



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines the commitment of Discovery schools to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The pupils' welfare is of paramount importance. The policy explains how roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are delegated.

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### Safeguarding Named staff and contacts

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<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (Teacher) for Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children</b>	Louise Saunders
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead for Attendance</b>	Catriona Mugglestone
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead for Mental Health</b>	Antony Corbett
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead for Online Safety</b>	Antony Corbett
<b>Chair of the Advisory Board</b>	Lesley Butcher

<b>Discovery Trust</b>		
<b>Designated Board member for Safeguarding</b>	Maggie Spence	0116 279 3462 <a href="mailto:mspence@discoveryschooltrust.org.uk">mspence@discoveryschooltrust.org.uk</a>
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<b>CHANNEL referral (extremism / radicalisation):</b>	101 0116 248 6726 <a href="mailto:prevent.team@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk">prevent.team@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk</a>
<b>Leicester City Psychology and Education Welfare Service</b>	0116 4545470 <a href="mailto:psychology@leicester.gov.uk">psychology@leicester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Early Help Advice</b>	0116 454 1934 <a href="mailto:early-help@leicester.gov.uk">early-help@leicester.gov.uk</a>
<b>United Against Violence and Abuse Helpline UAVA Professionals Advice and Referrals</b>	0808 802 0028 0116 255 0004 (professionals only)

## 1. Introduction

Merrydale Junior School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. The aim of the policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive environment.

We believe that the best interests of children always come first. All pupils have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection. We encourage children to talk about their worries and report their concerns to us.

All staff at Merrydale Junior School maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.

This policy is consistent with the legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as described in section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the guidance:

- 'Keeping children safe in education – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges', September 2022 (KCSIE 2022)
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2018
- Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- **Prevention**
  - creating a positive, supportive and safe culture and curriculum, pastoral support to pupils, safer recruitment procedures).
- **Protection**
  - following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns).
- **Support**
  - for all pupils, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific interventions are required for those who may be at risk of harm).
- **Working with parents and other agencies**
  - to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise).

This policy applies in all aspects of the school, including Wraparound Care. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including trustees, advisory board members, volunteers, and visitors to the school. We recognise that child protection is the responsibility of all staff. We will ensure that all parents and other working partners are aware of our child protection policy by displaying appropriate information in our reception and on the school website and by raising awareness at meetings with parents.



## 2. Safeguarding Commitment

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

The school recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment that will help children to be safe. Staff encourage children and parents to talk about any concerns and to see school as a safe place even when there are difficulties. Children’s worries and fears will be taken seriously, they are actively encouraged to seek help from members of staff. Where appropriate the school will ensure the children’s wishes and feelings are considered when determining what safeguarding action to take and what services to provide. Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where all children (including those having protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010) feel secure and are encouraged to report concerns, talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children’s wishes, and feelings are taken into account when determining what actions to take and services to provide and that they are able to express their views and give feedback. We will always seek to act in the best interests of children
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty and that there are alternative ways to report concerns.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE / Citizenship / Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse (including online and other contexts children are in), and to know to whom they can turn for help.
- Ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.
- Operate safer recruitment procedures and follow Discovery’s Recruitment and Selection Policy and use the safer recruitment checklist to ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children. These include but are not limited to:
  - Identity checks
  - Verification of right to work in the UK (including EU nationals)
  - An enhanced DBS criminal record and barred list check (and overseas where needed)
  - References
  - Prohibition from teaching or managing in schools (section 128) checks

More information on safer recruitment can be found in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Trust will seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children (inspecting these where needed) and that there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. Safeguarding requirements will be included in any lease

or hire agreement as a condition of use; and any failure to comply will lead to termination of the agreement. This will be monitored through the school's annual safeguarding audit.

### **3. Linked Policies**

The Trust and school's statutory responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond this policy. This policy is one of a series in Merrydale Junior School integrated safeguarding portfolio and should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below:

- Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyberbullying)
- Attendance Policy
- Document Retention Management Policy
- GDPR Data Protection Strategy
- Early Help Offer
- Exclusion Policy
- Holiday Club Safeguarding Procedure
- Intimate care Plan
- Looked After Child Policy
- Medications and Medicines Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Online Safety Policy (including ICT Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils and Staff)
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Pupil Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Site Security Safety
  - Accessibility Plan
  - CCTV policy
  - First Aid Procedures
  - Health and Safety Policy
  - Volunteer and Visitor Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Trips and visits Policy

Staff related Policies and Procedures:

- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Mobile Phone and Loaned Property Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Staff handbook which includes Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Wellbeing Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will consider the implications for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

## **4. Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, key roles and responsibilities include:

### **4.1 Trustees' Responsibilities**

All Trustees need to understand their safeguarding duties and should be kept up to date with legislation and regulation. The Trust Board has a legal responsibility to make sure that the schools have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place and monitors the implementation of these policies regularly. The Trust Board will do this by:

- Commissioning independent safeguarding audits of each school annually.
- Receiving regular reports from the Trust Leader on safeguarding to the MAT board.
- Delegating operational responsibilities to Advisory Board's and school leader as defined below.
- Receiving and approving a template Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy annually.
- Appointing a Lead Trustee with responsibility for the Trust's wider safeguarding arrangements. The Safeguarding Trustee will regularly meet with the Trust Safeguarding and Behaviour Lead.

### **4.2 Local Governance Responsibilities**

The Advisory Board has delegated responsibility for the oversight of safeguarding in the school. The Advisory Board will do this by:

- Adopting a personalised Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy annually. Ensuring the current policy is made available publicly and on the school's website.
- Appointing a Lead Safeguarding Advisory Board member who attends the required training and that they refresh their training every two years.
- Receiving regular reports from the Headteacher on the effectiveness of safeguarding
- Monitoring trends in safeguarding data.
- Reviewing the annual safeguarding audit and monitoring progress against the action plan
- Reporting and escalating concerns to the Trust Board.

### **4.3 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is designated to take overall accountability for safeguarding and child protection in the school. The Headteacher of the school will ensure that:

- They have regard to the KCSIE 2022 guidance and will ensure school policies, procedures and training is effective and always complies with the law.
- The policies and procedures adopted by the Trust Board are effectively implemented, and followed by all staff
- Designated Safeguarding Lead arrangements are implemented in line with Trust and KCSIE 2022 guidance.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner.
- Allegations of abuse or concerns that a member of staff or adult working at school may pose a risk of harm to a child or young person are notified firstly to the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- All staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility to pass on safeguarding concerns and that if all else fails to report these directly to Children's Social Care (Children and Family Specialist Services) or the Police.

#### **4.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The school has appointed a member of the senior leadership team as the Designated Safeguarding Lead who has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety) in school.

The responsibilities of the DSL are outlined in a specific job description that is consistent with the functions set out in Annex C of KCSIE 2022. This includes but is not limited to:

- Acting as the central point of contact for all staff to discuss safeguarding concerns
- Managing referrals to the relevant agencies
- Working with parents and outside agencies
- Information sharing and the management of safeguarding records
- Raising awareness of safeguarding
- Keeping training, knowledge, and skills up to date
- Providing support to staff
- Understanding the views of children
- Always ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements including out of hours and for out of term activities.
- Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE.

The school has also appointed Deputy DSLs who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSLs absence. Delegated responsibility areas include:

- Attendance
- Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Online Safety

Current details of the DSL and Deputy DSLs job descriptions can be found on the school website, in the safeguarding section. DSL job descriptions are based on the responsibilities stated in Annex C of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.' These job descriptions are signed by each Designated Safeguarding Lead and kept in their personnel files. If a DSL is the Deputy Safeguarding lead for a specific area this will be included in their job description. The named staff and contacts document specifies the Designated Safeguarding Lead for each area.

#### **4.5 All staff**

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Read Part 1 of KCSIE and Annex B annually
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
- Know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
- Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
- Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
- Understand the early help process and their role in it.

- Understand the school safeguarding policies and systems.
- Undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.
- Be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

#### **4.6 Children**

Children have a right to:

- Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
- Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Contribute to the development of school safeguarding policies.
- Receive help from a trusted adult.
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

#### **4.7 Parents and Carers**

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the school's safeguarding approaches.
- Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online.
- Seek help and support from the school or other agencies.

#### **4.8 Trust Safeguarding and Behaviour Lead**

The Trust Safeguarding lead has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that safeguarding policies, procedures, and practice across the Trust meet statutory requirements.
- Support DSLs in leading and managing processes and procedures in relation to safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Deliver the DSL network termly and provide school staff with regular updates.
- Complete audits of safeguarding compliance in schools and support with areas for development where appropriate.
- Seek external support to ensure audits are robust and follow statutory guidance.
- Review and evaluate Trust safeguarding data half termly and report this data to the Trust board.

#### **4.9 Trust Online Safety Lead**

The Trust Online Safety Lead has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that there are robust procedures and protocols in place for both the monitoring and reporting of Online Safety Incidents.
- Deliver Online Safety training to school staff and lead the Online Safety DSL network. Ensure that there are robust procedures and protocols in place for both the reporting and monitoring of Online Safety incidents.

- Update Trust leaders on Online Safety processes in schools as well as reporting Online Safety data to the Trust board.
- Action annual Online Safety audits for schools and report findings to Trust Leaders

## **5. Reporting Concerns**

At Merrydale Junior School we take all concerns seriously. This flow chart details how staff members will respond and report any welfare concerns which are related to a pupil.

# What to do if you have a Safeguarding Concern about a Child

## Why are you concerned?

For example:

- Something a child has said – e.g., allegation of harm
- Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
- Behaviour change
- Witnessed concerning behaviour

## Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first.

Follow the school procedure:

- Reassure the child
- Clarify concerns, using open questions if necessary
- Recording using the child's own words, record facts not opinions, use the body map if physical injury
- Sign and date your records (if written on paper)
- Seek support for yourself if required from DSL

## Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g., unsafe to go home
- Access the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures: [www.lrsb.org.uk](http://www.lrsb.org.uk)
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g., social care, Early Help, LADO or Police
- If unsure the consult professionals advise line 0116 454 1004

### If you are unhappy with the response Staff:

- Seek advice and guidance from the First Response Children's Duty Professionals Consultation Line
- Follow whistleblowing procedures

### Pupils and Parents:

- Follow school complaints procedures listed on school website

**Record decision making and action taken on the child's file on CPOMs.**  
Share information confidentially with those who need to know

## Monitor

Be clear about:

- What you are monitoring e.g., behaviour trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

**Review and request further support** if necessary

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review  
The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child's safety** is **paramount**

In many cases of concern there will be an expectation that there have already been positive steps taken to work with parents and relevant parties to help alleviate the concerns and effect an improvement for the child. This is appropriate where it is thought a child may be in need in some way and require assessment to see whether additional support and services are required. An example might be where it is suspected a child may be the subject of neglect. In most cases the parents' knowledge and consent to the referral are expected, unless there is reason for this not being in the child's interest. However, there will be circumstances when informing the parent/carer of a referral that might put the child at risk, and in individual cases advice from Children's Social Care will need to be taken. [Appendix 1](#) contains the procedural steps a DSL will take.

If responding to an incident of sexual harassment, we will follow the DfE guidance on Child-on-Child sexual violence and sexual harassment in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022). Support will be offered to both the alleged victim(s) and child(ren) accused. Parents will be included in discussions about the format that this support will take.

Complaints or concerns raised by parents or pupils will be taken seriously and followed up in accordance with the school's complaints process.

## **6. Records, Monitoring and Transfer**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All staff are clear about the need to record and report concern about a child or children within the school. The school uses CPOMS secure online monitoring of children protection, safeguarding and wider pupil pastoral welfare software to record incidents.

All staff are given access to CPOMs. Where staff are unable to access CPOMs they are expected to complete a safeguarding concern form. These forms are kept in the school staff room, in the school office. These forms will be passed to a DSL without delay, and it is the DSLs responsibility to upload these to CPOMs.

Records of concerns will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words. These will be written down or typed on CPOMs, signed, dated, and passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy). If there is an immediate safeguarding concern for example pupil is danger of immediate harm, the member of staff will consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority. It is the Designated Safeguarding Leads responsibility to ensure any written concerns are scanned into CPOMs on the day they are written which will form part of the child's Child protection records.

Child protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if injuries have been observed. Child protection records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and details regarding any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Child protection records are kept confidential and stored securely on CPOMs, only Designated Safeguarding Leads have access to these records. Child protection records are kept for individual children and are maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these



records should be shared with other agencies (in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR principles).

Child protection records are reviewed regularly by the Designated Safeguarding Leads to check whether any action or updating is needed. This includes monitoring a pattern of complaints or concerns about any individuals and ensuring these are acted upon. Records of these reviews are kept in school and any actions taken are clearly identified and logged on the pupil's Child protection file.

When children transfer school, their child protection records are also transferred within 5 days of them starting. Safeguarding records will be transferred separately from other records. If a pupil's new school does not use CPOMS, the school will run a full student report, and either print a hard copy for a physical handover or send on through a secure electronic system. The school will ensure a signed and dated receipt of the record of the transfer is recorded. Where CPOMS is used by the receiving school records will be sent over electronically and securely through the CPOMS system. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new school in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new school to continue to provide support.

In the event of a child moving out of area and a physical handover or electronic CPOMS transfer not being possible then the most secure method should be found to send the confidential records to a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and a photocopy kept. Records requested by other agencies e.g., Police should be signed for and always copied.

## **7. Multi agency working**

We recognise and are committed to our responsibility to work within the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. The Designated Safeguarding Leads will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.

We work alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership processes as required, such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings.

We will share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within KCSIE 2022. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose relevant safeguarding information about a child with staff on a 'need to know' basis to ensure that the child's safety is paramount.

We are an Operation Encompass School. This means we work in partnership with Leicestershire Police to provide support to children experiencing domestic abuse. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.

## **8. Support to Pupils, Parents and Staff**

### **8.1 Support to pupils**

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and view their lives in a positive way and that this is likely to adversely impact their mental health and emotional well-being. We understand that this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Therefore, pupil will have access to pastoral support in school, this support may include

- Meet and Greet
- ELSA support

All pupils who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Children will be encouraged to report to a trusted adult in school all incidents of abuse may have happened and will be taught about alternative ways of doing this both in school and elsewhere for example, using the school worry post box on the wall of the nest

All concerns, worries and incidents of abuse will always be taken seriously, and pupils will never be made to feel that they are creating a problem by reporting their concern or made to feel ashamed.

At Merrydale Junior School we avoid victim blaming. Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected abuse will be supported by:

- Appropriate pastoral support
- Working with parents/carers
- Reviewing educational approaches
- Following procedures as identified in other relevant policies (Section 3)
- Where necessary and appropriate, informing the police and social care.

### **8.2 Supporting Children potentially at Greater Risk of Harm**

Whilst all children should be protected, some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm:

- **Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities**
  - We acknowledge that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
  - Children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges; these barriers included:
    - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
    - these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
    - the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and
    - communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.
  - All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child’s disability.
  - Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
  - To address these additional challenges our SENDCO will plan support as required
- **Children requiring Mental Health Support**
    - All staff will be made 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 or exploitation.
    - All staff are aware that children’s experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
    - Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
    - If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy
  - **Children Missing (including absence from school)**
    - We school recognise the entitlement that all children have to education and will work closely with the local authority and the Inclusion Service to share information about pupils who may be missing out on full time education or who go missing from education. The local authority will also be informed where children are to be removed from the school register.
      - a) to be educated outside the school system.
      - b) for medical reasons.
      - c) because they have ceased to attend.
      - d) because they are in custody.
      - e) because they have been permanently excluded.
    - We also recognise that when children go missing this is a sign that they may have been targeted by perpetrators of Child Sexual Exploitation and/or drug related criminals (County Lines). Children may also be groomed into participating in other forms of criminal exploitation including cybercrime, serious violence, and violent crime.
    - Children who attend an alternative education provision or have an agreed reduced timetable.
  - **Elective Home Education**
    - Where a parent/carer expresses their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will respond in line with national Elective Home Education guidance and local authority guidance and will work together with parents/carers and other key professionals and organisations to ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

- **Children with a Social Worker**
  - DSLs will hold details of social workers working with children in so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes
  - Where children have a social worker, this will inform decisions about a pupil's safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.
  
- **Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers**
  - The school recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.
  - The school has appointed a designated teacher who works with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after or who have been previously looked after.
  - The designated teacher will work with the DSL to ensure appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.

### **8.3 Support for parents**

Child abuse is devastating for the child; however, we recognise that it can also result in distress and anxiety for parents and carers. We will support parents and carers by ensuring each family has a key adult in school (usually a DSL) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. The school can also offer details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support to ensure that all family members are supported.

### **8.4 Support for staff**

As part of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people staff may hear information, either from the child as part of a disclosure or from another adult that will be upsetting. Where a member of staff is distressed because of dealing with a child protection concern, they should in the first instance speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead about the support they require. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek to arrange the necessary support. The Trust's Stress Management and Staff Wellbeing Policy contains more information.

## **9. Specific Safeguarding Concerns**

Merrydale Junior School acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues that can put children at a greater risk of harm. The different safeguarding concerns are summarised below however more information is included in the relevant appendices.

### **9.1 Abuse and Neglect**

When assessing whether a child may be suffering actual potential harm there are four categories of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- **Emotional Abuse** - the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.
- **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.
- **Sexual abuse** - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening.

For further information, see [Appendix 2](#). We recognise that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members.

## 9.2 Child on Child Abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Child on Child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- upskirting (which is a criminal offence)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

We acknowledge that children sometimes display harmful behaviour themselves and that even if there are no reports, it may still be happening. Incidents or allegations will be referred on for appropriate support and intervention. Such abuse is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at all or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up’. Incidents or allegations will be referred on for appropriate support and intervention. For further information, see [Appendix 3](#).

## 9.3 Online Safety/Online Sexual Abuse

We recognise that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Some children may use mobile and smart technology, whilst at school and outside of school, to sexually harass

their peers, share indecent images (consensually and non-consensually) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

Our online safety policy describes the rules governing the use of the internet in school. [Appendix 4](#) contains more information but the DfE guidance “Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people” (Dec 2020) will be used to guide our response to online sexual abuse on a case-by-case basis.

#### **9.4 Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 including rape and sexual assault. Sexual harassment is ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and may include sexual name-calling, taunting or “jokes” and physical behaviour, for example, deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with clothes. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable. [Appendix 5](#) contains further information.

#### **9.5 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. [Appendix 6](#) contains further information.

#### **9.6 Serious violence**

Serious violence is associated with a number of risk indicators in children including increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Staff are made aware of these and of the other risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence and these risk factors are listed in [Appendix 7](#).

#### **9.7 So called ‘Honour-based’ abuse**

So called ‘honour-based’ abuse encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the so-called ‘Honour’ of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (see appendix 8), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called Honour Based Abuse are abuse (regardless of the motivation). [Appendix 8](#) contains more information.

#### **9.8 Modern slavery and human trafficking**

Modern slavery and human trafficking can take on many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Children may be trafficked into the UK from abroad or moved around the country. [Appendix 9](#) contains more information.

#### **9.9 Radicalisation and Extremism**

We are aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism,’ also known as the Prevent duty and the specific obligations placed upon us as a school regarding risk

assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies. We recognise that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. [Appendix 10](#) contains more information along with our risk assessment for Radicalisation and Extremism.

### **9.10 Private fostering arrangements**

A child under 16 (or 18 with a disability) is living with someone who is not their family or a close relative (includes stepparent, grandparents, uncle, auntie or sibling) for 28 days or more. Staff will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that a referral to Children's Social Care for a safety check, can be made.

### **9.11 Domestic Abuse**

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

## **10. Safeguarding in the Curriculum**

Children are taught about safeguarding in school and how to report their concerns to a trusted adult through assemblies and the PSHE curriculum. This will be appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development. Through PSHE (Including Relationships Education) and the wider curriculum children are taught:

- Bullying/Cyberbullying
  - Drugs, alcohol and substance abuse (including awareness of County Lines and the Criminal Exploitation of children where appropriate)
  - Online safety
  - The danger of meeting up with strangers
  - Protective Behaviours Safety Curriculum
  - Fire and water safety
  - Road safety
  - Domestic violence/Healthy Relationships/Consent
  - Honour Based Abuse e.g. forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
  - Sexual exploitation of children (CSE), including online
  - Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

The school follows the Discovery Statutory Relationships and Sex Education policy alongside delivery of both the Protective Behaviours. Our curriculum provides opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness, and decision making so that learners have a range of age-appropriate contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others.

We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

## **11. Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

The school's safer recruitment processes follow the statutory guidance: "Keeping children safe in education September 2022, Part Three: Safer recruitment."

The school will provide all the relevant information in references for a member of staff about whom there have been safeguarding concerns i.e. about child protection / inappropriate conduct. Cases in which the conclusion of an allegation has been unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious will not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be unsubstantiated, malicious etc. will also not be included in a reference.

The school has an open safeguarding ethos regularly addressing safeguarding responsibilities during staff meetings and fostering an ongoing culture of vigilance. All new staff and volunteers receive a safeguarding induction and are briefed on the code of conduct for adults working with children before contact with children is allowed. The Leicestershire County Council induction leaflet is given to all staff and is the basis for the safeguarding induction.

In line with statutory requirements, every interview panel for school staff will have at least one member (Senior Leader/ teacher /manager or advisory board member) who has undertaken safer recruitment training. The Discovery safer recruitment checklist will be used to evidence that all checks have been made prior to appointment.

Staff and volunteers who provide early years or later years childcare and any managers of such Childcare, are covered by the disqualification regulations of the Childcare Act 2006 and are required to declare relevant information - see statutory guidance: Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (Updated August 2018).

## **12. DBS rechecks & portability**

### **12.1 DBS rechecks**

There is no legal requirement or mandatory time period for undertaking DBS re-checks. Rechecks for existing staff will be carried out yearly on a random sample basis (Number of staff to be sampled will be decided by the Headteacher, with Trust central team staff to be decided by the Trust Leader). Rechecks for governance volunteers (Trustees & Advisory Boards) are required on re-appointment.

### **12.2 DBS Portability**

DBS Checks will be undertaken in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.



Where applicants have subscribed to the DBS Update Service, the schools will seek their consent to undertake an on-line check of their DBS status. Applicants will still be required to produce a hardcopy of their most recent DBS certificate. Where the status check says that the DBS certificate remains current (i.e. no new information recorded), then there is no requirement to undergo a full DBS check.

A recent DBS check (within 12 months) may be accepted subject to a risk assessment that considers:

- If the applicant has had a break in service. A break in service over three months requires a new DBS.
- If the level of that check is right for the position being recruited.
- If the certificate matches the job role - the position field and information on the certificate must match that of the applicant's new role.
- The police disclose information on an enhanced DBS certificate
- The information revealed was based on the identity of the applicant, which was validated by another Registered Body
- That the identity details on the certificate match those of the applicant

### **12.3 Disclosing convictions in service**

Employees and volunteers subject to DBS checks must disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands, or final warnings that arise during their service with the school, to the Headteacher immediately. Failure to reveal information directly relevant to their role may lead to disciplinary action.

## **13. Staff Induction and Training**

### **13.1 Induction**

At Induction all new staff and volunteers (including agency staff) receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety). This induction includes information to ensure they are aware of the schools internal safeguarding processes.

This will be conducted by a member of the SLT.

### **13.2 Training**

Annually, all staff members receive child protection training (including online safety) to ensure they are aware of the definitions and indicators of a range of safeguarding issues. All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy, Part One and Annex B of KCSIE 2022. Copies of this policy and KCSIE are available to all staff through Teams, on the website, hard copies are available in the staff room.

All members of staff complete a Safeguarding quiz and sign to confirm that they have read and understood the national guidance shared with them. This information is stored with the office manager and will be available upon request.

In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via staff briefings This information provides staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

### **13.3 Use of mobile phones**

All staff must ensure that their mobile phones, personal cameras and recording devices are stored securely during working hours on school premises or when on outings (This includes supply teachers, visitors, volunteers, and students).

Staff should never use their personal mobile phone or other personal device to record images of children, recordings or give out their personal contact details to pupils and/or their family. All telephone contact with parents or carers must be made on the school phone.

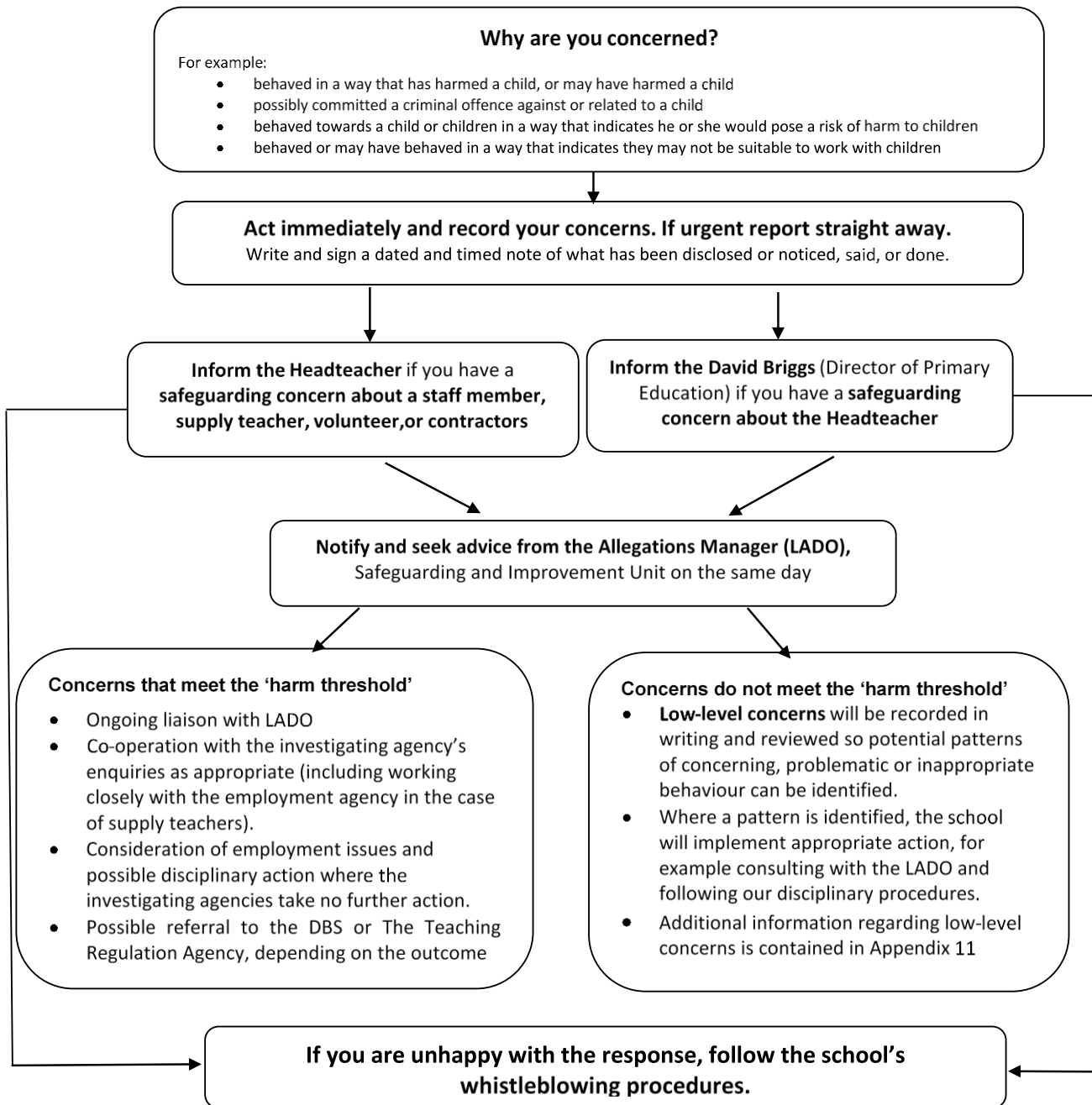
Staff will be issued with a work phone if their line manager deems this as essential to their role. More information can be found in the Mobile Phone and Loaned Property Policy.

### **14. Reporting incidents with safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff**

As part of our approach to safeguarding, we have created and embedded a culture of openness, trust, and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored, and reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors).

All staff are expected to report concerns, no matter how small, about their own behaviour or that of another member of staff, volunteer, supply teacher, contractor or other person working in school. All concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately including 'Low-level concerns'- [Appendix 11](#) contains more information regarding our 'Low-Level Concerns' procedure.

**What to do if you have a Safeguarding Concern about a Staff Member  
(including headteachers, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors)**



**15. Record Keeping of concerns or allegations against staff**

Following a concern or allegation against a member of staff, the Headteacher will have a conversation with the member of staff (unless advised not to do so by the LADO or Police). The headteacher will decide if any formal action needs to be taken. If formal action is not required a record of the informal discussion will be placed on file at local level, which only the headteacher will have access to. If formal actions are required, the Headteacher will follow the Trusts Disciplinary Procedures Policy and discussions/outcomes are placed on file at Trust level.

If the concern is about the Headteacher, the same procedure applies but David Briggs will complete the informal discussion. The Trusts Disciplinary Procedures Policy will be followed if these concerns become of a formal nature.

## **16. Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually (as a minimum) and be updated as needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt. The policy will also be revised following any national or local updates, significant local or national safeguarding events and/or learning, and/or any changes to our own procedures.

## **Appendix 1: Designated Safeguarding Lead procedure for responding to a concern**

- 1) Log all information and records of communications on CPOMs.
- 2) Where initial enquiries do not justify a referral to the investigating agencies, inform the initiating adult and monitor the situation. If in doubt, seek advice from the First Response professionals' consultation line.
- 3) Share information confidentially with those who need to know.
- 4) Where there is a child protection concern requiring immediate, same day, intervention from Children's Social Care, the First Response Children's Duty should be contacted by phone (contact the local authority Children's Services where the child lives). Written confirmation should be made within 24 hours on the Multi-Agency Referral Form to Children's Social Care. All other referrals should be made using the online form (<http://lrsb.org.uk/childreport>).
- 5) If the concern is about children using harmful sexual behaviour, refer to the separate guidance, "Guidance for schools working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour" (Leicestershire LA Guidance).
- 6) If it appears that urgent medical attention is required arrange for the child to be taken to hospital (normally this means calling an ambulance) accompanied by a member of staff who must inform medical staff that non-accidental injury is suspected. Parents must be informed that the child has been taken to hospital.
- 7) Exceptional circumstances: If it is feared that the child might be at immediate risk on leaving school, take advice from the First Response Professionals Consultation line (for instance about difficulties if the school day has ended, or on whether to contact the police). Remain with the child until the Social Worker takes responsibility. If in these circumstances a parent arrives to collect the child, the member of staff has no right to withhold the child, unless there are current legal restrictions in force (e.g., a restraining order). If there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, First Response Children's Duty should be updated, and the Police should be contacted immediately.

## Appendix 2: Abuse and Neglect Further Information

The four categories of abuse:

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

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

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

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

### Appendix 3: Child on Child Abuse

All members of staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Child on Child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

We recognise that children sometimes display harmful behaviour themselves and that even if there are no reports, it may still be happening. Incidents or allegations will be referred on for appropriate support and intervention. Such abuse is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at all or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

Child on Child abuse may be experienced by both boys and girls; however, girls are more likely to be the victims and boys perpetrators. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, bi-phobic, or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. We will take positive action to create a culture of support and to ensure that girls and vulnerable groups such as LGBT and pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds feel confident to bring forward any concerns and have a safe space to talk to trusted staff about their experiences. There are school and local authority guidance and policies which detail the school's procedures to address and minimise these concerns:

- Pupil Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online safety Policy
- “Guidance for schools working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour” (Leicestershire LA Guidance)
- Part 5 of “Keeping children safe in education”.

Where an incident has occurred or specific risks are identified, the details will be added to a safeguarding or behaviour record for the children concerned and a thorough investigation conducted by the DSL, where appropriate. A written risk assessment will be undertaken by the DSL to minimise the risk of further harm and to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

Parents or carers of the children involved will be informed as soon as it is appropriate to do so. Support plans will be written, and help offered, by different adults in school (to avoid a possible conflict of interest), to the alleged victim, the child accused, and any other children involved.

A referral to any relevant outside agency will be made e.g., Police or Social Care. Detailed guidance and procedures are included in the linked guidance and school policies listed in the main policy.

The following steps will be taken to minimise the risk of Child-on-Child abuse:

- Staff training to ensure an understanding of what it is and how to recognise signs
- Promotion of a supportive environment by teaching about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours (including online) in both assemblies and the wider curriculum e.g., RSHE
- Clear procedures put in place to govern the use of mobile phones in school
- Appropriate staff supervision of pupils and identifying locations around the school site that are less visible and may present more risk to pupils

Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers a statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises e.g., when children are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, to such extent as is reasonable. Note legislation is for schools only and is not applicable to independent schools.



## Appendix 4: Online Safety/Online Sexual Abuse

We recognise that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Some children may use mobile and smart technology, whilst at school and outside of school, to sexually harass their peers, share indecent images (consensually and non-consensually) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Many children have unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phones and our online safety describes the rules governing the use of the internet in school. It also sets out the school's response to incidents which may involve one or more of the four areas of risk – content, contact, conduct and commerce.

Online safety is a consideration running through the planning and implementation of all relevant policies and procedures. Staff will always respond if informed that children have been involved in sharing indecent images. The DfE guidance "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people" (Dec 2020) will be used to guide the school's response on a case-by-case basis. All staff are made aware of the key points in this document:

- Report immediately to the DSL
- Do not view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g., if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it. Leave this for the DSL if needed.
- Do not ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).
- Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

The DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.

Parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm. All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.

A referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:

- the incident involves an adult (over 18).
- there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
- the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of 13, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.

- a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.

## **Appendix 5: Sexual Violence and sexual harassment**

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 including rape and sexual assault. Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and may include sexual name-calling, taunting or "jokes" and physical behaviour, for example, deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with clothes.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.

'Upskirting' is also a criminal offence (under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019) and typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without them knowing, in order to obtain sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress, or alarm (anyone of any gender can be a victim).

Evidence shows that girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are more likely to be the victims of sexual violence and harassment and boys are more likely to be the perpetrators. We will take positive action to create a safe and supportive culture in school, recognising the disproportionate vulnerability of these groups so that all pupils feel supported and have a safe space to speak openly with trusted adults if they wish to do so. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any gender.

All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will make an immediate risk assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted). The risk will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, adult students (if appropriate) and staff and any actions that are required to protect them. Immediate consideration will be given as to

Reports will initially be managed internally by the school/college and where necessary will be referred to Integrated Children's Services and/or the Police. The decision making and required action taken will vary on a case by case basis, but will be informed by the wishes of the victim, the nature of the alleged incident (including whether a crime may have been committed), the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse, if there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school/college staff, and, any other related issues or wider context.

If at any stage the DSL is unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Local Authority.

## **Appendix 6: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

CSE and CCE can affect both males and females and can include children who have been moved (trafficked) for the purpose of exploitation. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted - exploitation, as well as being physical, can be facilitated and/or take place online.

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point or are targeted by criminals involved in the illegal supply of drugs (County Lines) and serious violent crime.

'County Lines' involves drug networks or individuals exploiting children and young people into carrying drugs and money between cities, towns and villages. Serious violent crime can be associated with this form of criminal activity together with child sexual exploitation. Children may also be exploited into committing cybercrime or money laundering offences and organised criminal groups or individuals may exploit children and young people with enhanced computer skills to access digital networks and/or data for criminal and financial gain. Children with bank accounts may be persuaded to allow criminal to use their banking facilities to launder money.

CCE can also involve working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing and may involve coercing children to commit vehicle crime or serious violence towards others.

It is important to note that the experience of girls can be very different to that of boys, but girls are also at risk. Criminal exploitation of children is a form of harm that can affect children in both a physical environment and online.

Staff training includes raising awareness of these issues and any concerns are passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will make a risk assessment and refer to Local Authority First Response Children's Duty if appropriate.

## **Appendix 7: Serious Violence Risk Factors**

The following risk factors increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery.

Staff training will raise awareness to these risks and any concerns will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to co-ordinate a safeguarding response.

## **Appendix 8: Female Genital Mutilation**

Whilst all staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 places a mandatory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 or where a girl discloses that she has undergone FGM.

The school's response to FGM will take into account the government guidance, "multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation" updated October 2018.

There will be a considered safeguarding response towards any girl who is identified as being at risk of FGM (e.g. there is a known history of practising FGM in her family, community or country of origin) which may include sensitive conversations with the girl and her family, sharing information with professionals from other agencies and/or making a referral to Children's Social Care. If the risk of harm is imminent there are several emergency measures that can be taken including police protection, an FGM protection order and an Emergency Protection Order.

## **Appendix 9: Modern slavery and human trafficking**

Modern slavery and human trafficking can take on many forms, including:

- sexual exploitation
- forced labour
- slavery
- servitude
- forced criminality
- the removal of organs.

Children may be trafficked into the UK from abroad or moved around the country. Staff need to be aware of indicators which include, but not limited to:

- neglect
- isolation
- poor living conditions
- having few personal belongings
- a lack of trust and reluctance to seek help.

Staff will refer any concerns to the DSL without delay who will act and also refer victims to the National Referral Mechanism ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).

## **Appendix 10: Radicalisation and Extremism**

Our school recognises the duties placed on us by the Counter Terrorism Bill (July 2015) to prevent our pupils being drawn into terrorism.

These include:

- Assessing the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism (see below)
- Working in partnership with relevant agencies (including making referrals) under the Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
- Appropriate staff training
- Appropriate online filtering

Our school is committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

There is a current threat from terrorism in the UK and this can include the exploitation of vulnerable young people, aiming to involve them in terrorism or to be active in supporting terrorism.

Our school seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including but not restricted to those linked to extremist religious Ideology, Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology etc. Concerns should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who has local contact details for the Prevent Engagement Team (Police) and Channel referrals. They will also consider whether circumstances require Police to be contacted urgently.



## Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment

School: Merrydale Junior School

	Yes/No	Evidence
Does the school have a policy?	N/A	This is part of the school's safeguarding policy
Does the school work with outside agencies on radicalisation and extremism e.g. Channel?	Yes	The school has worked alongside PREVENT for individual cases.
Have staff received appropriate training?	Yes	This forms part of the annual safeguarding training and is revisited through the year. We also send updates to staff
Has the school got a trained Prevent lead?	Yes	The DHT is the lead for PREVENT
Do staff know who to discuss concerns with? (DSL)	Yes	The Safeguarding team are available in school.
Is suitable filtering of the internet in place?	Yes	
Do children know who to talk to about their concerns?	Yes	This topic is revisited in school assemblies on a regular basis and also forms part of the annual children's questionnaire
Are there opportunities for children to learn about radicalisation and extremism?	Yes	The PHSE curriculum does have coverage
Have any cases been reported?	Yes	There have been historical cases reported to PREVENT
Are individual pupils risk assessed?	Yes	When issues are identified the risk to children is assessed. This is done in line with current training from the PREVENT team
What factors make the school community potentially vulnerable to being radicalised? (e.g. EDL local base, extreme religious views promoted locally, tensions between local communities, promotion of radical websites by some pupils/parents)		The school serves a wide-ranging community. We have a diverse school community that represents a variety of religions and beliefs. Our community is respectful of each other's beliefs; however, we do need to remain vigilant at all times for the small minorities that may seek to disrupt.
Comment on the school's community, locality, and relevant history:		

Risk evaluation	<b>Medium</b>	Continue with staff training for these issues. Continue to be a listening school with clear reporting structures for things that seem out of the ordinary. Continue to educate children in the dangers of extremism in all forms.
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Date completed 23/8/22 Signed

*Anthony Corbett*

## **Appendix 11: Low-level Concerns Procedure**

### **1. Purpose**

All staff are expected to report concerns, no matter how small, about their own behaviour or that of another member of staff, volunteer, supply teacher, contractor, or other person working in school. This helps to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the clear values and expected behaviour set out in the “Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” (February 2022) are lived, monitored, and reinforced.

The procedure should be read in conjunction with the current statutory guidance – “Keeping Children Safe in Education” Part 4, Section 2. This procedure applies to all staff and other individuals who work or volunteer in school.

### **2. Definition of a low-level concern**

The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is not insignificant. It means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet threshold:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child and/or.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or.
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’, that a person working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the “Guidance for safer working practice” (February 2022), including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to make a referral to the LADO

### **3. Reporting low-level concerns**

Where a low-level concern has been identified this will be reported as soon possible to the headteacher. However, it is never too late to share a low-level concern if this has not already happened.

Where the headteacher is not available, the information will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy (the most senior member of SLT acting in this role). The most senior member of SLT must inform the headteacher of the details as soon as possible.

Low-level concerns about the headteacher will be reported to David Briggs (Director of Primary Education). A low-level concern about a supply teacher or contractor will be reported to their employer.

#### 4. Recording concerns

A summary of the low-level concern should be written down, signed, timed, dated and shared by the person bringing the information forward.

Where concerns are reported verbally to the headteacher a record of the conversation will be made by the headteacher which will be signed, timed, and dated.

The person bringing forward the concern will be named in the written record. Where they request to remain anonymous this will be respected as far as possible. However, there may be circumstances where this is not possible e.g. where a fair disciplinary investigation is needed or where a later criminal investigation is required.

#### 5. Responding to low-level concerns

Where a low-level concern has been raised this will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. The headteacher will:

- Speak to the person reporting the concern to gather all the relevant information
- Speak to the individual about the concern raised to ascertain their response, unless advised not to do so by the LADO or Police (HR advice may also need to be taken).
- Where necessary further investigation will be carried out to gather all relevant information. This may involve speaking to any potential witnesses.
- The information reported and gathered will then be reviewed to determine whether the behaviour:
  - i) is consistent with the “Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” (February 2022): no further action will be required,
  - ii) constitutes a low-level concern: no further action is required, or additional training/guidance/support may be required to rectify the behaviour via normal day to day management processes. The employee should understand that failure to improve or a repeat of the behaviour may lead to further action being taken, e.g. either via the Performance Management Policy or Disciplinary Policy.
  - iii) is serious enough to consult with or refer to the LADO: a referral should be made to the LADO and advice taken from HR. In this case the school’s Managing Allegations procedure within the Safeguarding Policy and Disciplinary Policy will be followed.
  - iv) when considered with any other low-level concerns that have previously been raised about the same individual, should be reclassified as an allegation, and referred to the LADO or Police: a referral should be made to the LADO and advice taken from HR. In this case the school’s Managing Allegations procedure within the Safeguarding Policy and Disciplinary Policy will be followed.
- Records will be made of:
  - all internal conversations including any relevant witnesses,
  - all external conversations e.g., with the LADO
  - the decision and the rationale for it
  - any action taken

It may be the case that a person finds themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted or might appear compromising to others; or they may have behaved in a manner which on reflection they consider falls below the standard set out in the “Guidance for safer working practice”. In these circumstances they should self-report. This will enable a potentially difficult situation to be addressed at an early opportunity if necessary.

Where behaviour is consistent with the “Guidance for safer working practice” (February 2022) feedback will be given to both parties to explain why the behaviour was consistent with the “Guidance for safer working practice”.

## **6. Reviewing**

Low-level concerns records will be reviewed periodically, and whenever a new low-level concern is added, so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and referred to the LADO if required. A record of these reviews will be retained.

## **7. References**

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless a low-level concern, or group of concerns, has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated.

## **8. Trust support**

The headteacher will regularly inform the Trust about any low-level concerns. The Trust Safeguarding Lead may also review an anonymised sample to ensure that these concerns have been handled appropriately.