

St Nicholas Catholic High School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

September 2023

To be read in conjunction with:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
Whistleblowing Policy and Protocol (2022)
Catholic Ethos Policy
Anti-bullying Policy
Medicines Policy
Drugs Policy

| Policy Impact Statement | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Policy: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy | |
| This Policy has been implemented: | |
| Fully | |
| Partially | |
| Occasionally | |
| Not at all (give reasons why) | |
| | |
| What revisions need to be made: | |
| To the Policy? | See Version Control below |
| To its implementation? | |

| Section | Summary of changes made from September 2022 to current draft (September 2023) |
|---|---|
| Name of Policy and to be read in conjunction with | Updated to September 2023 and KCSIE 2023 and added Whistleblowing Policy. |
| Page 3 | Added table key personnel |
| Page 4 | Mission Statement updated. Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) |
| Page 5 | Addition of Policy Statement and principles: |
| Page 9 | Updated Legislation referenced when drafting policy and date updated. |
| Page 11 | Removed Homework Diary replaced with teams |
| Page 12 | Updated Staff Names in Designated Safeguarding Lead |
| Section 1.4 | Added Safe environment section |
| Section 3 and Section 6 | Changed Peer on Peer to Child on Child and changed SRE to |
| Section 3 | New sub categories added 3.19 Children who are absent from education 3.20 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) 3.21 Online Safety |
| Section 4.1 | Extra information and web link added to Radicalisation and Extremism section in line with new prevent guidance |
| Section 5 | Replaced section 5 with updated guidance from KCSIE 2023 |
| Section 6.3 | Additional information added regarding sharing nudes and semi nudes |
| Section 9.1 | Special Consideration- additional information included under key categories Work experience added |
| Section 10.5.1 | Added in additional guidance about allegations against staff |
| Section 10.7 | Contractors information added |
| Appendix 2 | Useful contacts updated |

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Key Personnel

| Role | Name | Email | Telephone |
|--|------------------|--|--------------|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*/** | Heather Pardoe | h.pardoe@st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk | 01606 706000 |
| Deputy DSL(s)*/** <i>Insert additional rows if needed</i> | Claire Whitehead | c.whitehead@st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk | 01606 706000 |
| Headteacher* | Craig Burns | head@st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk | 01606 706000 |
| Online safety Co-ordinator | Chis Pennington | lynne.gill@edsential.co.uk (Clerk to the Governors) | |
| Chair of Governors* | Chris Mottram | lynne.gill@edsential.co.uk (Clerk to the Governors) | |
| Safeguarding Governor/Trustee | Chris Mottram | lynne.gill@edsential.co.uk (Clerk to the Governors) | |

*Out of hours contact details will be made available to staff

**Any changes to key personnel/holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies and LA safeguarding boards/hubs

Note: All content should be read, adjusted, and personalised according to your school's profile, procedures and practices. This policy should be ratified, read, and amended in conjunction with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education.

St Nicholas Catholic High School

Here at St Nicholas we let our God-given talents shine. We believe all students should enjoy their learning and achieve their potential, striving at all times to embrace the Gospel and its teachings.

Our school environment is built upon trust and respect for each other. We embrace our differences and celebrate what it means to be part of God's family. "Everyone Matters."

What makes us distinctive as a Catholic school is that we care more about who a child becomes than just what she or he becomes. In this way we seek to ensure that each student is not only prepared for society when they leave school but equipped to make a positive contribution for its betterment.

Rationale

In accordance with the school mission statement this policy reflects our active commitment to promote and safeguard the welfare of students at our school. We believe that children have a fundamental right to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. Therefore, we aim to provide a secure, caring environment and a curriculum which nurtures self-esteem and empowers children to protect themselves, in line with the *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)*. Our policy applies to all students, staff, governors, and volunteers working at St Nicholas Catholic High School.

Our aim is to work with families, but in the knowledge that children and young people have rights of their own, independent of their parents. Where there is conflict of interests between the parent/carer and the child, the school will operate in a professional manner, which serves the child's interests as referred to in the Children's Act (1988). The rights of parents will be respected, and the school will strive to ensure parents are informed of concerns raised by its staff regarding Child Protection issues affecting their child/children.

We aim to ensure that children who are vulnerable, at risk and have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm are identified, and appropriate action is taken to keep them safe. The school has and will continue to develop a systematic approach towards identification and referral of suspected child abuse to an appropriate agency. We recognise that abuse may be emotional, physical, sexual or through neglect.

Policy Statement and principles

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. This policy is available on the school website and is included in the staff handbook.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- *safeguarding is everyone's responsibility*
- *the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance*
- *safer children make more successful learners*
- *policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.*

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 What is the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development'
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child Protection is a part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective Child Protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

There are six main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children and Child Protection
- Equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse
- Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her Child Protection plan
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

1.2 Our Commitment

St Nicholas Catholic High School is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and young people, identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with families and other agencies. This policy reflects the policies of Cheshire West's Safeguarding Children Partnership, [Cheshire West SCP](#) and is in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#)

To create this safe environment the school has *considered the following legislation and guidance when drafting this policy:*

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023;](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018](#)
- [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales 2023](#)
- [Education Act 2002 Section 175 \(maintained schools only\)](#)
- [Education Act 2002 Section 157 \(Independent schools incl Academies and CTC's\)](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Teachers' Standards \(Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies\)](#)
- [Information Sharing 2018](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)
- [Filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges \(DfE\)](#)

1.3 Duties

To provide a safe environment the Governing Body, Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team of the school will:

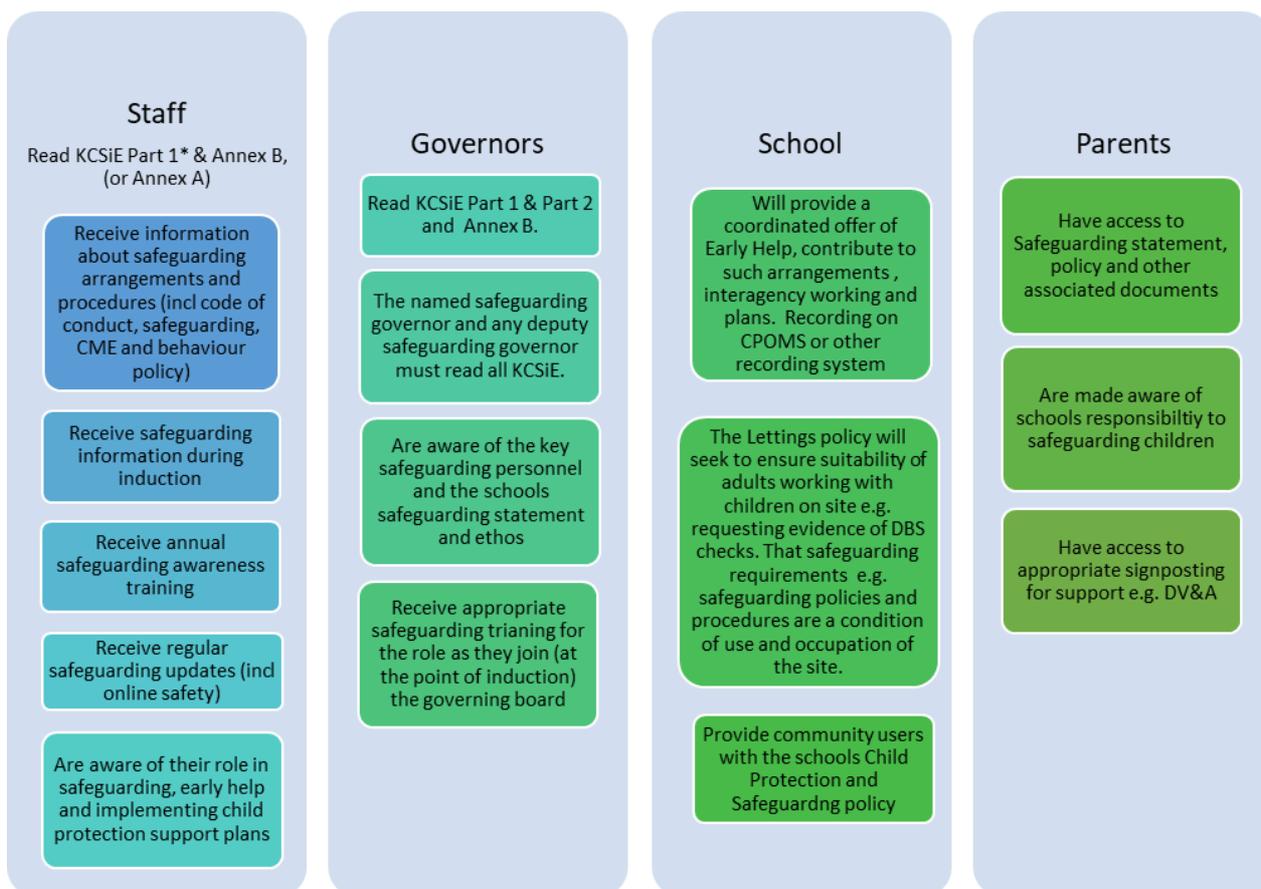
- Ensure that everyone from the Designated Safeguarding Governor to the Designated Safeguarding Person and all members of the school community have appropriate safeguards and supports in place should they choose to raise safeguarding issues, however unusual or sensitive these may be
- Cultivate an ethos within our school community where all adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated
- Pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children
- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk without coercion and are listened to
- Ensure students know that if they are worried, they can talk to adults in the school
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with families and colleagues from other agencies and are fully committed to the provision of Early Help
- Ensure all adults working with children are aware of the role of Cheshire West Safeguarding Children’s Board
- Include opportunities in the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) & Sex and Relationship Education (RSE) curriculum for young people to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to assess and manage risk as is appropriate to their age, stage of development and level of understanding
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure risks of harm to a young person’s welfare is minimised
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a young person, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with families and agencies as far as possible
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school
- Promote student health and safety
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice in line with procedure
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against staff, supply staff and volunteers
 - *HM Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023, Part 4: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff (also set out within the Local Interagency Procedures)*
- Put in place and promote robust anti-bullying, including cyber bullying, strategies
- Meet the health needs of children with medical conditions
- Provide first aid
- Maximise school security
- Tackle drugs and substance misuse
- Provide support and planning for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community
- Work with all agencies with regard to missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, and violence/knife crime in the community.
- Work with all agencies with regard to missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity, child sexual and criminal exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, contextual safeguarding and violence/knife crime in the community.
- Tackle Child on Child abuse and sexual violence and sexual harassment through RSE and the Pastoral Curriculum, ensuring all students are aware of the school’s zero tolerance position and how this will be managed through the School’s Behaviour Policy. Additionally, all staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- Ensure all staff are aware of contextual safeguarding (extra-familial harm) and the risks of abuse posed to children outside of the family context.

1.4 Safe Environment

The school will also contribute through the curriculum by developing children’s understanding, awareness and promoting their resilience by providing a safe environment within schools.

To provide a safe environment we will ensure that staff, governors, school, and parents:



Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Responsibility of all staff

St Nicholas Catholic High School will identify harm and maintain safety by:

- Everybody having a duty to safeguard our students both inside and outside the school environment including school trips, extended schools, activities and vocational placements.
- Involving families and providing advice/guidance regarding safeguarding
- Maintaining a focus and listening to our young people recognising signs of concern, especially with young people who may be vulnerable:

- Documenting and collating information on individual students to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguard.
- Taking appropriate actions to address concerns about a young person's welfare in partnership with other organisations and safeguarding agencies.
- Informing all staff and volunteers who the Designated Safeguarding and Deputy persons for Safeguarding are in school.
- Providing PSHE/RSE including raising awareness with students about what are and are not acceptable behaviours.

PSHE/RSE input will provide opportunities for young people to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, by:

- The availability of advice and support in their local area and online
- Recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet
- Judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable
- Recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being
- Developing effective ways of resisting pressure
- Developing healthy relationships, including awareness of unhealthy relationships where domestic violence, bullying and abuse occur

St Nicholas Catholic High School will ensure that students are made aware that information can be found in the school *via Teams*.

As a school we will consult with and listen to students through a range of student voice.

We make students aware of these arrangements through assemblies, and form time activities.

2.2 The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

An appropriate member of the School Leadership Team has been assigned to the role of Designated Safeguarding Person. They have received appropriate training and are supported in their role:

Designated Safeguarding Person: *Heather Pardoe*
Supervised by: *Craig Burns*

A Deputy Designate has been appointed and will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. This will entail supporting the Designated Safeguarding Person in dealing with referrals, attending case conferences and supporting the child/children. They have received appropriate training and are supported in their role:

Deputy Designated Leads: *Claire Whitehead, Simon Spencer and Ash Evans*
Supervised by: *Heather Pardoe and Craig Burns*

We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding students. The Designated Safeguarding Person will ensure a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed in cases of suspected abuse.

The Designated Safeguarding Person and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person are responsible for the following:

Referrals

- Referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies;
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise within the school when deciding on the most appropriate course of action by liaising with relevant agencies;
- Liaising with the Head Teacher/Principal (where the Designated Safeguarding Lead role is not carried out by the Head Teacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure there is always cover for this role on the school site in the event of their absence;
- Ensuring that a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm is in place and that the school contributes to assessments of need and actively supports multi-agency planning for those children;
- To help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Person will consider:

- any urgent medical needs of the young person
- the immediate safety and wellbeing of the young person
- discussing the matter with other agencies currently known to be involved with the young person and family
- the young person's wishes and feelings

Then decide:

- wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a young person at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk
- whether to make a Child Protection referral to I-ART because a young person is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately

OR

- not to make a referral at this stage
- if further monitoring is necessary
- if it would be appropriate to invite the parent or carer to engage with a Team Around the Family assessment and/or make a referral for other services.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

The Designated Safeguarding Person is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff. This is the responsibility of the Head Teacher who will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Low level concerns reported to the Headteacher should be shared with the DSL if the concern is deemed not to meet LADO threshold of harm. The DSL should then keep a record of these concerns in order to be able to identify a pattern of behaviour – these concerns should not be contained in the employee's file.

2.3 Action following a Child Protection referral

The Designated Safeguarding Person or other appropriate member of staff will:

- make regular contact with the allocated social worker or team manager in the event of absence
- wherever possible, contribute to the strategy discussion
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection conference
- if the young person is made the subject of a Child Protection Plan, contribute to the Child Protection Plan, and attend core group meetings and review conferences
- endeavour to share all reports with parents prior to meetings
- where in disagreement with a decision made by Children's Social Care e.g. not to apply Child Protection procedures or not to convene a Child Protection Conference, follow the formal Escalation Process in respect of resolving professional disagreements/escalation process <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/policy-and-procedures/escalation-and-resolution-policy/>
- where a young person subject to a Child Protection plan moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform I-ART.

2.4 Raising Awareness

- Working with the governing body to ensure that the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed annually;
- Ensuring that, in order to avoid conflict and mistrust, parents are aware that referrals may be made and of the role of the School;
- Ensuring that when young people leave the school, their Child Protection File is discussed as soon as possible with the Designated Safeguarding Person at the new school;
- Making sure that the Child Protection File is transferred separately from the main student file within 15 days of transfer; it should be posted recorded delivery to the Designated Safeguarding Person at the new school or delivered directly by hand and a signature received, unless the young person is leaving Year 11 to go to a further education setting, in which case the file should be retained by the current school for a period stipulated in current statutory guidance.
- Where the new school is not known, alerting the Education Welfare Service at Cheshire West and Chester Council so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing students and appropriate action taken to ascertain the safety of the child, completing CME2 and CME3 procedures.
- Cascading safeguarding advice and guidance issued by the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

2.5 Training

The Designated Safeguarding Person and the Deputy Designate need to attend the multi-agency 2-day Level 3 course in Safeguarding. This training then needs to be updated by attending a one day refresher course, every **3 years**, unless the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person feels they require a repeat of the full 2-day course.

This will enable more time to attend additional courses in areas such as CSE, Neglect and Domestic Abuse.

The Level 3 training will enable the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person to:

- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral by using the Continuum of Need thresholds

- Have a working knowledge of how to support the Team Around the Family, how the Safeguarding Children's Partnership operates, how a Child Protection case conference is conducted, and be able to attend and contribute effectively to all planning meetings when required to do so
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons will ensure **all** staff receive and all members of the Governing Body receive appropriate Safeguarding training including online safety.

All staff and Governors will be expected to undergo endorsed Basic Awareness in Safeguarding training within the first term of their employment/placement, which will be refreshed every 3 years, to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively:.

All new staff will receive:

- a copy of a safeguarding summary document prior to starting work
- Interim Safeguarding Training induction to ensure they are able to recognise/identify signs of abuse which may include:
 - a. significant changes in a young person's behaviour;
 - b. deterioration in a young person's general well-being, including mental health;
 - c. unexplained bruising, marks for signs of possible abuse or neglect;
 - d. a young person's comments which give cause for concern;
 - e. any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the young person's home; and/or
 - f. inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with young people.
- know that they must report any concerns immediately they arise and to whom
- information to understand confidentiality issues.

They will also be expected to confirm they have read and understood KSCIE (2021) Part 1 and the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

2.6 Roles and Responsibilities of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented and followed by all staff, so that everyone knows what to do if concerned about a young person;
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including undertaking the Lead Professional role in the Team Around the Family, taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of a young person;
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to young people, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies;
- They personally, along with other senior leaders undertake safer recruitment training in order to comply with the statutory requirement to have a trained person on every recruitment panel.
- Allegations against a member of staff are referred in a timely manner to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if appropriate

2.7 Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is collectively responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements and ensuring that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. The Designated Safeguarding Governor will undertake initial Safeguarding training to understand their Role and Responsibilities. Ideally, all governors will undertake the Basic Awareness Safeguarding training along with all colleagues during the school cycle.

Allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher are reported to the Chair of Governors and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- Safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day to day safeguarding practices;
- Sufficient governors are trained in safer recruitment practices so that appointments to the senior leadership team can be adequately supported;
- The school has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this policy, and school's compliance with them is monitored;
- There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints and/or allegations against staff, including the Head Teacher and any subsequent staff disciplinary hearings.
- There is a Designated Safeguarding Governor to champion safeguarding issues within the school, to liaise with the Head Teacher/Designated Safeguarding Person, and to provide information and reports to the Governing Body. The Designated Safeguarding Governor should be supported by the Chair of Governors;
- The Head Teacher, and all staff who work with young people, will undertake a full and endorsed Basic Awareness Safeguarding training every three years and have access to a refresher session every year.
- The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons attend at least a minimum of Level 3 multi-agency course every three years
- Temporary staff, volunteers and other regular visitors to the school who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and their responsibilities.

Section 3: Identifying concerns, definitions of abuse, and responding to a disclosure

| | |
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| 3.22 | Responding to disclosures |

3.1 Introduction

“Early identification and provision of help is in the child’s best interest and results –services which deliver and support families are vital in promoting children’s wellbeing.”

“All who come into contact with families have a part to play in identifying these children whose needs are not being adequately met.”

The Munro Review of Child Protection Part 1: A systems analysis Professor Eileen Munro.

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional, or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, students, parents, and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns.

3.2 Glossary

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Child | anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18 th birthday or in the case of disabled children 25 years (Children’s Act 1989 and 2004) |
| Harm | The ill-treatment or impairment of health and development including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another |
| Development | Physical, intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development |
| Health | This includes both physical and mental health |
| Ill-treatment | This includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical |

3.3 Abuse and Neglect

These are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or young person.

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

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

- provide adequate food, clothing or 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 carers
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

3.4 Physical Abuse:

This may involve the hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child / young person.

3.5 Sexual Abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily a high level of violence, whether or not the child / young person is aware of what is happening. These activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children/ young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child / young person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children and young people.

3.6 Emotional Abuse

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child / young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve:

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

3.7 Domestic abuse

The behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.

The behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to—

- (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- (b) obtain goods or services.

For the purposes of the domestic abuse Act 2021 A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

The Domestic abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

3.8 *Child on Child Abuse*

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

3.9 Safeguarding children with SEND

Staff should be aware of additional safeguarding challenges for children with SEN and Disabilities including:

- Awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability
- Higher risk of peer group isolation
- Disproportionate impact of bullying
- Difficulties with communication

Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to exploitation, forced marriage, honour-based violence, female genital mutilation, sharing of nudes or semi-nude images/videos, sexual violence and sexual harassment or trafficking and modern slavery.

3.10 Child sexual exploitation

This is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- 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.

3.11 Child criminal exploitation.

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Some of the following signs may be indicators of criminal exploitation:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts / phone calls
- Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

3.12 County Lines

This is a form of criminal exploitation whereby gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

3.13 HBA/Forced Marriage or FGM

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced

marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBA. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512906/Multi_Agency_Statutory_Guidance_on_FGM_-_FINAL.pdf (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see following section).

FGM mandatory reporting duty FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, 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, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_S_P_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf

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. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf, with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools

and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: fmufco.gov.uk.

3.14 Sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as 'sexting' there is no clear definition of 'sexting'. Many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.' Yet when young people⁵ are asked 'What does sexting mean to you?' they are more likely to interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know'. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images. This only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

On this basis current advice introduces the phrase 'youth produced sexual imagery' and uses this instead of 'sexting.' This is to ensure clarity about the issues current advice addresses.

'Youth produced sexual imagery' best describes the practice because:

- 'Youth produced' includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves.
- 'Sexual' is clearer than 'indecent.' A judgement of whether something is 'decent' is both a value judgement and dependent on context.
- 'Imagery' covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the document).

The types of incidents which this covers are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

For the best way to respond to these issues, staff should read the following advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

3.15 Gang Activity and Youth Violence

A child or young person can be exploited (sexually and / or physically) by a gang, but this is not necessarily the reason why gangs are formed. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has defined Child Exploitation in gangs and groups as:

- **Gangs** - mainly comprising men and boys aged 13-25 years old, who take part in many forms of criminal activity (e.g. knife crime or robbery) who can engage in violence against other gangs, and who have identifiable markers, for example a territory, a name, or sometimes clothing.
- **Groups** - involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, coordinating and / or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organised or opportunistic way. Types of exploitation may include using sex as a weapon between rival gangs, as a form of punishment to fellow gang members and / or a means of gaining status within the hierarchy of the gang. Children and young people may be forced to gain entry into the gang by carrying out an initiation process which may be harmful to them and / or may inflict harm to others. Where abuse takes place in a gang environment, female members may perceive the abuse as normal, as well as accepting it as a way of achieving a respected status / title within the gang.

3.16 Domestic Violence

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and / or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and / or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

Our school recognises that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’, “just having a laugh”, or “part of growing up”. We also recognise that Child on Child abuse, although more likely to be reported by girls as victims and boys as perpetrators, can be experienced by all genders or identities. All reports of abuse will be taken seriously and sensitively.

3.17 Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, trauma, or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

If staff have a concern about a child’s mental health, that is also a safeguarding concern, it must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

3.18 Child trafficking and modern slavery

Child trafficking and modern slavery are forms of child abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic servitude such as: cleaning, childcare, cooking, forced labour in factories or agriculture and criminal activity such as: pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional violence are often used to control victims of trafficking. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected.

Children are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes. Traffickers use grooming techniques to gain the trust of the child, family or community. They may threaten families, but this isn’t always the case, they may promise children education or persuade parents their child can have a better future in another place. Sometimes families will be asked for payment towards the ‘service’ a trafficker is providing e.g. sorting out travel documentation or transport. Traffickers make a profit from the money a child earns through exploitation, forced labour or crime. Often this is explained as a way for a child to pay off a debt they or their family ‘owe’ to the traffickers.

Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats do not need to be proven in cases of child trafficking – a child cannot legally consent, so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation.

Our safeguarding policy, through the school's values, ethos, and behaviour policies, provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other.

- Our school keeps itself up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation.
- Our staff are supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues, include such issues in an age appropriate way in their curriculum,
- Our school works with and engages our families and communities to talk about such issues,
- Our staff are supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead knows where to seek and get advice as necessary.
- Our school brings in experts and uses specialist material to support the work we do.

3.19 Children who are absent from education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, and a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation or mental health problems. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children are absent or go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

3.20 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. Unfortunately, children who are LGBT, or are perceived to be LGBT, can be targeted by other children. The risk to these children can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. Our staff endeavour to reduce the barriers and provide a safe space for those children to speak out or share their concerns with them.

3.21 Online Safety

1. Online safety

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation.

We have ensured that appropriate and effective filters and monitoring systems are in place to block harmful and inappropriate content by managing the content available to pupils, who can contact our pupils and the personal conduct of our pupils online. We take care to ensure that these systems do not unreasonably impact on teaching and learning, and staff have been identified and assigned suitable roles and responsibilities to manage these systems. We also have effective monitoring strategies in place to meet the safeguarding needs of our pupils. Our filtering and monitoring systems are reviewed regularly (at least annually) to ensure their effectiveness. The school currently uses the systems called Smoothwall and SENSO.

We tell parents and carers what filtering and monitoring systems we use, so they can understand how we work to keep children safe. We will also inform parents and carers of what we are asking children to do online, including the sites they need to access, and with whom they will be interacting online.

We have also ensured that appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place to safeguard our systems, staff and learners. We review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

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

- content - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content such as pornography, fake news, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, radicalisation and extremism
- contact - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users such as peer to peer pressure and adults posing as children or young adults to groom or exploit children
- conduct - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm such as making, sending and receiving explicit images, sharing other explicit images and online bullying
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams.

All staff are aware of these risk areas and should report any concerns to the DSL.

3.22 Responding to disclosures

“Staff across frontline services need appropriate support and training to ensure that as far as possible they put themselves in the place of the child or young person and consider first and foremost how that situation must feel for them. “

Lord Laming 2009

All members of staff, volunteers and governors must know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and they must be familiar with procedures to be followed.

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel disloyal, ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a pupil talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the pupil may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the student:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over-react – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the pupil.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this. Use TED – Tell me about that, Explain that to me, Describe that...
- At an appropriate time tell the pupil that to help them you must pass the information on.
- Respect the child’s personal space. Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.

- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the pupil what will happen next.
- Report verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children’s social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

Section 4: Radicalisation and Extremism

4.1 Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to extremism

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, *which was updated in 2023*, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

St Nicholas Catholic High School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is Valued.

Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. St Nicholas Catholic High School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

4.2 Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in Appendix 3.

St Nicholas Catholic High School seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

The school Governors, the Head Teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Person will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, Citizenship and PSHE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual s175 return that is monitored by the local authority and the local safeguarding children board.

Our school, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent **Single Point of Contact** (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Person. The SPOC for St Nicholas Catholic High School is Dominic Johnson. The responsibilities of the SPOC are described in Appendix 4.

When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC and to the Designated Safeguarding Person if this is not the same person.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the

appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Section 5: Sexual violence and sexual harassment

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| 5.1 | What is sexual violence and sexual harassment? |
| 5.2 | Sexual violence |
| 5.3 | Sexual harassment |
| 5.4 | Harmful Sexual behaviour and Preventing abuse |
| 5.5 | Responding to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment |

5.1 What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:

- *making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it*
- *recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported*
- *challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them*

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

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also three times more likely to be abused than their peer.

Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

5.2 Sexual violence

It is important that schools and colleges are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence in this advice, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual violence.

When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003/134 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – Schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone’s bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- the age of consent is 16
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape. Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent](#)

5.3 Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school or college. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. 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.

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. Schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim.
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence), and
- online sexual harassment.

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:

- o consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.

Taking and sharing nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people provides detailed advice for schools and colleges

- o sharing of unwanted explicit content
- o sexualised online bullying
- o unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- o sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
- o coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they’re not comfortable with online.

It is important that schools and colleges consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

5.4 Harmful sexual behaviour and preventing abuse

Children’s sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is “harmful sexual behaviour” (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context.

When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years’ difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector, and sources are listed in Annex B.

It is effective safeguarding practice for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) to have a good understanding of HSB. This could form part of their safeguarding training. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, drafting and implementing an effective child protection policy and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Preventing abuse

Effective safeguarding practice is demonstrated when schools and colleges are clear, in advance, about what local processes are in place and what support can be accessed when sexual violence or sexual harassment has occurred. It is important to prepare for this in advance and review this information on a regular basis to ensure it is up to date. As such:

- if required, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children’s social care colleagues in order to prepare the school or college’s policies (especially the child protection policy) and responses, and
- the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) should be confident as to what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support when required. Further information on specialist support and interventions can be found in Annex B in the additional advice and support section under “sexual violence and sexual harassment”.

5.5 Responding to reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment

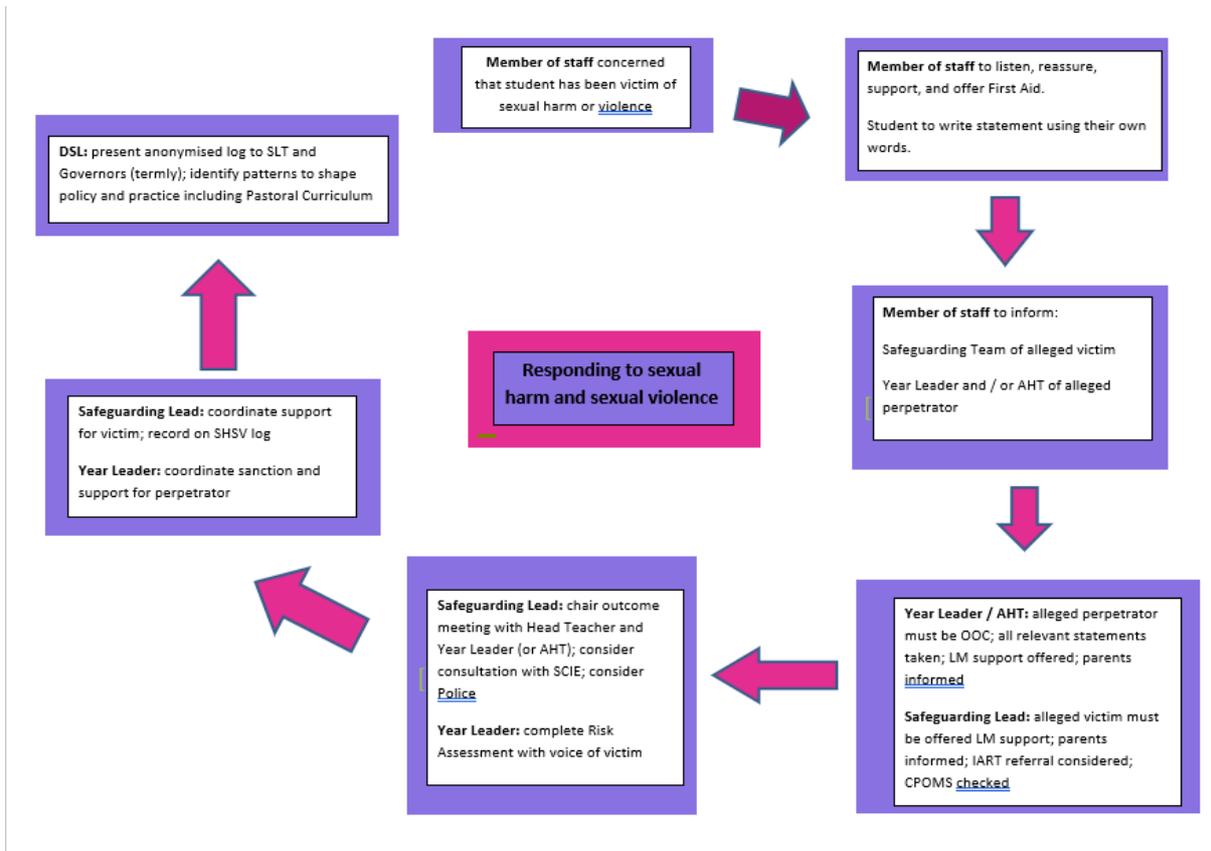
Part two of the KCSIE guidance is clear that systems should be in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Preplanning, effective training and effective policies will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (and as summarised in Part two of KCSIE guidance).

This part of the guidance does not attempt to provide (nor would it be possible to provide) detailed guidance on what to do in any or every case. The guidance provides effective safeguarding practice and principles for schools and colleges to consider in their decision-making process.

The school has a clear process for responding to reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment:



The guidance also provides case studies. These are not intended to offer a step-by-step guide, but to provide an indication of some of the various options that are available to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

For the best way to respond to these issues, staff should read the following advice (p110-135):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

Section 6: Child on Child Abuse

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|-----|---|
| 6.1 | What is Child on Child abuse? |
| 6.2 | Where Child on Child abuse can occur |
| 6.3 | Harmful Sexual Behaviour Including sharing of nudes and / or semi-nudes |
| 6.4 | Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) within peer-on-peer abuse |

6.1 What is Child-on-Child abuse?

There is no clear definition of what Child on Child abuse entails. However, it can be captured in a range of different definitions:

- **Domestic Abuse:** relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and / or financial abuse, and coercive control in their intimate relationships;
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** captures young people aged under-18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age - including another young person;
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who demonstrates behaviour outside of their normative parameters of development (this includes, but is not exclusive to abusive behaviours);
- **Serious Youth Crime / Violence:** reference to offences (as opposed to relationships / contexts) and captures all those of the most serious in nature including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18.

Child on Child abuse can refer to any of the above individually or as a combination, therefore professionals working with children and young people who are experiencing abuse from their peers must respond to the needs of each of the definitions to uncover the level of complexity and respond in the most effective manner. It is possible that a young person may be sexually exploited in a gang related situation by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

6.2 Where child-on-child abuse can occur

Bullying is defined as “behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”. Bullying often starts with trivial events and it is behaviour that hurts someone else - such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, threatening, or undermining someone; mocking; making offensive comments; taking belongings; inappropriate touching; producing offensive graffiti; or always leaving someone out of groups. It can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It’s usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. A child that is being bullied can feel like there’s no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

There are many different forms of bullying:

- **‘Cyberbullying’:** involves sending inappropriate or hurtful text messages, emails or instant messages, posting malicious material online (e.g. on social networking websites) or sending or posting offensive or degrading images and videos;
- **Racist and Religious Bullying:** A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
- **Sexual, Sexist and Transphobic Bullying:** includes any behaviour, whether physical or nonphysical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls;

- **Homophobic Bullying:** targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
- **Disablist Bullying:** targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way or exploiting a certain aspect of the victim's disability.

It is important to remember that bullying can also be a combination of the above. There has been much media attention surrounding children and young people who have committed suicide due to being bullied. Professionals must understand the damaging and at times fatal effects bullying can and does have on children and young people and be able to respond to it effectively.

6.3 Harmful Sexual Behaviour Including sharing of nudes and / or semi-nudes

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people does not always occur with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse. This also includes sexting when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture may occur in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be committing a criminal offence.

Sharing photos, videos and live streams online is part of daily life for many children and young people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting online of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums, or done offline between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop.

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'. Other terms used in education include 'sexting', youth produced sexual imagery' and 'youth involved sexual imagery'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nudes and semi-nudes are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may also occur where:

- *children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer*
- *children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online*
- *images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame*

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to as follows:

- *The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.*
- *Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.*

- *At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children’s social care and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.*

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded, and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

The UK Council for Internet Safety updated its advice for managing incidences of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in December 2020 – [UKCIS advice 2020](#). The school will have regard to this advice when managing these issues.

6.4 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) within child-on-child abuse

Many of the warning signs and indicators of CSE tend to refer to adult perpetrators, e.g. associations with older boyfriends / girlfriends, relationships or associations with risky adults and / or entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults. As per the revised definition of CSE it “occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity”. The key element of CSE is the imbalance of power and control within the exploitative relationship. Many children and young people are not aware of the exploitation as they have a genuine belief that they are loved by their boyfriend / girlfriend or are acting in accordance with their peers. Children and young people are often recruited into exploitation by those who they trust, those of a similar age and with similar hobbies, often the nature of peer-on-peer exploitation encompasses a sense of peer pressure and wanting to fit in. In peer-on-peer exploitation, schools and youth clubs are also locations where children and young people can be exploited.

Section 7: Confidentiality

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| 7.1 | Responsibility of all staff |
| 7.2 | Responsibility of the Headteacher and Designated (or Deputy) Safeguarding Lead |
| 7.3 | Whistleblowing |

7.1 Responsibility of all staff

While it is recognised that all matters relating to safeguarding individual children and young people are confidential, a member of staff, governor, or volunteer, if confided in by a student, must never guarantee confidentiality to that student.

Where there is a Child Protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Person who will consider the most appropriate response, consulting with relevant agencies if appropriate.

The parents of the child / young person should be informed immediately unless it is felt that this would not be in the best interests of the child / young person. We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to I-ART with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children and young people as set out in ‘Working together to Safeguard Children, 2018’ and ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023’.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.

In line with KCSiE, all children’s safeguarding files will be kept confidential and stored securely. Safeguarding files will be kept separate from students’ schools’ files on CPOMS.

7.2 Responsibility of the Headteacher and Designated (or Deputy) Safeguarding Lead

The Head Teacher or Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person will disclose personal information about a student, including the level of involvement of other agencies, to other members of staff only on a ‘need to know’ basis.

7.3 Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school’s safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing in relation to the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body whose contact details are readily available to staff (as pertinent to setting).

(N.B. - The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk)

Section 8: Record keeping and monitoring

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| 8.1 | Overview |
| 8.2 | Transfer of records |

8.1 Overview

Child Protection information will be stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure that information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject’s rights
- secure.

Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see Child Protection records, they should refer the request to the Headteacher.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child / young person.

Any concerns about a child / young person will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records must provide a factual, evidence-based account. Accurate recording of actions should be made. Records will be signed, dated and where appropriate witnessed.

Hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding concerns will be kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored away from the main student file. The main student file will be kept by the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer (Lisa Burton.) Authorisation to access these electronic records will be controlled by the Designated Safeguarding Person.

The school will keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to action the matter immediately. These records will be kept within the separate, confidential file.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. Original notes will be retained as evidence if there are criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect or civil actions.

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child. A record of each and every episode/incident/concern/activity regarding that child, including telephone calls to other professionals, needs to be recorded in chronological order and kept within the confidential file for that child. Support and advice will be sought from Children’s Social Care or the Local Authority Designated Officer, whenever necessary and recorded.

8.2 Transfer of records

If a child moves to another setting the Safeguarding file should be sent, by registered post immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Person at the new setting, making sure that the Safeguarding file is transferred separately from the main student file. There must be liaison between the two Designated Safeguarding Persons to ensure a smooth and safe transition for the child.

Where the new school is not known, the Educational Welfare Service at Cheshire West and Chester should be informed so that the child can be included on the data base for missing students and action taken to ascertain the safety and wellbeing of the child and that the child is receiving their right to education.

Section 9: Supporting all children

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| 9.1 | Special consideration |
| 9.2 | Early Intervention and Prevention |
| 9.3 | Young Carers |

9.1 Special consideration

“The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti bullying strategies.”

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

Some children may have an increased risk of harm. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled, have special educational needs or physical health issues
- children in the care of the Local Authority and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

- living in a domestic abuse situation (now defined in law as victims)
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- Work experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) living away from home

- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, or gender identity disorder
- involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language.
- who need a Social Worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with us, and the DSL will hold and use this information to inform decision about safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare.

- missing from education
- requiring mental health support
- Care leavers
- with family members in prison

The school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the student through:

- The content of the curriculum
- A school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued
- Implementation of the school Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students. The school will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but they are nonetheless valued and are not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student, such as Children's Social Care,

and Education Psychology Service

- Raising awareness to the school community of Operation Encompass and the school's involvement with Cheshire Police.

- Ensuring that, where a student subject to a Child Protection plan leaves their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

9.2 Early Intervention and Prevention within Safeguarding

All school staff need to be aware of their responsibility to raise any concerns they have about a child as early as possible in order to prevent the situation worsening. This may present as a change in a child's behaviour, appearance or from a conversation with the family about home conditions, financial difficulties, speech and language, toileting issues etc. Where this concern does not identify a safeguarding issue but could lead to more serious concerns if left, staff need to follow the procedures set out in the **Team around the Family (TAF)** guidance to fulfil their duties at level 2 and 3 on the **Continuum of Need**. This may involve signposting to or involving more appropriate agencies for support and may involve the school acting as Lead Person on a child's TAF. In the event of complex needs, a referral to the Early Support Access team should be made.

9.3 Young Carers

In many families, children contribute to family care and well-being as a part of normal family life. A young carer is a child who is responsible for caring on a regular basis for a relative (usually a parent, grandparent, sometimes a sibling or very occasionally a friend) who has an illness or disability. Many young carers may experience:

- Social isolation;
- A low level of school attendance;
- Some educational difficulties;
- Impaired development of their identity and potential;

- Low self-esteem
- Emotional and physical neglect
- Conflict between loyalty to their family and their wish to have their own needs met.

Where a young carer is identified, the child’s need will be considered using the Team around the Family process.

Section 10: Safe Staff

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| 10.1 | Recruitment |
| 10.2 | Volunteers |
| 10.3 | Safe staff |
| 10.4 | Conduct of staff |
| 10.5 | Allegations |
| 10.6 | Supporting staff |
| 10.7 | <i>Contractors</i> |
| 10.8 | Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings |

10.1 Recruitment

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2021). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking the Children’s List, Disclosure and Barring checks and right to work in England checks.

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

- An enhanced DBS Check is obtained for **all** new appointments where an individual will ‘intensively and frequently’ have contact with our students, which will include a barred list/prohibition from teaching check for all new teaching staff.
- this school is committed to keep an up-to-date single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on our staff
- all new appointments who clause omitted have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate
- the school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy
- identity checks must be carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the Local Authority.
- all shortlisted candidates will have an online search of publicly available information carried out as part of the school’s safer recruitment due diligence.

10.2 Volunteers

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, are expected to follow the policies and procedures in the same way *as paid staff*.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

We will ensure all volunteers receive guidance on the parameters of their role and what to do if they have concerns before they start their work with the school.

10.3 Safe Staff

Checks will be undertaken corresponding to Safer Recruitment procedures on all adults working in the school to establish their suitability to work with children.

All school staff will take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted with or in view of other adults.

If an allegation is made against another member of staff, supply staff or volunteer, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head Teacher or the most senior teacher if the Head Teacher is not present. The Head Teacher or most senior teacher will then consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Allegations against the Head Teacher are reported to the Chair and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) The Duty LADO for CWAC can be contacted on 0151 33 74570.

10.4 Conduct of Staff

"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"

"Sounding the Alarm" – Barnardos)

The school has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

Staff will have access to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) on appointment/induction and will sign that they have read and understood Part 1.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE_July_2015.pdf

All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- Working alone with a child;
- Physical interventions;
- Cultural and gender stereotyping;
- Dealing with sensitive information;
- Giving to, and receiving gifts from, children and parents;

- Contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites;
- Disclosing personal details inappropriately;
- Meeting students outside school hours or school duties;
- Making inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the normal requirements of the role; or inappropriate sharing of images

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Cheshire West Children's Safeguarding Partnership procedures, this will be viewed as misconduct, and appropriate action will be taken.

In addition, all staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent.

10.5 Allegations

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the school that he or she has:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- c. 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
- d. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

We will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and will always follow the Cheshire West Safeguarding Children Procedures. Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely by the Headteacher.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be with foundation. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

Initial action to be taken:

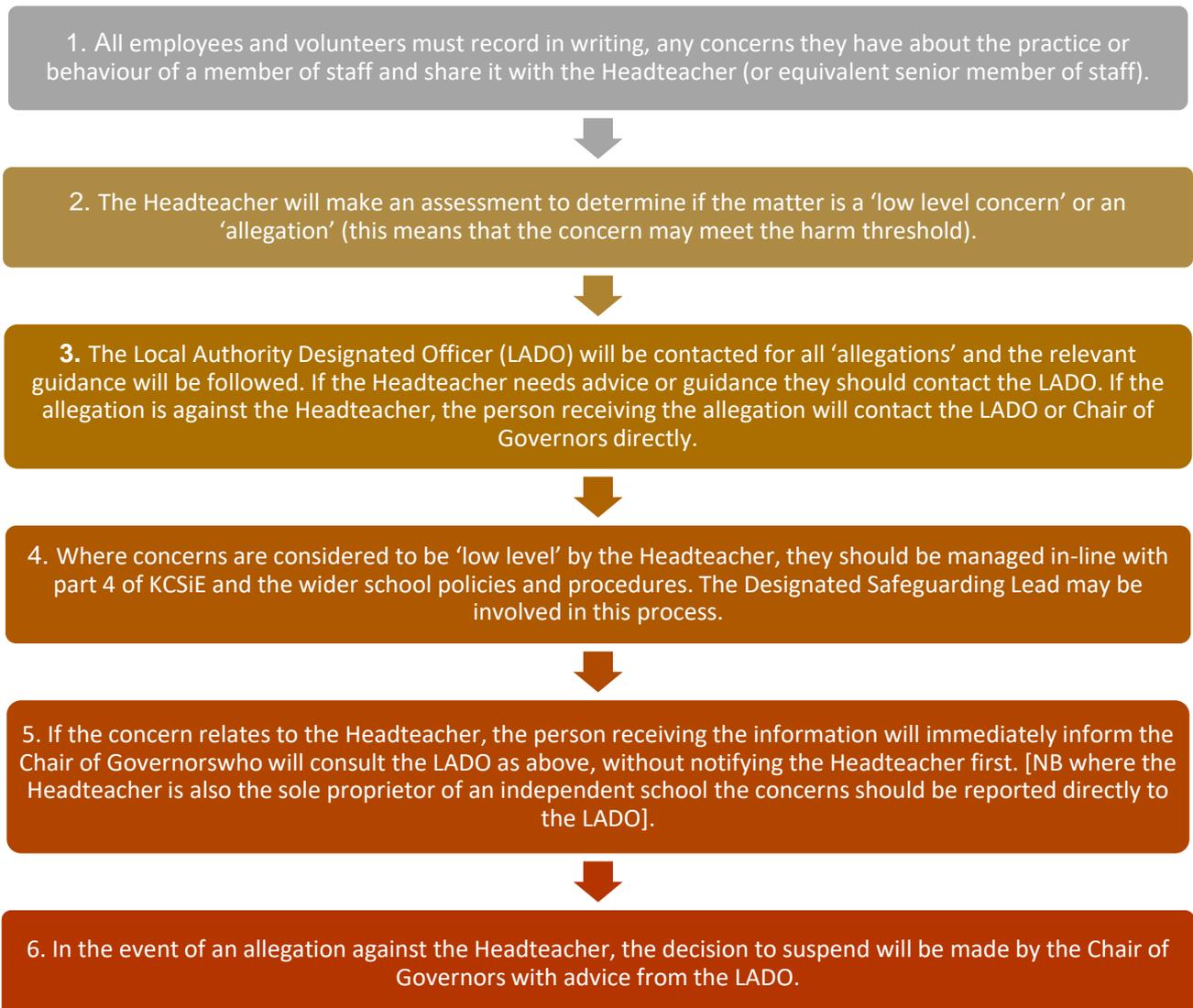
- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Head teacher and make a record
- In the event that an allegation is made against the Head teacher the matter will be reported to the Chair of Governors who will proceed as the 'Head teacher'
- The Head teacher will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children
- The Head teacher may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation, however no person will be interviewed at this stage
- The Head teacher will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (see Contacts List) in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by school or if there needs to be a referral to Contact and Referral and/or the police for investigation

- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of students, parents and staff
- The Head teacher will inform the Chair of Governors of any allegation.
- If consideration needs to be given to the individual’s employment, advice will be sought from the HR department at the Local Authority

10.5.1 Allegations against a member of staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction¹.

In line with KCSiE part 4 guidelines,



Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision.

¹ Refer to “Guidance for Safe Working Practice”

Staff, parents, and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.

10.6 Supporting staff

It is important not to underestimate the difficulty for both staff and managers in confronting what appear to be poor professional standards or unacceptable conduct by a colleague in an environment, which of necessity is dependent on close working relationships. It must also be recognised that it is very rare for a teacher to commit offences in the manner of Teacher A. However some of the allegations were of such a serious nature, particularly those from children themselves that they constituted matters that should have been investigated under the Child Protection procedures.

North Somerset SCR – The Sexual Abuse of Children in a First School February 2012

We recognise that staff who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or who appears likely to suffer harm, may find this situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Person or Head Teacher and to seek further support, if necessary.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person and the Head Teacher can seek personal support through the SCiE Team 0151 356 6843, CWAPH/CWASH Chair or other appropriate services.

10.7 Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

10.8 Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings: <http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/upload/Guidance%20.pdf>.

This guidance provides advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and the circumstances that should be avoided to limit complaints against staff of the abuse of trust and/or allegations of abuse. All members of staff are given a copy at the start of each year and sign for the receipt of copy.

Section 11: Photographing children

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| 11.1 | Introduction |
| 11.2 | Staff and volunteers |
| 11.3 | Parents or members of the public |

11.1 Introduction

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We acknowledge, however, that some people abuse children through taking, using, or circulating images.

11.2 Staff and Volunteers

- Parental consent will be sought via the data collection sheet and permissions noted.

- Staff and volunteers must ensure the authorisation of the parents /carers prior to taking photographs/ videos of children and must only use school equipment unless given specific authorisation by the Head Teacher.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones or personal cameras is forbidden.
- Only the student's first name will be used with an image
- It will be ensured that students are appropriately dressed before images are taken
- Students are encouraged to tell us if they are worried or unsure about any photographs that are taken of them.

The Guidance for Safer working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People provides detailed guidance on the taking of photographs and storage of images.

11.3 Parents or Members of the Public

Although we understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school production, or at sports day, or school presentations, we do not allow this.

We will not allow other people, including staff, to photograph or film students during a school activity without parental permission. This includes the use of cameras on mobile phones or any other device.

We will not allow images of students to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, including social networking sites, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

Section 12: Contracted Services

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| 12.1 | Before and after school activities and contracted services |
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12.1 Before and After School Activities and Contracted Services

Where the Governing Body transfers control or otherwise allows the use of school premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of school hours, we will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to co-ordinate with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers.

Section 13: Complaints and compliments

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| 13.1 | Complaints from students or parents / carers |
| 13.2 | Complaints from staff |

13.1 Complaints from students or parents / carers

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for Child Protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying, or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in (see *Complaints Policy & Procedure* on the school website).

13.2 Complaints from staff

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's Complaints, Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

Appendices

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| Appendix 1 | Safeguarding children: key points |
| Appendix 2 | Useful contacts |
| Appendix 3 | Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation |
| Appendix 4 | Preventing violent extremism: role and responsibility of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) |

Appendix 1 Safeguarding Children: Key Points

All adults in charge of or in contact with children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. Ensure that you are familiar with the Safeguarding policy; copies of which are located on the school website and with the Head teacher's PA. On request you will be provided with a printed copy.

In addition, the following key points give a guide on what to do and not to do.

1. Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. Make a note of what was said or observed as soon as possible and pass to the Designated Safeguarding Person (Dominic Johnson) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons (Lisa Burton or Ashley Evans) or Richard Woods (Headteacher) at your earliest opportunity.
3. Never make a promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret. If you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it. You should explain that if you are going to be told something very important that needs to be sorted out, you will need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell the people who absolutely have to know.
4. Do not ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened, e.g. "did he do X to you?" Just ask, "what do you want to tell me?" or "Is there anything else you want to say?"

5. Immediately tell the Designated Senior Person for safeguarding unless they are the subject of the accusation. Don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told. If someone has made an accusation to you or you have concerns about the Head Teacher, you should report your concerns to the Chair of Governors, Chris Mottram: details can be obtained from V. Hill
6. Discuss with the Designated Senior Person for safeguarding whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse.
7. **Never** attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Children's Social Care Officers and police officers are the people trained to do this. You could cause more damage and endanger possible criminal proceedings. **It is your duty to refer concerns on, not investigate.**
8. As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the Designated Senior Person for safeguarding or the Chair of Governors where the allegation is against the Head Teacher, should refer the matter to The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Contact and Referral Team (helped by your notes). Follow their instructions about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations. That is their statutory job.
9. **Never** think abuse is impossible in your organisation or assume that an accusation against someone you know well, and trust is bound to be wrong.
10. Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults about abuse. Therefore, you may hear an allegation from another child. This should be acted upon in the same manner as outlined above.

Appendix 2

Useful contacts

| | Contact Details |
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| <i>Designated Senior Person</i> | <i>Heather Pardoe</i> 01606 706 000 |
| <i>Headteacher</i> | Craig Burns 01606 706 000 |
| <i>Nominated Governor for Safeguarding</i> | Chris Mottram (via Vicky Hill 01606 706 000) |
| <i>Chair of Governors</i> | Chris Mottram (via Vicky Hill 01606 706 000) |
| <i>Deputy Designated Person</i> | <i>Claire Whitehead</i> 01606 706 000 |
| <i>Local Authority Designated Officer</i> | Duty LADO: 0151 33 74570 |
| <i>Local Authority Safeguarding Children in Education Officer</i> | Pam Beech 0151 356 6566 |
| <i>Local Authority Legal Services Helpline</i> | |
| <i>Local Authority Human Resources</i> | |
| <i>Children's Social Care Contact and Referral Team</i> 8.30-5pm Mon-Thurs 8.30-4.30 Fri | http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/health_and_social_care/children_and_young_people/report_a_concern_about_a_child.aspx 01606 275099 |
| <i>Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)</i> 4.30pm-8am Mon-Thurs From 4pm Friday 24hours weekends and bank | 01244 977 277 |

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| <i>holidays</i> | |
| <i>TAF Co Ordinator</i> | Sarah Latham |
| <i>Early Support Access Team</i> | 0300 123 7047 |
| <i>TAF Champion</i> | |
| <i>Local Safeguarding Children's Board</i> | www.cheshirewestlsb.org.uk 0151 356 6494 |
| <i>School Health Advisor</i> | |
| <i>CAMHS</i> | 01606 863 152 |
| <i>Cheshire Police</i> | 0845 458 0000 or 101 for non emergencies 999 in case of emergency |
| Safer Schools Officer | Elizabeth.Stanton@cheshire.pnn.police.uk 01606 364565 |
| Neighbourhood Policing Officer | Alexander Haskell 101 |

Appendix 3 Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:
Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:
The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;
or
Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.
3. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.
4. Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
 - Identity Crisis – the student / student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
 - Personal Crisis – the student / student may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
 - Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / student’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
 - Unmet Aspirations – the student / student may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
 - Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
 - Special Educational Need – students / students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.
7. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

8. More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

Appendix four Preventing Violent Extremism: Roles and Responsibilities of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The SPOC for St Nicholas Catholic High School is Dominic Johnson, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware that you are the SPOC in relation to protecting students/students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students/students from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of St Nicholas Catholic High School in relation to protecting students/students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students/students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to students / students who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;
- Collating relevant information from in relation to referrals of vulnerable students / students into the Channel* process;
- attending Channel* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed;
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel* Co-ordinator; and
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.
- Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to
 - Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals;
 - Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
 - Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

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| Reviewed by: Full Governing Board | Date: 22 nd September 2023 |
| Review of Policy Due By | Date: <i>September 2024 (or earlier if required following DfE Guidance)</i> |