CHILD PROTECTION

AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

BASED ON A DERBYSHIRE POLICY

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NB THERE ARE MANY REFERENCES IN BLUE TO OTHER SITES THESE ARE NOT HYPERLINKS AND NEED TO BE ENTERED MANUALLY ON THE WEBSITE TO ACCESS THEM

Section 1: Introduction

This child protection/safeguarding policy outlines how the school will safeguard and promote children's welfare to keep our learners safe from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, governors, supply staff and contractors working in or on behalf of the setting.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

> Protecting children from maltreatment

> Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

> Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and

> Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best outcomes

'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

1.1 We help to keep children safe by:

> Providing safe environments, with secure access, where children can learn and develop

> Acting in the best interests of children to protect them online and offline, including when they are receiving remote education

> Identifying children who may need early help, and who are at risk of harm or have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse (including by other children), grooming or exploitation

> Taking timely and appropriate safeguarding action for children who need extra help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer, harm. This includes, if required, referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help

> Using safe recruitment processes and managing allegations that may meet the harm threshold and allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, referred to as low-level concerns

We will ensure that parents/carers and our partner agencies are aware of our child protection/ safeguarding policy by ensuring that it is on the school website. We advertise safeguarding information around our school, including names and contact details of Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and contact details for other relevant parties or agencies.

The school website will also have information about how parents/children/other agencies can contact the DSLs and include about who to contact during out of school hours and school holidays.

1.2 Safeguarding and child protection policy statement

Hadfield Infant School operates a whole school approach and ethos to safeguarding and protecting children. Where safeguarding is concerned, we maintain an attitude of *"it could happen here"*. We recognise that everyone in the school has a role to play to keep children safe; this includes identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action. Safeguarding and child protection is incorporated in all relevant aspects of processes and policy development. All systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of a child at their centre.

We ensure that all children are safeguarded while on or off school premises and are proactive about anticipating and managing risks that children face in the wider community and online. To support this the school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its learners. Due to the context of our school, our children may be at greater risk of criminal exploitation/gangs (including county lines), domestic abuse, and online bullying/exploitation.

To protect our learners, we have a comprehensive programme of training for staff, volunteers, and governors (including Prevent, First Aid and Safer Recruitment etc.), and are part of the Operation Encompass initiative. We provide robust education around safety and wellbeing. Our whole-school approach to preventative education means children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. We also work with partner agencies, such as the Police, to respond to risks as they emerge.

The school recognises we have an important role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and contributes to multi-agency working as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2025). As a relevant agency, the school understands its role within local safeguarding arrangements and operates in accordance with the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children multi-agency procedures, including the local criteria for action (known as the Threshold document) and local protocols for assessment in Derby and Derbyshire. The school is also aware of, and implements any local learning where appropriate, such as those as outlined in DDSCP Briefing note: safeguarding school age children and learning from case reviews and other DDSCP briefing notes located in the multi-agency safeguarding children procedures document library.

Our school works with the following partners and agencies to support vulnerable children:

- Health services i.e. school nurses,
- CAMHS - emotional well-being/mental health, substance misuse services,
- Voluntary sector, such as Crossroads domestic abuse support service,
- Faith settings, such as our local church who provide pastoral support, when required,
- Local authority children's services – e.g., early help teams and social care

We engage with these partners and agencies in a number of ways, including holding regular meetings in schools, taking part in locality partnership forums/events, hosting meetings for individual children and families in school etc.

1.3 Context

This policy enables Hadfield Infant School to carry out our functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and must be read alongside key guidance:

Department for Education's statutory guidance publications for schools and local authorities, including:

> Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)

> Keeping children Safe in Education (2026)

> Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (2018)

> Human Rights Act (1998)

> Equality Act (2010), including the Public Sector Equality Duty

> Prevent Duty Guidance (2023)

> Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures

These are not hyperlinks and need to be entered manually on the web site

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm, neglect, or failure to act, it relates to broader aspects of care and education. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies, such as:

> Behaviour policy, including how we engage learners struggling to engage in school, mental health and behaviour, acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours. This policy also outlines the school's screening, searching, and confiscating powers and how they will be used safely, proportionately, and appropriately, including police strip searches, the use of reasonable force/physical intervention, including the increased vulnerability of children with special education needs (SEN) or disabilities

> Anti-bullying policy including how we prevent and respond to bullying including cyber bullying, prejudiced- based and discriminatory bullying and child-on-child abuse

> Reduced timetables, suspension and permanent exclusion procedures and guidance

> School attendance policy, including children who run away or go missing from education, home, or care

> Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions

> First aid and administering medicine policies

> Educational visits procedures

> Intimate care policy

> Online safety policy, data protection policy and acceptable use policy (for pupils), including use of mobile and smart technology, online safety at school and at home and other associated issues, including sharing nudes and semi-nudes, use of pupil mobile phones in school, appropriate filtering and monitoring and how children can be kept safe from terrorist and extremist materials

> Safer recruitment and selection procedures, including single central record

- Staff code of conduct, disciplinary procedure, including managing low level concerns, managing allegations against staff (whistleblowing) policy, including supply staff, contractors and volunteers incorporating 'duty to refer' and whistleblowing, acceptable use of technologies/mobile devices (for staff), social media policy, including staff/learner relationships and communications,
- School security and visitors' procedures
- SEND annual information report
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy, personal, health, and social education policy (including physical and mental well-being)
- Complaints procedure
- Information sharing/privacy notice, data protection policy and retention policy

Section 2: What is abuse?

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child which may be caused by an adult, adults or by another child or children inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. The abuse can be physical, sexual, neglect or emotional, including witnessing the ill treatment of others, such as domestic abuse. Children can be at risk of abuse inside and outside their home, in their community, inside and outside the school and online.

Safeguarding issues can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including county lines), radicalisation, consensual/non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images can be signs that children are at risk. Abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events; in most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children from the following risks, which include abuse perpetrated by other children as well as by adults:

- Any concerns that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or
- Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying, racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- Sexual harassment, online sexual abuse, and sexual violence between children. Online abuse can include sending abusive, harassing, and misogynistic or misandrist messages; sharing nude and semi-nude images and videos; and coercing others to make and share sexual imagery
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, including county lines. This is known locally as child at risk of exploitation or 'CSE'
- Risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example youth produced sexual imagery
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship' abuse)

- Upskirting[1]
- Substance misuse – drugs and alcohol
- Gang activity and serious violence, particularly affecting young males who have been excluded, have experienced trauma and have been involved in offending
- Domestic abuse
- Forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour-based' violence
- Children with Perplexing Presentations (PP) in whom illness is fabricated or induced (FII)
- Homelessness

Further information about indicators of abuse and neglect as well as safeguarding risks noted above are located in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)

Section 3: School staff safeguarding roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff induction

Staff and governors at Hadfield Infants will have an induction appropriate to their roles, which will include organization, vision/ethos, aspirations, and expectations of all staff, as well as what is considered acceptable and what is not. New staff will also receive information about systems within the school which support safeguarding, including online safety and copies of policies; this includes:

- Child protection/ safeguarding policy, which includes how the school deals with child-on-child abuse
- School behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy, which includes school measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Staff code of conduct policy, acceptable use of technologies/mobile devices (for staff), and social media policy, including staff/learner relationship and communications
- Children missing from education policy

The safeguarding response to child-on-child abuse

- The role and names of the designated safeguarding leads and the deputy, the designated teacher for looked after children, the senior mental health lead and the designated governor.

All staff will:

Receive a paper/electronic copy of, read, and sign to say that they have received, read, and understood:

- Those who work directly with children at least Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education: for school and college staff and Annex B: Further information (2026)
- (for school leaders including governors and designated safeguarding leads/deputies) all of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)

[1] Upskirting is taking a picture of someone's genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate or distress the individual. This is a criminal offence, see Voyeurism (Offences) Act (2019)

- Staff who do not work with children directly at least Keeping Children Safe in Education: for school and college staff (part 1) or Annex A Safeguarding information for school and college staff (a condensed version of part 1)

All staff will:

> Be aware of:
- The Stopping Domestic Abuse Together initiative (Operation Encompass), a police-led early domestic abuse notification to schools
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The safeguarding response to child-on-child abuse
- The early help process for low level and emerging needs and understand their role in it
- The process for making a referral to local authority children's social care, the statutory assessments that may follow this and the role they may play in such assessments

> Know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and will be able to reassure children they are being taken seriously, will be supported, and kept safe

> Know what to do if a child shares, produces or receives a sexual communication, including sharing nudes/ semi-nudes

> Know what to do if a parent or carer shares any concerns about a child

> Be aware:
- Children may not feel ready or know how to tell and/or might not recognise their experiences as harmful and that certain children may face additional barriers to telling
- Any child may benefit from early help and be alert to the need for early help for some groups of children
- Of the indicators of abuse and neglect, understand that children can be at risk inside and outside of the school, in their home, institutional or community setting and online
- Children can abuse other children, referred to as child-on-child abuse, and the school policy to prevent and respond to it
- Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), particularly those with neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism, as well as those with certain medical or physical health conditions are particularly vulnerable to online and offline abuse, exploitation, and neglect - and also face additional barriers to the recognition of this abuse
- Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being issues
- 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
- That children's poor behaviour may be a sign that they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse
- Of the '*one chance'* rule with suspected or actual victims of forced marriage and so called 'honour-based' abuse. That is, they may only have one opportunity to speak to a victim or potential victim to offer appropriate support and advice
- Of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime

Have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and previously looked after children safe

Discuss/report any concerns they have about a child with the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy

Speak to the designated safeguarding leads or deputy about any concerns about so called 'honour-based' abuse, breast ironing, female genital mutilation (FGM)[2], virginity testing and hymenoplasty[3]

Work with the designated safeguarding leads and do everything they can to support social workers to help them carry out a statutory assessment

Be mindful that early information sharing is vital to identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes

3.2 Governors and the management of school safeguarding

As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education the governing body/trustees/proprietors have a strategic leadership responsibility for the school safeguarding arrangements and has/have the responsibility to ensure that the school complies with safeguarding duties under legislation. There is a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the establishment's safeguarding arrangements.

The governing body, their senior leadership team and designated safeguarding leads are aware of and follow local arrangements. This includes understanding and applying the Threshold document (criteria for action), local Protocol for Assessment in Derby and Derbyshire ,Child Protection Conference Professionals Dissent process and Dispute Resolution and Escalation policy. Arrangements have been made to set out information sharing processes and principles within the school and with local authority children's social care, safeguarding partners (Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership/DDSCP) and other agencies. The school will supply information as requested by the DDSCP which enables and assists partners to perform their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, including information related to local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.

Governors exercise strategic oversight of all aspects of safeguarding in the school and this is a standing item at all governing body meetings and recorded in minutes. To support this an annual safeguarding audit is completed to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and processes. Confirmation of annual safeguarding audit completion is also provided to the DDSCP. In addition, an annual review and risk assessment of the school approach to online safety, policy and practice is undertaken via the 360 Degrees Safe Online Safety Self-Review Tool for Schools.

3.3 Headteacher

The school headteacher will ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by their governing body are understood and followed by all staff. This includes working with the designated safeguarding leads, their deputy, and other leaders, to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding within the school and ensuring that educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker are promoted.

[2] There is a specific legal duty on teachers to report acts of FGM on girls under 18 to the police

[3] It is illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK; see multi-agency guidance for more information

3.4 Designated safeguarding leads and deputy designated safeguarding lead

A member of the senior leadership team is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety).

The designated safeguarding leads co-ordinate the setting's safeguarding and child protection arrangements by providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, including Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (Operation Encompass) notifications; take part in strategy discussions/meetings and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so, and contribute to the assessment of children.

The establishment also has a deputy designated safeguarding lead to cover for when the designated safeguarding leads are not available; the lead responsibility however remains with the designated safeguarding leads.

The designated safeguarding leads actively liaise with other school staff with safeguarding responsibilities, teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT leads, SENCos and senior mental health leads on matters of safety and safeguarding to ensure safeguarding and promoting children's well-being are effective.

The designated safeguarding leads or a deputy are always available during school hours for the staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the exceptional event that designated safeguarding leads or their deputy is not contactable, the DSL at St. Andrew's Junior School will act in the role. If an urgent issue occurs outside of school hours, staff are advised to contact the Police or Starting Point and inform the DSLs as soon as they are able.

More information about the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex B) Role of the designated safeguarding lead.

3.5 Safeguarding training

In addition to the safeguarding training at induction, all staff and governors will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities which is regularly updated[4] as well as Prevent Duty, child-on-child abuse, and online safety training, including sharing nudes/semi-nudes, so they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to keep children safe. They will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates at least annually to help provide them with an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at the risk of harm ensuring they have the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

[4] See DDSCP multi-agency training pathway on the training page of www.ddscp.org.uk

The governors' safeguarding training and updates will enable them to have the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that safeguarding processes and procedures are effective and robust and a whole school approach to safeguarding is in place.

Those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children will have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

Section 4: Key safeguarding contacts

4.1 School staff with specific safeguarding responsibilities

Safeguarding Role	Name and Role	School contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	F.Dodd [head] Leanne de Vega Oldham (CT)	headteacher@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk l.devegaoldham@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Senior Leader(s) available for contact in the absence of the designated safeguarding leads	Mandy Cornwall (HT at St. Andrew's Junior school)	headteacher@st-andrews-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Leanne de Vega Oldham (CT)	l.devegaoldham@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Attendance Officer	Denise McLoughlin	d.mcloughlin@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
SENCo	Joanne Lowe	j.lowe@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Governor	Jenna Bardsley	j.bardsley@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Designated Teacher for Looked After/ previously Looked After Children	F.Dodd (HT)	headteacher@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Senior Lead/s for Mental Health and Well-being	F.Dodd (HT)	headteacher@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Governor for Mental Health and Well-being	Cilla Hollman	c.hollman@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk

4.2 Other Key Local Safeguarding Contacts

Early Help Advice	Transition Team *(see DDSCP early help webpage)*
Targeted Early Help requests	Requests for support from professionals, should be made via the online request for support unless a child is at risk of Significant Harm
Speak to a Social Worker for thresholds advice and consultation	Starting Point Consultation and Advice Service for Professionals 01629 535353
Referrals to Local Authority Children's Social Care	***Starting Point*** **Urgent:** 01629 533 190 **Non Urgent:** Starting Point online
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Derby and Derbyshire LADO referral form **Email:** professional.allegations@derbyshire.gov.uk
Derbyshire Police	• 999 for emergencies or 101 for non-emergencies • Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) via 101 • School Police Safer neighbourhood team or link officer *(add name, role and contact details)*

Prevent (radicalisation and extremism)	• Police Prevent (radicalisation/extremism) Team on 101 or directly via 0300 1228694 • Prevent/channel referral form • For advice contact: Derbyshire - 01629 538473 or prevent@derbyshire.gov.uk Derby - 07765 222032 or sally.siner@derby.gov.uk
Education Welfare and **Local Authority Children Missing Education CME) Officer**	CME: CS.CMECoordinators@derbyshire.gov.uk • See Children missing from education (CME) policy and guidance and removal from school roll for further information
Virtual School for Looked After Children	• Rachel Moore, Head of the Virtual School for Children in Care 07798 882876 • Specialist Education Support Officer for LAC or other role
Public Health Nurse/other health contact/s	
Emotional Health and Well-being Services	*emotional well-being and mental health services* *Specialist Community Advisors*.
Domestic Abuse	• Safer Derbyshire domestic abuse webpage • Derbyshire constabulary - information and advice about domestic abuse webpages
Harmful Sexual Behaviour Service	Action for Children Pathway Programme Service for harmful sexual behaviours. Please note this service is for children in Derbyshire who are living with their birth family. pathwayservice@actionforchildren.org.uk
Cyberchoices	For children at risk of being drawn into cybercrime via East Midlands Cyber Secure
Homelessness or at risk of homelessness	Derbyshire county council Preventing homelessness webpages

4.3 Key National Contacts

Organisation	Description and contact details
NSPCC helpline for adults	Helping adults protect children 24 hours a day. For help and support, including anyone needing advice about female genital mutilation, young people affected by gangs, concerns that someone may be a victim of modern slavery contact the NSPCC trained helpline counsellors on: • Text 88858 • 0808 800 5000 • help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education	Bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals who need support and guidance: • 0800 136 663 • help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice	Free advice and support for professionals concerned about how child protection issues are being handled in their organisation: • 0800 028 0285 • help@nspcc.org.uk
UK Safer Internet Centre professional advice line	Helpline for professionals working with children and young people in the UK with any online safety issues they may face themselves or with children in their care: • 0844 381 4772 • helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
Police Anti-Terrorist Hot Line number	0800 789 321
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	Hosted by Refuge, Helpline 0808 2000247
Operation Encompass	Resources for schools include free advice from an Education Psychologist about how best to support children via National Helpline 0204 513 9990

Report harmful online content	• UK Safer Internet Centre – report online harm. A national reporting centre that has been designed to assist anyone in reporting harmful content online • CEOP – to report online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating online
Report Abuse in Education helpline	• Young people who have experienced abuse at school and parents and teachers who are concerned about sexual abuse in education settings can call the Report Abuse in Education helpline on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk
Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Services	• SWGfL Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service for the children's workforce 0344 2250623 or email hsbsupport@swgfl.org.uk • Stop it now! For worries about a child's sexual behaviour, 0808 1000 900

Section 5: Ensuring a safe environment for all children

Our school provides a safe environment where children can learn and develop. This is an essential part of our whole school approach to safeguarding which incorporates a culture of vigilance where children's welfare is promoted, timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children who need extra help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

The school environment is safe and secure and protects our learners from harm or the risk of harm. Positive behaviours are consistently promoted, and abusive or inappropriate behaviour challenged. A positive and supportive environment is promoted which gives learners a sense of being valued.

5.1 Vulnerable children

We recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others and have agreed arrangements to ensure the safety of these children:

5.2 Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

As a matter of routine, the designated safeguarding leads will hold and use the information that the child has a social worker to ensure that as a matter of routine decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. In addition, the school will work with the virtual head as appropriate, regarding the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

5.3 Children missing from education

The school response to children missing from education supports identification of a range of safeguarding issues and abuse; it also helps prevent the risk of children going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker, where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. We support and monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. See our Attendance Policy, which outlines our approach to promoting attendance and children missing from education i.e. children not on a school roll, not being educated in a school or anywhere else or identified as being out of education for over 20 school days; see Derbyshire Children Missing from Education webpage).

The school also recognises that when children are not in school, such as when a pupil is on a reduced timetable, suspended, or excluded, they miss the protection and opportunities that education can provide, and can become more vulnerable to harm. Learners who have a social worker, including looked-after children and previously looked-after children, are especially vulnerable. The school proactively supports learners in the school environment and decision-making processes about reduced timetables, suspension, or exclusion operate in the best interest of children as outlined in local and national guidance. See Behaviour in Schools (2024), Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (2022), Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2015) and local guidance, and Derbyshire attendance management and exclusions).

5.4 Elective home education

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the school will seek to co-ordinate a meeting with the parents/carers, Local Authority, and other key professionals where possible. This would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child and is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker or is vulnerable. Where a child is taken off roll, we will inform the Local Authority of the deletion from our admission register via the system outlined on the Derbyshire Education Welfare webpages

5.5 Children who require mental health support

The school has an important role to play in supporting the well-being and mental health of our learners. Mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible emotional well-being issues and mental health problems, seek advice from external agencies where appropriate and have clear referral and accountability systems.

We use a range of strategies and our whole school curriculum for PSHE to promote resilience, and to support emotional well-being. Our mental health lead oversees the school's bespoke Derby and Derbyshire Mental Health Pathway. We offer a range of nurture and support therapies including Drawing and Talking, Lego therapy, Nurture Group, My Happy Mind and Classroom Calm Corners.

5.6 Looked after children and previously looked after children

The school ensures that 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 him/her. The designated safeguarding lead has:

> Details of the child's social worker, and

> The name and contact details of the virtual school head and the relevant support officer in the authority that looks after the child

> The name of the Personal Advisor appointed to support a child who has left care

When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, the school will work with all local authority children's social care, health, and other relevant agencies, and take prompt action when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group. The school has a named designated teacher, who works with the Virtual School, to promote the educational achievement of pupils who are looked after, have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders, or adopted from state care outside of England and Wales. The designated teacher has appropriate training, relevant qualifications, and experience.

5.7 Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or health issues

The designated safeguarding lead and SENDCo with oversight of SEND will closely liaise whenever there are any concerns or reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation involving a child with SEND, neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism or certain medical or physical health conditions. The school will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. Our Behaviour Policy makes explicit reference to managing behaviour, and being aware of behaviour as a sign of a potential safeguarding concern.

5.8 Children who are, or may be, lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT+)

The school will take steps to reduce the additional barriers these children face and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with staff. Our whole-school approach to relationships/relationships and sex education comprehensively promotes inclusion and healthy relationships.

We also recognise that in addition to the above, other factors can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, or neglect such as:

> In a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as parental substance (drugs and/or alcohol) misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

- Misusing drugs and or alcohol
- Being an asylum seeker/refugee
- Being from our New Communities
- Living away from home, including private fostering arrangements, or have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of homelessness or living in temporary accommodation
- Living in chaotic, neglectful, and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of age, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity leave, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion/belief, gender, sex, or sexual orientation
- Being a young carer
- Not speaking or not having English as a first language
- Being involved in the court system
- Children affected by parental offending or with family members in prison

5.9 Teaching safeguarding

We are committed to offering our learners preventative education and ensure that they are aware of safeguarding risks, recognise when they are at risk and how and where to get help and support if they need it. They will be taught about healthy relationships online and offline, how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. To be effective, we recognise this will need to be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including those who have been victims of abuse and children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Our preventative education forms part of our whole school approach to prepare our learners for life in modern Britain, encourages open debate about different points of view and beliefs, and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, disablism, racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and sexual violence and harassment. The school's core values and standards, alongside the fundamental British Values, are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of the school. This is underpinned by the school's behaviour policy, pastoral support system and our planned evidence-based relationships education/relationships and sex education and health education and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

See the Hadfield Infants, Relationship and Health Education Policy and the Behaviour Policy.

5.10 Online safety

Online safety and protecting learners from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material forms part of the whole school approach to safeguarding, including policies, curriculum, staff training, roles and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead, and parental engagement.

The school has filtering and monitoring systems in place, these are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness and the leadership team and relevant staff escalate concerns when identified. The school protects and educates learners and staff in their use of technology, including where they are learning remotely, and has mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any concerns where this is needed.

The school's Online Safety Policy outlines how the four areas of risk- content, contact, conduct, and commerce-will be addressed to protect and educate learners and staff. It also incorporates the policy on the use of mobile and smart technology. The school is also in regular communication with parents and carers and uses these communications to reinforce online safety and the systems the school uses to protect children from online harm.

To ensure that online safety is effective, especially as technology and the associated risks and harms evolve and change, the school undertakes an annual review and risk assessment.

Recent use of AI generated content [deepfakes,misinformation,disinformation] and its risks should be considered in line with KCSIE updates

> See school Online Safety Policy

5.11 Systems for children to report concerns and abuse

Our school recognises the importance of ensuring that all children feel heard and understood. We have a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures the school may put in place to protect them. Whenever there are any concerns, the child's wishes will be taken into account when determining what action to take and what services are provided. The welfare and safety of a child is of paramount concern and staff will act in the best interests of the child.

We understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and any concerns they may have. Some children may feel unable to report their concerns or abuse, others may have additional barriers to telling someone or not recognise what is happening is abusive.

The school has an open and accepting attitude towards children and promotes a positive and supportive environment as part of our responsibility for pastoral care. Our school ethos promotes trusted relationships between learners and all staff which supports children to tell staff about any concerns they may have.

Children, parents/carers, and all staff will be free to talk about any concerns and see the school as a safe place. Many children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice or react to, others may make indirect reports via a friend, or staff may overhear conversations. All staff are alert to this and to the potential need for early help and are aware of the indicators of abuse, exploitation, and neglect, and know what actions they should take.

The school has systems in place for children to complain and/or confidently report their concerns, including any form of abuse or neglect, including child-on-child abuse, and know that their concerns will be treated seriously. We have a well-promoted system for children who do not feel confident to speak directly to an adult in the first instance about something they are concerned about.

5.12 Working with parents and carers

We recognise the importance of working together with parents/carers to educate as well as safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Hadfield Infants will ensure that:

- We work with parents positively, openly, and honestly
- Parents are encouraged to discuss their issues or concerns about safety and welfare of children, including any worries about a child's emotional well-being or mental health. They will be listened to and taken seriously
- Parents/carers are aware there is a whole school safeguarding approach to ensure that children are kept safe and well, and as part of this the school is part of the Operation Encompassinitiative (the local version of Operation Encompass)
- We will provide parents with information about safeguarding issues, such as child exploitation (sexual and criminal) known as child at risk of exploitation (CRE), child-on-child abuse, emotional well-being/mental health, online safety, including sharing nudes and semi-nudes, harmful sexual behaviour, and terrorist/extremist material. We will also outline the support available to keep children safe within the school, locally and nationally
- Up-to-date and accurate information is kept about pupils/students i.e.
  - names and contact persons with whom the child normally lives
  - those with parental responsibility
  - where reasonably possible, we hold more than one emergency contact number
  - if different from above, those authorised to collect the child from the setting
  - name and contact details of GP
  - any relevant court orders or any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child
- Information about our learners given to us by children themselves, their parents, or carers or by other agencies will remain confidential. Staff will be given relevant information on a 'need to know' basis in order to support the child
- It is made clear to parents and carers that the school has a duty to share information when there are any safeguarding concerns. Also, that there is a duty to keep records which relate to safeguarding work by the school, or partner agencies. These will be kept securely, kept apart from the main pupil record, and only accessible to key members of staff. Copies of these records will be securely sent to any education provider to which the child transfers and a confirmation of receipt obtained
- Where we have reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child, we will always seek to discuss this with the child's parents or carers first. However, there may be occasions where we are not able to do this, for example, when by doing so, it places the child at additional risk or where it may not be possible to speak to the parents/carers

Section 6: Responding to concerns about a child's welfare

Key points to remember for any member of staff (including volunteers or supply staff) or visitors whenever they have any concerns about a child's welfare:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- Do not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical to keeping a child safe. Early information sharing is vital in keeping children safe, whether this is when problems first emerge, or when a child is already known to local authority children's social care
- Report your concern to the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy as soon as you can but by the end of the day at the latest, verbally, and follow up on CPOMS or a written concern form (from the safeguarding board in the staffroom)
- If you are unsure speak to the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy
- If the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy are not around, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the school that day. The concerns and any action taken must then be shared with the designated safeguarding leads as soon as it is possible
- If the concerns are about sharing nudes and semi-nudes do not view, copy, print or share the images
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends, or family
- As soon as you are able complete a record of the concerns. This should be on the same day and before the child is due to leave the school premises, and add on CPOMS (if you have access) or a written concern form (from the safeguarding board in the staffroom)
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed

Staff must always **immediately** inform the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy if there are any:

- Concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect, including suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
- Searching incidents where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a learner was in possession of a prohibited item[5] or where a search has revealed a safeguarding risk
- Behaviour or changes in presentation, including changes in school attendance, which gives rise to suspicions that a child may not be receiving adequate care or may be suffering harm
- Hint or disclosure of abuse about or by a child
- Concerns that a person(s) who may pose a risk to children is living in a household with children present
- Concerns about online abuse including cybercrime, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, sharing nudes and semi-nudes and/or where any adult appears to be sexually communicating (e.g., email, text, written note or verbally) with a child
- Concerns about child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- Information which indicates that the child is living with someone who does not have parental responsibility for them (this is known as private fostering)
- Concerns that a child is at risk of domestic abuse or so called 'honour-based' abuse, including forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), breast ironing, virginity testing or hymenoplasty
- Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation, including county lines (this is also known locally as CRE - child at risk of exploitation) or that a child or their parent/carer may be a victim of modern slavery (trafficked)

There will also be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at risk, but you have no 'real' evidence or that the child may need support with their mental health. The child's behaviour and or appearance may have changed, their attendance at school may have reduced, their ability to concentrate and focus may have altered, or you may have noticed other behavioural and or physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

[5] Prohibited items include knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco, cigarette papers, fireworks pornographic images; any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used, to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the learner).

It is not the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation; this is the responsibility of local authority children's social care. All staff however have a duty to recognise where extra support is needed or where there are complex needs or child protection concerns requiring intensive or specialist support.

Ensure you record these early concerns using CPOMS. If a child or adult does begin to reveal that a child is being harmed, you should follow the advice in the section *'If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about a concern or abuse'*.

Remember: If you are unsure, you should always have a discussion with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy

6.1 If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about a concern or abuse

It takes a lot of courage for a child, parent, carer, or other significant adult to disclose that they are worried or have concerns. They may feel ashamed, the 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. It is important they are reassured that they are being taken seriously, and that they will be supported and kept safe. They should not be made to feel they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for making a report. Reports, particularly those about sexual violence and harassment, if possible, should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one being one of the designated safeguarding leads or a deputy), however this might not be possible in all cases.

If a child or adult talks to you about any risks to a child's 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.

During your conversation with the child (or their parent/carer):

> Allow them to speak freely, listen to what is being said without interruption and without asking leading questions
> Keep questions to a minimum and of an open nature ('TED questions' tell me, explain, describe) i.e., 'can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'did x hit you?'
> Remain calm and do not overreact – the child (or their parent/carer) 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'
> Avoid admonishing the child or adult 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 they may interpret it that they have done something wrong
> Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child or adult
> Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what do other family members think about all this
> At an appropriate time tell the child or adult that to help them you must pass the information on
> Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort; it may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
> Tell the child or adult what will happen next. The child or adult may agree to go with you to see the designated safeguarding lead. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see or contact them before the end of the day
> Report verbally to the designated safeguarding lead
> Write up your conversation as soon as possible and hand it to the designated safeguarding lead
> Children should not be asked to write statements about abuse or any concerns that may have happened to them or sign the staff record
> Seek support if you feel distressed. This may be sometime after the disclosure

6.2 Role of the designated safeguarding lead and their deputy following identification of concerns

Whenever the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy receive information regarding concerns about a child, including via police domestic abuse notifications (Stopping Domestic Abuse Together/Operation Encompass) they will:

> Review information received and assess if any urgent actions are needed, i.e. medical, child's immediate safety
> Check what is known about the child when they arrived (or not) at school today, how they are presenting physically and emotionally and if there are any changes in their behaviour

- Consider what is already known about the child and their family, including whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff or if they are already known to local authority children's services (targeted early help or social care)
- Consider what 'checks' need to be carried out and how best these can be achieved
- Inform relevant school staff who have a specific need to know i.e. class/form teacher and relevant support staff
- Where appropriate use relevant national, local and education-based risk identifying, assessment tools and guidance to support the identification of needs and decision making, such as:
  - School-based records, assessments, and chronologies, including any contextual factors/place-based risks
  - DDSCP multi-agency guidance, tools and briefing notes, for example Self-harm and Suicidal Behaviour Guidance, Briefing Note: Harmful Online Challenges and Hoaxes, Guidelines for gathering information and assessing the needs of children whose parents have drug/alcohol issues, Practice Guidance Child Sexual Abuse within the Family, Practice Guidance for responding to Adults and Child Victims of Modern Slavery, Male Circumcision guidance, Childhood Obesity: Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding guidance for practitioners, Schools Stopping Domestic Abuse Together Guidance, Domestic Violence Risk Identification Matrix (DVRIM), Safelives DASH Risk Identification Checklist (domestic abuse risk to adults), CRE (Children at Risk of Exploitation) risk assessment, Graded Care Profile (neglect); see DDSCP safeguarding children procedures documents library
  - National guidance and assessment tools e.g. Stop it now (sexual behaviours), Contextual safeguarding tools, Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Not directly approaching a child or parent/carer about an incident when the school have received a domestic abuse notification (SDAT) and instead make general enquiries with the child about how they are. If a child initiates a conversation about the incident the guidance outlined in the section '*If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about a concern or abuse'* will be followed.
- Following the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Procedures and using the DDSCP Threshold document to support decision making about the child's needs and the appropriate level of support and intervention. Possible options include internal support via school pastoral systems, early help assessment and referral to statutory services such as local authority children's services.
- Considering whether the matter should be discussed with the child's parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm, see Notifying parents.
- If unsure about the action to take, including that a child protection referral should be made, seeking advice from local authority children's social care or another appropriate agency.
- If the concerns are about radicalisation or violent extremism, making a referral to the police Prevent Team.
- Where the child has complex needs or where there are child protection concerns, referring as appropriate to Local Authority Children's Services via agreed processes, providing a copy of the early help assessment, action plan and any other relevant assessments.
- If a child is at risk of immediate harm, and/or where it is believed a criminal offence has been committed, including sexual violence and harassment, referring to the police. See NPCC When to call the police; guidance for schools and colleges. Safeguarding considerations must take priority and include how screening, searching, and confiscating powers will be used safely, proportionately, and appropriately, including undertaking a police strip search on a child and the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult.; see Searching, screening and confiscation at school guidance (2022).

6.3 Notifying parents/carers

The school will normally seek to discuss any needs or concerns about a child with their parents or carers. Where an early help assessment would benefit the child and their family the most appropriate member of staff should approach the parent/carer to take this forward. In situations where there are serious needs or child protection concerns the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will contact the parent or carer. However, if the setting believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from local authority children's social care.

6.4 Pastoral/school-based support (universal support/ low level needs)

In all cases the school will consider what support could be offered within the setting via pastoral support processes. This may include direct work with our school-based therapies (Drawing and Talking/Nurture Group etc.), work with our SENDCo/Mental Health Lead. Pastoral support will be kept under constant review to ensure that it is effective.

6.5 Early help support and assessment (emerging needs)

Where a child is likely to require co-ordinated support from a range of early help services, or where there are concerns for a child's well-being or a child's needs are not clear, not known or not being met, the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy will support the completion of an early help assessment (EHA) and if needed, co-ordinate a team around the family (TAF).

Whenever a child and their family are supported via an early help assessment, the school will keep this under constant review and should the child's situation appear not to be improving or getting worse, consideration will be given to a referral to local authority children's services.

For more information about the early help assessment process see Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children; Providing early help procedure.

6.6 Referral to local authority children's social care (intensive and specialist support)

Concerns about a child's welfare will be referred to local authority children's social care using the agreed referral process as outlined in Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children; Making a referral to Children's Social Care procedure.

If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, an immediate referral should be made to local authority children's social care and/or if appropriate, the police

Anybody can make the referral

Where it is believed that there are urgent child protection concerns, the designated safeguarding leads or deputy will make a referral to local authority children's social care by phone and follow this up in 'writing' via the local authority Online Referral System. Non-urgent cases will be referred via the local authority Care Online Referral System.

In exceptional circumstances, such as in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, any staff member can refer their concerns directly to local authority children's social care; however, they should inform the designated safeguarding leads or deputy as soon as possible.

6.7 Female genital mutilation (FGM)

If the referral is about a 'known' case of female genital mutilation (FGM), in addition to a referral to local authority children's social care, the individual teacher also has a mandatory reporting duty; see Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation; procedural information (2015). Under this duty, 'known' cases of FGM where a girl under 18 informs the person that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or where physical signs appear to show that an act of FGM was carried out, this must be reported to the police on 101. This is a personal responsibility in addition to the referral to local authority children's social care and the professional who identifies FGM and/or receives the disclosure should make the report by the close of the next working day.

6.8 Action following referral

The designated safeguarding leads, their deputy or other appropriate member of staff will:

> Where a referral was made by phone follow up the referral in writing using the online referral system within 48 hours and attaching any existing assessment e.g., early help assessment. In all cases the school will also include information held about any place-based risks (harm outside of the home)
> Be aware that local authority children's social care should make a decision within one working day of the referral being made about what course of action they are taking and let the school know the outcome. If the information is not forthcoming, the designated safeguarding lead or another appropriate member of staff should follow this up
> Maintain contact with the allocated social worker and support them or other agencies following any referral
> Contribute to any strategy discussion or meetings
> Support any Section 47 enquiries or statutory assessments that are carried out
> Provide a report for, attend, and contribute to any initial and review Child Protection Conference. This includes sharing any reports with parents/carers and where appropriate, the child
> Share the content of this report with the parent/carer and if appropriate the child, prior to the meeting
> Attend core group meetings for any child subject to a Child Protection plan or Child in Need meeting for any child subject to a Child in Need plan
> Whenever there are concerns about the outcome of a Child Protection Conference, use the appropriate Derbyshire Child Protection Conference Professional Dissent Process
> Where a child on a Child Protection plan, Child in Need plan or who is Looked After moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in local authority children's social care
> If after the referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding leads should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves. See Derby and Derbyshire DDSCP [select Priorities and Procedures then Document Library and select 1.3]

6.9 Confidentiality and sharing information

The school recognises the importance of information sharing between the school and local agencies to effectively safeguard our learners. The setting operates with regard to HM Government Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018) and DDSCP select Policies and Procedures then Document Library and select 1.3

All staff will be mindful of the seven golden rules to sharing information (See Appendix 3) and Data Protection Act (2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) obligations. Staff are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.

School staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of a child, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated

safeguarding leads or the deputy

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand

in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated safeguarding leads or deputy (or the most senior person on the premises if they are unavailable), headteacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Wherever possible consent will be sought to share information. However, where there are safeguarding concerns about a child, information will be shared with the appropriate organisations such as local authority children's social care. In most cases concerns will be discussed with parents and carers prior to the referral taking place unless doing so would increase risk.

The school's policy on information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

6.10 Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing using the school's agreed processes. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy.

Records of concerns, documentation, referrals, and other written safeguarding information is kept in a child protection file for each child and stored separately from each child's education file; this file is 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. Child protection files are confidential, stored securely, and only made available to relevant individuals.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached, and the outcome, as well as a review of any progress made. Any professional differences of opinion about the safety of a child will also be recorded; see DDSCP[link as above] Multi Agency Dispute Resolution and Escalation Policy and Derbyshire Child Protection Conference Professional Dissent Process

When a child leaves the school, the designated safeguarding leads will ensure a copy of these records will be sent securely as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term) to any school or other education setting to which the child transfers and a confirmation of receipt obtained. The child protection file transfer will be separate to the main pupil file. This will allow the new provider to continue supporting the child and have the support in place for when the child arrives.

The designated safeguarding leads will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new education provider in advance of the child leaving e.g., children who have or who have had a social worker and those receiving support through the Channel programme.

The designated safeguarding leads, their deputy, and key staff such, as special education needs co-ordinators, will be informed when a child's safeguarding/child protection file is received.

6.11 Support for those involved in a safeguarding/child protection issue

Child neglect, abuse and exploitation are devastating for children and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support the children and their families and staff by:

- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- Nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Nominating a 'case manager' where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child
- Responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety

> Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
> Storing records securely
> Offering details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support
> Following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints, and disciplinary procedures
> Co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies

Note: The actions where there are concerns about a child flowchart (KCSIE 2022) is included in Appendix 2,

Section 7: Child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment

All staff working in or on behalf of the school maintain an attitude of *'it could happen here'* – this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse. Even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening.

If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the designated safeguarding leads or their deputy

The school recognises that children may abuse their peers physically, sexually, and emotionally. There is a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse; abuse is abuse and this will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'boys being boys' or 'part of growing up' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. This reflects the school's zero tolerant approach and commitment to the DDSCP see link as above Child-on-Child Abuse Strategy, recognising that the issue requires a partnership-wide strategic response. It is consistent with the school behaviour policy, staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, anti-bullying policy, e-safety policy and other associated policies.

The setting will take child-on-child abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and address it through the same processes as any safeguarding issue. We will respond to all reports and concerns, including those that have happened outside of the school and/or online. In addition, we also recognise that children who abuse others and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse are also likely to have considerable welfare and safeguarding issues themselves.

7.1 What is child-on-child abuse?

> Keeping Children Safe in Education defines child-on-child abuse as most likely to include but not limited to:
o Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying)
o Abuse within intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')

- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and /or encourages physical abuse
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos
- Upskirting[6], 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
- Abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element

> It can also include causing someone to engage in extremist or radicalising behaviour
> Child-on-child abuse exists on a continuum and different forms of abuse may overlap
> It can affect any child/young person of any age and sex and can occur between two children or through a group of children abusing a single child or group of children
> Sometimes vulnerable children are targeted. For example:

- Those living with domestic abuse or with intra-familial abuse in their histories
- Young people in care
- Those who have experienced bereavement through the loss of a parent, sibling, or friend
- Black and minority ethnic children are under-identified as victims but are over -identified as perpetrators
- There is recognition it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys are likely to be perpetrators. However, both girls and boys can experience child-on-child abuse, but they are likely to experience it differently e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to homophobic taunts/initiation/hazing (rituals and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group)
- Evidence also shows that children with SEND, and LGBT+ children are at greater risk

> It is influenced by the nature of the environments in which children/young people spend their time - home, school, peer group, online and community - and is built upon notions of power and consent. Power imbalances related to gender, social status within a group, intellectual ability, economic wealth, social marginalisation etc., can all be used to exert power over a peer
> Child-on-child abuse involves someone who abuses a 'vulnerability' or power imbalance to harm another and has the opportunity or is in an environment where this is possible
> While perpetrators of child-on-child abuse pose a risk to others, they are often victims of abuse themselves

7.2 Preventing child-on-child abuse

There is a whole-school approach to preventing child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment; this forms part of the whole school approach to safeguarding. The school will seek to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by ensuring an approach that prepares learners for life in modern Britain. The establishment has a clear set of values and standards which are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life.

[6] The Voyeurism (Offences) Act (2019) – upskirting is a criminal offence and anyone of any gender can be a victim

The school provides a safe environment, promotes a culture of positive standards of behaviour, takes steps to address inappropriate behaviour, has effective systems in place where children can confidently raise concerns knowing they will be taken seriously and provides safeguarding through the curriculum via sex and relationships education, online safety, and other curriculum opportunities. This may include targeted work with children identified as vulnerable or being at risk and developing risk assessment and targeted work with those identified as being a potential risk to others.

All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours will not be tolerated or passed off. Staff will maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here'* and all inappropriate behaviour will be addressed.

The setting deals with a wide continuum of children's behaviour on a day-to-day basis and most cases will be dealt with via school-based processes. These are outlined in the following policies:

> Behaviour policy, including school screening, searching, and confiscating powers and how they will be used safely, and appropriately, including police strip searches
> Anti-bullying policy including bullying/ online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
> Online safety policy and other associated issues, including sharing nudes and semi-nudes and extremist material
> Children who run away or go missing
> Sex and relationships education/ personal, social, health and sex education

> 7.3 Systems for children to report abuse

> Even if there are no reports, all staff understand it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is not being reported. We recognise that children may not find it easy to tell staff about the abuse, that certain children may have additional barriers to telling someone, and children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice or react to. In some cases, victims may make indirect reports via a friend or staff may overhear conversations. All staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it.

> See page *Systems for children to report concerns and abuse* for information about the systems in place for children to confidently report abuse. [5.11]

If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the designated safeguarding leads or deputy

7.4 Action on concerns

Child-on-child abuse may be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. Staff may be able to easily identify some behaviour/s as abusive; however in some circumstances it may be less clear. In particular, reports of sexual violence and harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. In all cases the initial response to a report is very important. Members of staff will take the concerns seriously and reassure the child that they will be supported and kept safe, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward. If possible, reports should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one being one of the designated safeguarding leads or a deputy), however this might not be possible in all cases. The victim will not be given the impression they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised. Abuse which has occurred online or outside of the school will be treated just as seriously as that which has occurred within the education environment.

Staff must follow the ***Section 6 : Responding to concerns about a child's welfare*** and discuss the concerns and seek advice from the designated safeguarding leads.

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and/or alleged perpetrator may have low level, emerging needs, complex/serious needs, or child protection concerns and follow the process outlined in Section 6. Responding to concerns about a child's welfare.

Considerations for cases where child-on-child abuse is a factor include:

> What are the wishes of victims in terms of how they want to proceed?
> What is the nature, extent and context of the behaviour including verbal, physical, sexual (including sharing of nudes/semi-nudes) and/or online abuse? Was there coercion, physical aggression, bullying, bribery or attempts to ensure secrecy? What was the time, location, duration, and frequency? Is the incident a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse? (Remember there may be other forms of abuse in addition to what has been reported) Were other children and/or adults involved? Has a crime been committed and/or have any harmfully sexual behaviours been displayed?
> What is the child's age, development, capacity to understand and make decisions (including anything that might have had an impact on this e.g., coercion), and family and social circumstances? What is the nature of the relationship between the children involved? Are they in a current or previous intimate personal relationship, do they live in the same household or setting, attend the same school, classes, or transport?
> What are the relative chronological and developmental ages of the children? Does the victim or perpetrator have a disability or learning difficulty? Are there are any differentials in power, social standing, or authority?
> Is the behaviour age appropriate or not? Does it involve inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation?

> Are there any risks to the child victim or alleged perpetrator themselves and others e.g., other children in school, adult students, school staff, in the child's household (particularly siblings or other children related to the household), extended family, peer group or wider social network? Are there any links to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation or gang related activity?

Immediate consideration should be given to how best to support and protect the victim and alleged perpetrator and any other children involved/impacted. Where the report involves rape and assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator must be removed from any classes they share with the victim. There must also be careful consideration on how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator apart on school premises (including any before or after school activities) and on transport to and from the setting.

For all other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment and forms of child-on-child abuse, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, school's premises and transport should be considered immediately.

All decisions will be made in the best interests of the children involved and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator. In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis with the designated safeguarding leads taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as local authority children's social care and the police as required. The designated safeguarding lead will refer to relevant assessment tools and guidance as appropriate such as:

> Keeping Children Safe in Education,
> Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
> Searching, screening and confiscation at school
> Stop it Now Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool
> DDSCP Thresholds Document
> DDSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures, in particular, children who present a risk of harm to others and Online Safety and Internet Abuse procedures
> When to call the police – guidance for schools and colleges

Whenever there is an allegation of abuse, including concerns about sexual harassment and violence, made against a child, the designated safeguarding leads and other appropriate staff will draw together separate risk and needs assessments and action plans to support the victim and the alleged perpetrator. These will consider:

> The victim, especially their protection and support
> Whether there have been other victims
> The alleged perpetrator/s
> All the other children (and if appropriate adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are needed to protect them from the perpetrator/s, or from future harms
> The time and location of the incident and any action required to make the location safer
> When information can be disclosed to staff and others, including the alleged perpetrator and parents/carers

Whenever local authority children's social care and/or the police are involved, the school will work in collaboration to ensure the best possible support and protection is provided for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

All reports of child-on-child abuse (including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence) will be recorded in the child's safeguarding/child protection file. This will include all decision making, risk and needs assessment and plans recorded in writing as outlined in Section 6.

Where appropriate, incidents may be managed internally (low level needs), via early help (emerging needs), or through local authority children's social care (complex/serious needs or child protection concerns). Reports to the police will be run in parallel with children's social care as outlined in the Derby and Derbyshire multi-agency safeguarding procedures, in particular Children who Present a Risk of Harm to Others and Online Safety and Internet Abuse procedures.

All risk and needs assessment and action plans whether internal or multi-agency will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. If things do not improve or deteriorate the situation should be reconsidered.

The school uses the Contextual Safeguarding School Beyond Referrals [htts //www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk /toolkits/beyond-referrals-toolkit/ Self-Assessment Toolkit & Guidance to self-assess our response to harmful sexual behaviour. All relevant policies will be updated to reflect the lessons learned and consideration given to the wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur.

Where the victim or alleged perpetrator transfers to another education setting, the designated safeguarding leads will ensure the new provider will be made aware of any on-going support needs (and will discuss this with the victim and where appropriate their parents, as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the safeguarding/child protection file. In the case of the alleged perpetrator, where appropriate, this will also include potential risks to other children and staff. See Section 6. Responding to concerns about a child's welfare - record keeping.

Any suspicion or allegations that a child has been sexually abused or is likely to sexually abuse another child

(or adult) or where there are concerns about any other form of abuse,

a referral must bemade immediately to local authority children's social care and where appropriate,

the police

Section 8: Safer recruitment and selection of staff

The school uses best practice and has adopted robust recruitment procedures as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) to deter and prevent people who are not suitable to working with children from applying, securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in the school. We apply all appropriate measures for our staff, including volunteers, agency, and third-party staff (supply staff) trainees/student teachers, governors, and contractors. This forms a vital part of the whole school approach to safeguarding and is an essential part of creating a safe environment for our learners.

Those involved with the recruitment and employment of our leadership staff have received appropriate safer recruitment training and at least one person who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding children at every stage of the process from advertising, job descriptions/person specifications, application forms, shortlisting, employment history and references, selection, and pre-appointment vetting checks.

Everyone who works in the school, including volunteers and school governors, will have appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) and teacher status, teacher and teacher prohibition checks or where appropriate GTCE sanctions and restrictions. Governors will also require section 128 checks.

Other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers, and others:

- Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK – will undergo the same checks as all other staff in the school and further checks deemed appropriate to ensure suitability
- Agency and third-party staff (supply staff) - the school will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation provider that they have carried out checks on an individual who will be working at the school that we would otherwise perform.
- Contractors - where the school uses contractors to provide services the contract will set out their safeguarding requirements.
- Trainee/ student teachers – applicants salaried by the school will undergo all necessary checks by the school. The initial teacher training provider will carry out necessary checks on fee funded trainee teachers and will provide written confirmation that these have been carried out and judged suitable to work with children.
- Volunteers - the school will ensure volunteers are appropriately supervised as outlined in statutory guidance on supervising the activities of workers and volunteers with children. In addition, risk assessments will be undertaken, and professional judgement/ experience used when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaged in regulated activity. The details of the risk assessment will be recorded.

The school maintains a single central record of pre-appointment checks consistent with the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education [KCSIE]

8.1 Visitors

The school premises provide a safe learning environment with secure access. We recognise there are different types of visitors: those in a professional capacity, children's relatives or others visiting for school activities or visitors via a third party, and have processes in place to ensure they are suitable, are checked and monitored as appropriate.

We recognise the importance of allowing access for local authority children's social care to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct an assessment and that staff from other partner agencies may need to visit to see a child or young person to either safeguard or promote their welfare. To support our decision making about appropriate checks regarding any professional visitor we operate using guidance outlined in the DDSCP Briefing Note - Professional Visitors to Schools. See school security and also PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEER HELPERS AND FREQUENT VISTORS POLICY on our web site

8.2 External speakers/visitors

The school may ask external speakers or visitors to work with children or provide assemblies on subjects such as online safety, relationships/relationships and sex education and health education. On these occasions there will be an assessment of the educational value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required, and an assessment made of what will be appropriate supervision. There will also be an agreement made in advance of the session/s on how a safeguarding report should be dealt with by an external visitor. See school policy/agreement for visiting speakers.

8.3 Alternative provision

The school continues to be responsible for any learner placed with an alternative provision provider. Learners in alternative provision often have complex needs and are vulnerable to additional risk of harm. We will ensure that the provider meets the needs of the learner and obtain written confirmation from the provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on their staff and individuals working for the provider. The school also has arrangements in place to ensure attendance is monitored and that there are effective safeguarding arrangements within the provision.

8.4 Use of school premises for non-school activities

Our school safeguarding arrangements will apply to all activities provided by the school under the direct supervision of school staff. Where activities are provided by another body, the governing body will seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding/child protection policies in place and ensure arrangements are in place to liaise with the school where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll. Safeguarding requirements are included in all lease/hire agreements.

Section 9: What staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff or concerns about safeguarding practices within the school

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, there are processes in place for continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. Our culture and environment support staff to discuss matters that concern them in the workplace and, where appropriate, outside the workplace which may have implications for the welfare and safety of children.

All concerns and or allegations about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, contractors, and volunteers) will be reported, recorded, and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

With this approach everyone in the school will:

- Create and embed a culture of openness, trust, and transparency
- Help to identify concerning, problematic, or inappropriate behaviour at an early stage
- Minimise risk of abuse
- Ensure that school staff are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with the ethos and value of the school.

The school recognise there are two levels of allegation/concern:

See 9.1 Allegations that **may** meet the harms threshold

See 9.4 Allegations/concerns that **do not** meet the harms threshold, also known as 'low level concerns'

Our response to concerns/allegations is consistent with the DDSCP Safeguarding Children Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers procedure

9.1 Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

An allegation that may meet the harms threshold is where an allegation might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school. Where it is alleged that anyone working in the establishment, including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers has:

- 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.

This includes any behaviour that may have happened outside school and is known as transferable risk.

9.2 If you have concerns about another staff member

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague (including supply staff, contractors, and volunteers) must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported without delay to the headteacher. Where there are concerns or allegations about the headteacher, this should be referred to the chair of governors. In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The member of staff should make a record which will include time, date, place of incident, persons present, what was witnessed, what was said etc; this should then be signed and dated.

9.3 Looking after the welfare of the child

Where a child has been harmed, or there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, or if the situation is an emergency, local authority children's social care should be contacted and, where appropriate, the police. It is the designated safeguarding leads' responsibility to ensure the child is not at risk and refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care.

For further information about how concerns which may meet the harms threshold will be investigated, recorded, and managed, including non-recent allegations by a child and referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); see the school's staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, which incorporates low-level concerns, managing allegations against staff and whistleblowing.

9.4 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold are referred to as 'low-level concerns". A low-level concern does not mean it is insignificant, rather that the behaviour towards the child does not meet the harm threshold as outlined above.

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

> Inconsistent with the staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, or
> Does not meet the harm threshold or is not serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum. Further information about distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be found in the school staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy.

Staff should share low-level concerns in confidence with the headteacher in a timely manner. Staff may be asked to follow up verbal conversations with written accounts.

Low-level concerns about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors using the email address of the Chair of Governors c.ward@hadfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk

Staff are also encouraged to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection, they believe they have behaved in a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

The headteacher will be the decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns; however, this may be undertaken in collaboration with the designated safeguarding leads.

Reports about supply staff or contractors will be notified to their employers.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing to include details of the concern, the context, and the action taken. For further information about the procedure for recording and responding to low-level concerns see school staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy.

9.5 Concerns about safeguarding practices within the school

All staff are encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. These concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

For information about how to raise concerns with the senior leadership team or other channels See staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, which incorporates the whistleblowing routes available to staff.

Appendix 1: Example concerns form

Principles

Any member of the staff, including volunteers, must record any concerns about a child or young person. This form must be completed as soon as possible after the discovery of the concern. If the concern is about:

> The welfare of a child it must be sent to the designated safeguarding lead
> The behaviour of any member of staff it must be sent immediately to the headteacher, or the chair of governors/management committee or equivalent if the allegation is against the headteacher/principal or where the headteacher/principal is the sole proprietor of an independent school the allegations should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If the concerns are immediate, please inform an appropriate person straight away.

Concerns about a child or young person

Child's full name:		**Date of birth:**	
		Class/year/form:	
Concern identified by:		**Role:**	
Date of concern:		**Time of concern:**	
Witness/es:		**Place of incident:**	
Name of alleged person (s) responsible for the harm/potential harm:			
Not known		**Volunteer**	
Learner in this school		**Member of staff**	
Learner in another school, please specify		**Governor**	
Family member		**Other, please specify**	

Concern/Incident/Disclosure: Why are you concerned about this child? What have you observed and when? What have you been told and when?

Please provide a description of any incident/s or anything you see or have been told by a child, or another person. Record any visible injuries or ask the child/young person to point to where else it is sore/hurts. Do not remove or lift clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment or take photos of injuries. If photos of injuries are required for evidence purposes, then this should be done by the police.

Remember to make clear what is fact and what is hearsay/opinion. Note the language and terminology used by the child, or adult, and be clear about who has said what. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern?

For example, child taken out of class, first aid

Name of person concerns reported to	Date

Action to be taken / recommendations from designated safeguarding lead

Name of person completing form	Signature	Date and time

Appendix 2: Safeguarding flowchart



[1] In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
[2] Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
[3] Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[4] Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[5] This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

Appendix 3: The seven golden rules to sharing information

1. Remember that the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information-sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Taken from Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018) HM Government