safeguarding review takes place each year.

Mr Richard Clegg is the safeguarding governor, but it is the responsibility of all the full governing body to ensure that the policy in place is fully implemented in practice. (see below for governor safeguarding training details too)

The Safeguarding Governor looks at policy and implementation, and interviews with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in preparation for the governors' formal annual review of safeguarding issues. The governing body is responsible for:

- reviewing the procedures for and the efficiency with which the safeguarding duties have been discharged;
- ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay;
- approving amendments to safeguarding arrangements in the light of changing regulations or recommended best practice.
- ensuring the school is contributing to any multi-agency working or local discussions about safeguarding;
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out the role and has the time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out the role effectively.

- That staff have received appropriate training, children are taught about safeguarding (including in relation to online safety), and that it is aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach.
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concern (no matter how small, or allegations that do not or may meet the hard threshold about staff.
- Ensuring that they receive annual safeguarding training, including online safety requirements.

As part of the annual safeguarding update to governors, or termly updates, a report is given as to the monitoring and filtering system in place and its effectiveness.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff or volunteer then the governors will conduct a full review with the DSL and the LADO to determine the need, and if necessary, to amend or strengthen aspects of the school's procedures.

If the school accepts a looked after child the governors will ensure proper training and support is given to a designated member of staff in liaising with the local authority.

We recognise that the School plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing good lines of communication with trusted adults, supported friends and an ethos of protection. We include within this the emotional wellbeing of our pupils and recognise the role school plays in recognising and protecting our children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or exposed to extremist views. Please see 'prevent' procedures.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

Mr Keith Dawes, Deputy Head Pastoral is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school, including the EYFS. He has been fully trained for the demands of his role in child protection and inter-agency working in accordance with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025). He is also the *Child Sexual Exploitation Champion* in line with Essex Safeguarding Partner processes, with responsibility for ensuring that all staff are alert to the signs of children at risk of child sexual exploitation.

Mrs Kathy Uttley, the Head is the Deputy DSL and Rob Fidler, the Development Director is DSL during holiday courses, with Keith Dawes retaining overall lead responsibility for child protection at all times. Mr Richard Clegg (Safeguarding Governor), Miss Helen Smith (Deputy Head Academic), Mrs Sarah Atherton (Head of PE, Girls' Games & PSHE) and Mrs Marie-Claire Elmakahleh (Head of Early Years) have also been trained to Level 3. They have been trained in accordance with statutory guidance.

The DSL is responsible for overseeing the Online Safety programmes run by the school.

Pupils, parents, staff or any adult who has concerns about children who have suffered or are likely to suffer 'significant' harm or who are in need of additional support should contact the DSL or in his absence the Deputy DSL.

The contact details for the DSL are

Email: kdawes@littlegarth.org

Telephone number: 01206 262332

The contact details for the Deputy DSL are

Email: kuttley@littlegarth.org

Telephone number: 01206 262332

The contact details for the Development Director (DSL on holiday courses) are

Email: rfidler@littlegarth.org

Telephone number: 01206 262332

The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Governor (Mr Richard Clegg) are

Email: rclegg@littlegarth.org

Telephone number: 01206 262332

TRAINING

The DSL and the Deputy DSL have been fully trained for the demands of this role in safeguarding and inter-agency working. They regularly attend courses with other child support agencies to ensure that they remain conversant with best practice. They undergo refresher training provided by the Essex Safeguarding Partners in line with the requirements of statutory guidance and keeps evidence of this training in the safeguarding file. The DSL and DDSL are trained every two years. The training includes inter-agency working (in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024); participation in child protection conferences; supporting children in need, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children as laid out in KCSIE (September 2025) Annex B. The DSL maintains close links with the Essex Safeguarding Partners and reports to both the safeguarding governor and the full governing body annually. Three other staff are also trained to the same level as the DSL / DDSL.

Every new member of staff, including part-timers and temporary, visiting and contract staff working in school, receives appropriate induction training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse, bullying or children at risk of radicalisation and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the Head. Annex B includes a range of specific harms that may adversely affect children. This list is not exhaustive but provides good illustration of the different types of harms in order to raise staff awareness of the potential for harm.

Training for staff, volunteers and governors includes refresher and updates in line with the latest KCSIE. Safeguarding training is also given to new governors and volunteers. This training occurs before the staff members/volunteers interact with pupils. This includes explanation and discussion of the child protection procedures; the code of conduct; the identities of the DSL and deputy with contact details, the Whistleblowing Policy; and the relevance of KCSIE (September 2025). All new staff/volunteers must read and sign to confirm that they have read Part One of KCSIE (September 2025) and the relevant school policies listed in our policy. Staff are also trained on how to manage a report of child on child abuse.

At Littlegarth all governors undertake specific online governor safeguarding training from the NSPCC to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Governors also have a face to face training session with the school's DSL annually. New governors have a safeguarding induction with the DSL and the safeguarding governor is additionally trained to Level 3 Safeguarding. Governors are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) , and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Littlegarth School will report promptly to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child. Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training or volunteering. The school will also make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. (Please see Safer Recruitment Policy)

The DSL meets with the Essex Safeguarding Partners and receives focussed training and updates to support learning and understanding of the ever changing landscape of child protection and safeguarding which is underpinned by legislation and guidance and includes issues such as radicalisation, child sexual exploitation in all its manifestations and FGM. All staff members, governors and volunteers receive regular updates and attend refresher training at least annually, in line with local recommendations.

Disqualification from providing childcare or registration.

All staff in our school are required to notify the school immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 and obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 apply to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after

school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 and to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

The school takes its responsibility to protect and safeguard children very seriously and any staff member who is aware of anything that may affect his/her suitability to work with children must notify the Head immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, or warnings he/she may receive. Staff are made aware of the Whistleblowing Policy which can be used should there be any situation where staff believe that appropriate action is not being taken to protect children.

Staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration, may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such staff may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the Head for more details.

Preventing radicalisation (the Prevent Duty)

The Prevent duty (December 2023)

The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent also extends to supporting the rehabilitation and disengagement of those already involved in terrorism.

The guidance applies to non-violent extremism where it can be reasonably linked to terrorism or could draw people into terrorism.

Prevent's objectives

The objectives of Prevent are to:

- tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

We recognise that it is the key role of the school to support children and that school may provide stability in the lives of children who may be at risk of harm. We also recognise that our pupils can be vulnerable and exploited by others. Staff will be alert to the signs of vulnerability and/or susceptibilities to any extremist indoctrination. Staff undergo Prevent training on a regular basis. Staff report concerns of radicalisation as per the School's safeguarding procedures.

Staff acknowledge the need for a culture of vigilance to be present in the school to support safeguarding. This includes awareness and sensitivity to the attitudinal changes of pupils which may indicate they are at risk of radicalisation.

The Prevent strategy is in place to deal with 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.' It also includes extremism as 'calls for the death of members of our armed forces.'

Prevent deals with all kinds of terrorist threats to the UK. Prevent's first objective is to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism. The ideological component of terrorism is what sets it apart from other acts of serious violence. Islamist ideology is resilient and enduring. Extreme Right-Wing ideology is resurgent. Other ideologies are less present, but still have the potential to motivate, inspire and be used to justify terrorism.

In the UK, the primary domestic terrorist threat comes from Islamist terrorism. Islamist terrorism is the threat or use of violence as a means to establish a strict interpretation of an Islamic society. For some this is a political ideology which envisions, for example, the creation of a global Islamic caliphate based on strict implementation of shari'ah law, drawing on political and religious ideas developed in the 20th century by Sayyid Qutb and Abdallah Azzam. Many adherents believe that violence (or 'jihad' as they conceive it) is not only a necessary strategic tool to achieve their aims, but an individual's religious duty.

Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism describes those involved in Extreme Right-Wing activity who use terrorist violence to further their ideology. These ideologies can be broadly characterised as Cultural Nationalism, White Nationalism and White Supremacism. Individuals and groups may subscribe to ideological trends and ideas from more than one category. Unlike Islamist terrorist groups, Extreme Right-Wing terrorists are not typically organised into formal groups with leadership hierarchies and territorial ambitions, but informal online communities which facilitate international links.

Prevent also tackles other ideologies and concerns that may pose a terrorist threat.

The school has a duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum promoting spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and community cohesion.

We believe in 'Reducing Permissive Environments' to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism. This includes building resilience through the curriculum and having effective IT and visiting speaker policies to reduce exposure to radicalising influences.

The school uses a clear system of behaviour for teaching right and wrong, teaches children to work collaboratively, celebrates a wide range of events, celebrates differences and 'being me', challenges negative stereotypes and attitudes, and teaches children to value each others views and opinions.

These duties and attributes are part of the school's strategy to prevent radicalisation and form the basis of the annual risk assessment.

Staff will consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include reference to Channel or Children's Social Care. If the school identifies a pupil who is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, we will make a referral to the Channel programme: www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance

Although not exclusively indicative of radicalisation a child who is being drawn into terrorism may exhibit signs that fall into the following three categories:

- Emotional behaviour that gives rise to concern
- Verbal language that is inappropriate or extreme in nature
- Physical/circumstantial indicators that suggest a change in attitude

If a child's behaviour, language or attitude gives rise to concern that they might be being drawn into terrorism staff will raise their concerns with the DSL who will proceed as with any other safeguarding concern procedure. The DSL will follow the locally agreed Prevent Strategy and seek advice from the local authority if in any doubt.

Any concerns about a child under the Prevent Duty are shared, as safeguarding concerns, with their next school.

Each September, the DSL revises the schools' Prevent Risk Assessment, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Governor.

The School's DSL is the person responsible for Prevent.

Children Missing Education and Children absent from education for prolonged periods and / or repeated occasions

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

'Working Together to Safeguard Attendance' is now mandatory.

A child being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding issues such as abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, CSE and CCE. It can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Staff must follow the School's procedures for dealing with children who are absent, particularly persistently or for prolonged periods. The School's procedure for dealing with children who are absent and/or missing can be found in the School's Attendance Policy. All unexplained absences will be followed up in accordance with this.

For Children Missing Education, the latest guidance is also taken from:

[Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/Children_Missing_Education_-_Guidance_for_Local_authorities.pdf)

Children Missing from Education or absent for prolonged periods of time, may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

The school will monitor all pupil absences from school and promptly address concerns about irregular attendance with the parent/carers. For further details, please see the Missing Child Policy and Procedures when a Child is not collected on Time and the Attendance Policy.

The school will report to the local authority any pupils who join or are removed from the school roll at nonstandard times. In effect this will be at any other time than at the end of Nursery, Reception, or Year 6. Please see the school's Admissions Policy.

Children attending alternative provision

Occasionally children may attend a separate setting for part of their education. This might be because they have additional needs.

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil.

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

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

LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Staff members are alerted to the particular potential vulnerabilities of looked after children and previously looked after children and the Governing Body has appointed the DSL as the designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of any children who are looked after and previously looked after and the Governing Body will ensure this person has appropriate training and knowledge to protect and promote their welfare. A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after-child) as defined in section 22 Children Act 1989, means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who is voluntarily accommodated by a local authority.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring he has the required information on any looked after and previously looked after children, including details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. The DSL must liaise regularly with staff from the virtual school and attend all Child Protection conferences / core groups and Local Authority meetings as necessary.

Safeguarding during COVID

Whilst pupils have been learning remotely, specific guidance has been temporarily drawn up to ensure that pupils are working in a family space, not a bedroom, when online and that parents are aware of the lesson content and timings. Pupils have access to teachers daily through zoom lessons and can send messages to staff too. Through zoom, they also have access to their peers during the lessons and form times. The DSL and DDSL are available throughout the lockdown period too. Staff remain vigilant to pupils' behaviour and progress, taking care to look after their mental health online and use tutor / form time for discussion. Dialogue with parents is maintained through Seesaw and any online absenteeism or worries can be addressed by form teachers.

During these times when remote learning is in place, there is usually regular contact with parents and carers. Clear guidance is given as to what sites children will be accessing and who they will be communicating with – in all cases they will be under the direction of their class teacher and only communicating with adults and other pupils in school.

RECORDS

The school's records on child protection are kept confidentially on the school's database system, with some historic records locked in the DSL's office and are separated from routine records. Access is restricted to the Head (deputy DSL), the Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL), the Designated Safeguarding Governor and the Chair of Governors. Reference is made to Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) with regard to information sharing and maintaining the child protection file. Records must include a clear and comprehensive note of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome and maintaining the child protection file.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children within the Early Years setting and liaising with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate. The Nursery and Pre-Prep staff assist in this goal, and undertakes training specific to the EYFS. It is essential that Ofsted is informed as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children at the premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

Employees are required to notify the Head in the event of any significant changes in their personal circumstances that may adversely affect the welfare of pupils at the school. Where the School becomes aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, the provider must take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children.

In the event of disqualification of a person employed in early years provision, the School will not continue to employ that person.

The School will give Ofsted the following information when relevant:

- details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose;
- the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and
- a certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES WITH IMAGING AND SHARING CAPABILITIES

Please refer to: Mobile Phones, Cameras and all other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, and Storage of Photographs and Images information is [here](#)

PROMOTION AND RAISING AWARENESS OF WELFARE

Littlegarth School prides itself on its culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils, and on its excellent pastoral support structures. We prepare all of our pupils to make reasoned, informed choices, judgments and decisions, and to encourage them to be resilient and adaptable. Time is allocated in PSHE and form time for discussion of child abuse/safeguarding and in developing in pupils the confidence which they require to recognise abuse and to keep themselves and their peers safe, including in the use of the internet, social media sites, and other electronic equipment. The limits on access from the school computers is regularly checked by the IT Manager.

The school will provide education with regard to relationships, sex and health, including positive mental health.

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn if they are worried.

EQUAL TREATMENT

Littlegarth School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or social background.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each student.

BULLYING

Please see separate Counter-Bullying Policy and Child on Child abuse guidance

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination which can be physical or psychological will not be tolerated. This includes banter and such behaviour via electronic devices or on social media. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. The 'Counter-Bullying Policy and Procedures' document highlights how staff should respond to any accusation of bullying.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR EXTERNAL AGENCIES

The Essex Safeguarding Children partners Room C228, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.

Tel: 03330 139797 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team

Tel: 0345 603 7627 (ask for the Children and Families Hub to seek advice or make a referral)

0345 606 1212 (Emergency Duty Service Number)

Colchester Police Station, Divisional HQ, Colchester CO3 3BU.

Tel: 01206 762212 or Tel: 101 or 0300 333 4444

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Tel: 0300 123 1231 (General Enquiries) Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), DBS Applications, PO Box 3961, Wootton Bassett SN4 4HF

Tel: 03000 200 190

Email: customerservices@dbb.gov.uk

Department for Education, Mowden Hall, Staindrop, Road Darlington, DL3 9BG

Tel: 0207 340 7264 (Dedicated helpline)

Email: counter-extremeism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Independent Schools Inspectorate, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

Childline, Tel: 0800 1111

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline for professionals - Tel: 0800 028 0285

Teaching Regulation Agency, Ground Floor South, Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

0207 593 5393

misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk

COMPLAINTS (PLEASE SEE SEPARATE POLICY)

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our school; but copies of the School's Complaints procedure can be found on the website or sent to you on request.

Appendices:

- 1) Low Level Concern Policy
- 2) Induction of New Staff
- 3) Guidance if a member of staff, volunteer or Head faces allegations of abuse
- 4) Guidance for Pupils on Confidentiality Issues

Appendix 1: Low Level Concern Policy

Low Level concerns are concerns about staff, volunteers, the Head or other adult school in their treatment of a child that does not meet the harm threshold. Concerns may arise from suspicion, complaint, disclosure and made by a child, parent or adult; or as a result of a vetting check.

We have an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Low Level Concerns are reported to the Head, not the DSL. If a concern is about the Head then it is reported to the Chair of Governors. Staff may also report to the NSPCC Whistleblowing Hotline.

Staff know that any 'nagging doubt' should be reported so that children are as safe as possible.

Examples of concerns could include:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photos of children on their own device
- Engaging 1:1 with a child in a secluded location or in a closed room
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Reporting a Low Level Concern:

Should be done in writing (electronically or paper) to the Head, confidentially and in a timely manner and should include:

- Details of the concern
- Context of the concern
- Action taken
- Name of the person reporting it

The reports of concern are kept confidentially by the Head. Actions are then taken in light of the concern. Actions by the Head would usually include:

- Collecting as much evidence as possible by speaking to relevant people and to the individual involved.
- Categorising the behaviour and determining the level of action required.
- Recording the rationale and actions.
- Taking action

These records are reviewed on a regular basis so that any patterns can be identified. Where a pattern is identified then it may be referred to the LADO, if reaches the threshold, or to a disciplinary procedure. If school procedures need to change, then this is also considered.

Records will be kept until the adult leave employment and will not form part of any references unless reaches the threshold level.

Reports made about any supply staff or contractors would be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If the Head is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they should consult with their LADO.

Appendix 2: Induction Policy for New Staff

INTRODUCTION

Every new member of staff, including new peripatetic musicians and sports coaches, supply staff and volunteers, is required to attend a training session on child protection/safeguarding. These sessions are organised by the Deputy Head, who is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and/or the Deputy Heads and will take place before any interaction with pupils. Similar training is given to all Governors and to parents who help with activities that bring them into contact with children. Only the following adults who work at the school or visit are exempt from this requirement:

- Night-time cleaners, whose hours of work mean that they do not have contact with pupils,
- Occasional visitors, including occasional lecturers and contractors, who sign in and are given a security badges by our Receptionist, and who are escorted throughout their visit,
- Contractors working on a designated site that is physically separated from the rest of the school, who are required to sign in and out at their site office and to wear security badges at all times,
- Contractors working during the school holidays.

N.B. As necessary, these staff are provided with individual guidance on the Child Protection/safeguarding Policy and expectations with regard to reporting any concerns to the DSL.

WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE TRAINING?

Child Protection and safeguarding is always our top priority

Every member of staff needs to be confident that he or she understands his or her role in:

- Keeping children safe
- Promoting the welfare of pupils
- Promoting equal opportunities and inclusion
- Preventing bullying and harassment including child on child issues

Everyone is required to take part in our training, no matter what their previous background or level of expertise. Refresher training for staff in accordance with the requirements of the Essex Safeguarding Partnership is held every year for those in direct contact with children and at three-yearly intervals for all staff.

WHAT TOPICS DOES THE TRAINING COVER?

Our induction training will tell you about:

- a. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (latest edition)** – there is requirement to read and understand at least Part One with regard to inter-agency working and specific roles and responsibilities of schools and other agencies within the local safeguarding system

b. Our pupil welfare systems

Starting with the roles of the following structures:

- The identity, contact details and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Deputy DSL
- The Prefect system and the training in leadership given to senior pupils
- The role of the School Council
- Our partnerships with parents and guardians

We will describe our arrangements for providing additional support for pupils with SEN, for whom English is an additional language, and who have additional needs.

c. The Legal Framework for our Child Protection/Safeguarding, On-line Safety and Counter-Bullying Policies

We describe this briefly and cover our policies on:

- Counter-bullying in all its forms (including e-communications and child on child)
- Behaviour and sanctions
- Special Education Needs and Learning Difficulties
- Equal Opportunities
- Educational Visits and risk assessments
- Supervision of children
- Online Safety
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistle-blowing
- Complaints

Teaching staff have a particular responsibility for supervising pupils and ensuring that they behave with consideration and good manners at all times; but all staff need to be aware of the school's policies in these areas. All staff are reminded in the Child Protection/Safeguarding Training Session and in staff meetings of their important role in building positive relationships, identifying risks and keeping everyone safe. We cover internet and technological bullying, and the risks of the internet and social networking sites.

d. Understanding Challenging Behaviour

We draw on national guidance relating to the safeguarding and protection of children, the signs of abuse, the particular harms that may affect children (See Annex B KCSIE September 2025) and the duties of staff, as well as the role of specialist agencies. We explain our expectations of how they should respond in a difficult situation, and why they cannot promise confidentiality to a pupil.

e. The School's Policies on Child Protection/Safeguarding

All new staff are required to be familiar with our policies on:

- Child Protection/Safeguarding
- Staff Code of Conduct

- Pupils and Confidentiality Issues
- Procedures when a Member of Staff, Volunteer, Designated Senior Person or Head faces Allegations of Abuse
- Procedures if a Pupil reports abuse or if abuse is suspected
- Whistle-blowing
- Use of ICT, mobile phones and electronic devices
- Counter-bullying
- Complaints procedures

Copies of these documents can be found on our website or staff portal

f. Visitors and Site Security

This covers the need for visitors to be signed in at Reception and to be escorted about the school.

g. Effective Record Keeping

Why effective record keeping matters and how records are kept and monitored.

h. Refresher Training

The session concludes with reminding staff that refresher training is given at three yearly intervals and for those staff members directly involved with children, annually. All staff, Governors and volunteers are required to certify in writing that they have completed the training session.

Appendix 3 : Guidance if a member of staff (including volunteer, supply teacher or contractor) or Head faces allegations of abuse

INTRODUCTION

This guidance is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position or in any capacity. The guidance is in line with the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025* and should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher, including supply staff, or member of staff 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; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Allegations that a member of staff has abused a pupil or pupils, either inside the school premises, during a school trip or visit, or at any other time, could be made by:

- Parents
- The abused pupil
- Other members of staff
- Other pupils
- The Police or Children's Services of the Local Authority
- A third party

An allegation of such seriousness would normally be made directly to the Head, and if they are not available then to the Chair of Governors. Please also refer to the school's Safeguarding policy (September 2024).

If the Head is the subject of the allegation or concern, the Chair of Governors should be contacted immediately without the Head being informed. The principle of upward reporting must prevail.

When any allegation is made, the school has a responsibility to the person that has allegedly been harmed as well as to the employee and should ensure that effective support is provided to all involved while the allegations are investigated.

It should be noted that anyone can make a referral to the LADO or Police but in usual circumstances the procedures set out in this policy should be followed.

ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

If we are faced with an anonymous allegation of child abuse which names both a member of staff and a child, the school will handle it in exactly the same way as if we knew the identity of the person making the allegation. Where the allegation names the member of staff, but not the pupil, we will still contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) before taking action.

THE FIRST RESPONSE

If an allegation is made against a teacher, the quick resolution of that allegation must be a clear priority for the benefit of all those concerned. At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated. Before embarking on any investigation, the Head must consult with the LADO on 03330 139797 or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, discussions with the LADO can be held informally without reference to individuals. Contact with the LADO will be made within one working day of the allegation being made known to the Head or Chairman.

Discussions with the LADO regarding the allegation will consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and a course of action will be agreed including any involvement of the police. These discussions will be recorded in writing and communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children will be agreed.

Following discussions with the LADO, we will respond promptly and sensitively to the legitimate concerns of the victim and his or her family. We undertake to:

- Take any allegation of abuse, involving a member of staff, very seriously,
- Establish the facts before jumping to any conclusion. Listen to the child sensitively and provide support
- Inform the child's parents/ guardians of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. This process might be delayed if the LADO advises that a strategy discussion is required or the police or children's social care services need to be involved. Once the child's parents/guardians have been informed they must maintain confidentiality whilst the investigation takes place. These restrictions, which came into effect in October 2012, apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case. If the allegation involves the parents, Essex children's services will be notified in accordance with the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and referral processes as set out in that policy.

The Head or Chair should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO and provide them with as much information as possible at that time. The school should also appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. He/she should also be advised to contact their Trade Union or Professional Association for advice and support

FORMAL INVESTIGATION STEPS

A formal investigation is a matter for specialists. Where the facts suggest that there may be reasonable grounds for suspecting actual abuse, or grooming of a child, or other criminal behaviour, we will always:

- Involve the LADO. Such a referral will take place within one working day (24 hours) of a disclosure or the suspicion of abuse. Contact details for the LADO are: telephone 03330 139797 (out of hours: 0345 606 1212) or access the website at www.escb.co.uk.
- Take advice from LADO when considering whether to suspend the member of staff (or volunteer) concerned. This will include reporting to the Police within 24 hours if a crime is suspected to have been committed.

- Inform Ofsted within 14 days of any allegation of serious harm to an EYFS child by a person living, working or looking after children at the premises, whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere. Ofsted also needs to be informed of any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises and of the action taken. In cases of serious harm, the police will be contacted at the outset.
- Report promptly to DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child. [PAGE 22 paragraph 97]
- A referral will be made to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed if he/ she had not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons for such an order are “unacceptable professional conduct”, “conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute” or a “conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence”.

In all cases, the school will follow detailed advice given in the latest version of KCSIE.

SUPPORT FOR THE PUPIL

Our priority is to safeguard the young people in our care. We will give all the support that we can to a pupil who has been abused. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), will consider how best to support and monitor the pupil concerned through any process of investigation, liaising closely with parents, guardians, Essex Children's Services, or other agencies involved to identify the support strategies that will be appropriate.

SUSPENSION

Suspension of a member of staff is a neutral act and does not imply that any judgement has been reached about his or her conduct. Even so, it is a serious step, and we will take legal advice beforehand, and will normally only suspend a member of staff where any of the following apply:

- ☐ The LADO or Children's Services suggest it would be appropriate
- ☐ There is a serious risk of harm (or further harm) to the child,
- ☐ The allegations are so serious as to constitute grounds for dismissal, if proven,
- ☐ The police are investigating allegations of criminal misconduct.

Any member of staff who is invited to a meeting whose outcome is likely to result in his or her suspension, is entitled to be accompanied by a friend or Trade Union representative.

IF THE MEMBER OF STAFF RESIGNS

The resignation of a member of staff or volunteer mid-way through an investigation would not lead to the investigation being abandoned. Our policy is always to complete every investigation into allegations of child abuse.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

The policy at Littlegarth School is to follow the DfE guidance set out in “Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) on the use of settlement agreements in cases of child abuse which is:

“Settlement agreements, by which a person agrees to resign, and a school agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, must not be used in these cases. In any case, such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate. Nor can it override the statutory duty to make a referral to DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where circumstances require it”

LENGTH OF INVESTIGATORY PROCESS

We recognise that everyone’s interests are served by completing any investigatory process as swiftly as possible. Littlegarth School is a small community and we will aim to spend as little time as is compatible with fair and impartial processes on the investigatory process. We would expect almost every case to be completed within one month.

REFERRAL TO THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) AND THE TEACHING REGULATION AGENCY (TRA)

Like all schools, we have a statutory legal duty to refer an individual, whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student, where there is the risk that he or she may harm, or has caused harm to children, to the DBS within one month of the individual’s dismissal or resignation because he or she has been considered unsuitable to work with children. Reports concerning members of staff or volunteers are normally made by the DSL. If the Head is involved, the report is made by the Chair of Governors.

The school is committed to report promptly to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) whose services are no longer used and the DBS criteria are met.

Ceasing to use a person’s services includes dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating a placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. The report will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible.

‘Settlement Agreements’ cannot apply in this connection, or when the individual refuses to cooperate with an investigation.

The school plays no part in the subsequent process of barring individuals from working with children and/or vulnerable adults. We also have a legal duty to respond to any requests for information that we receive from the DBS at any time.

The address for DBS referrals is: PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA. Tel: 01325 953 795

Where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, the school has a duty to make a referral to the TRA who will then consider what further action is necessary including relevant Orders which include:

- Unacceptable professional conduct;
- Conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute; or
- A conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence.

ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OF A CHILD WHO IS NOT A PUPIL AT THE SCHOOL

If we are given information that suggested that a member of staff was abusing a child who was not a pupil at Littlegarth School, we would immediately pass such information to Essex Children's Services to handle. We would then interview the member of staff and formally advise him/ her of the allegations, making it clear that the school would not play any part in the investigatory process. He or she would be advised of the possibility of facing suspension, re-assignment to other duties etc. in exactly the same way as if the allegation had involved a school pupil. If the allegation subsequently proved to be unfounded, he or she would be given full support by the school in resuming his/her career.

ALLEGATION INVOLVING THE HEAD OR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The Chair of Governors should be told at once of any allegation involving the Head by the person receiving the allegation. He or she must not notify the Head. All allegations should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice before any investigation takes place. The Chair of Governors may also obtain legal advice. The Head will normally be suspended for the duration of the investigatory process and the Deputy Head(s) will be made acting Head until the conclusion of the investigation and resolution of the issue. In the case of serious harm, the police must be informed from the outset.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head, it should be reported directly to the LADO.

SUPPLY STAFF

Where an allegation relates to a member of supply staff provided by an agency, the agency should be fully involved.

RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

We will record all allegations of abuse, and our subsequent actions, including any disciplinary actions, on an individual's file. A copy will be given to the individual and he or she will be told that the record will be retained until he or she reaches statutory retirement age, or for ten years, if that is longer.

HANDLING UNFOUNDED OR UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS

The Child

A child who has been the centre of unfounded or unsubstantiated allegations of child abuse needs professional help in dealing with the aftermath. We will liaise closely with the Essex Children's Services to set up a professional programme that best meets his or her needs.

However much support the child may need in such circumstances, we need to be sensitive to the possibility that the aftermath of an unfounded allegation of abuse may result in the irretrievable breakdown of the relationship with the teacher. In such circumstances, we may conclude that it is in the

child's best interests to move to another school. We would do our best to help him/her to achieve as smooth a transition as possible, working closely with the parents or guardians.

The Member of Staff

A member of staff could be left at the end of an unfounded or unsubstantiated allegation of child abuse with severely diminished self-esteem, feeling isolated and vulnerable, all too conscious that colleagues might shun him/her on the grounds of "no smoke without fire". If issues of professional competency are involved, and though acquitted of child abuse, disciplinary issues are raised, we recognise that he or she is likely to need both professional and emotional help. We will undertake to arrange a mentoring programme in such circumstances, together with professional counselling outside the school community. A short sabbatical or period of re-training may be appropriate.

Appendix 4:

GUIDANCE FOR PUPILS ON CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES

WHAT CAN A CHILD DO IF THEY ARE WORRIED?

Although it may be difficult, it is important to talk to somebody:

Children must always be encouraged to tell someone they trust, at once, whenever they have any problems. They need to recognise that they need help.

If a friend is experiencing abuse, children are encouraged to advise them to tell someone at once. He or she needs help.

WHO CAN CHILDREN TALK TO?

The Deputy Head Pastoral is the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Children are encouraged to see him at any time if they are feeling unhappy or believe they are being abused, or think someone they know is unhappy or being abused. They are encouraged to speak to him even if the concern relates to events taking place outside school.

Some children may prefer to speak to another member of staff. The important thing is that they talk to someone they can trust, although the member of staff should not promise confidentiality.

IS THERE SOMEONE TO TALK TO OUTSIDE SCHOOL?

ChildLine is a free confidential helpline for children and young people. Children can call any time on 0800 1111, or look at their website at www.childline.org.uk. Contact details are posted around the School.

In an emergency, call the Police on Telephone 999

The NSPCC have a contact line on 0808 800 5000 for children and young people. Their web site is www.nspcc.org.uk/kidszone.

Kidscape has helpful advice on www.kidscape.org.uk

Another helpful web site is www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk

The Samaritans can be called at any time on 08457 909090

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Whoever a child talks to in school, the matter must be dealt with sensitively and correctly, taking care not to ask too many questions. The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately and he will decide on the correct course of action from that point. It may be that professional help is sought from specialists who spend their lives working to promote the wellbeing of children and to keep them safe from harm or abuse. Please see Child Protection/Safeguarding policy.

It is important to remember that no teacher is allowed to keep this type of information to themselves. They have to pass it on, so that help can be obtained. However, only those who need to know will be told.

REMEMBER – it is everyone's responsibility to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and to keep them safe from harm. If you have concerns it is very important that you tell someone who will do all they can to help.