



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. (including safer recruitment)

Approved by:	Paula Tucker	Date: 15/9/25
Review by:	31/9/26	

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ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Laura Bolton	Laura@ReFocus.school
Deputy DSL	Hayley Perry Liam Kerr Katie Close	Hayley@ReFocus.school Liam@ReFocus.school Katie@ReFocus.school
Headteacher	Paula Tucker	Paula@ReFocus.school
Designated Officer (Local Authority)		01604362633
Chair of Governors	James Alcock	governor@ReFocus.school
Nominated Safeguarding governor	Richard Boddy	Richard@ReFocus.school
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264

1. Aims

1.1 The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

2.1. This policy is based on:

- the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the
- [Governance Handbook](#).
- We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

2.2 This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the

police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

3. Definitions

3.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

3.2 Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

3.3 Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

3.4 Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

3.5 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

3.6 Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

3.7 The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

3.8 Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

3.9 Alleged perpetrator(s) and perpetrator(s) are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

3.10 See APPENDIX 5 local identified safeguarding issues – curriculum and training strategies

4. Equality statement

4.1 Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

4.2 We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10) ›
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- ›Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- ›Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- ›Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs ›Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners.

5.2 Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

5.3 The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships
 - Boundaries and consent
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

5.4 All staff

All staff will:

5.4.1 Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually

5.4.2 Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance

5.4.3 Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)

5.4.4 Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct], the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and [deputy/deputies], the behaviour policy, online safety policy: and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The early help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment. The process for making referrals to local authority

children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play

- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection
- Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.5 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

5.5.1 Our DSL is Laura Bolton. Deputy DSLs are Hayley Perry, Liam Kerr and Katie Close. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

5.5.2 During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

5.5.3 DSL can also be contacted out of school hours if necessary, e.g. email,

Laura Bolton	Laura@ReFocus.school
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5.5.4 When the DSL is absent, the deputies will act as cover.

Deputy DSL	Hayley Perry Liam Kerr Katie Close	Hayley@ReFocus.school Liam@ReFocus.school Katie@ReFocus.school
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5.5.5 If the DSL and deputies are not available, Paula Kerr Executive Headteacher will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

5.5.6 The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children

- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school

5.5.7 The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

5.5.8 The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

5.6 The governing board

5.6.1 The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the
- Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements Safeguarding Governor Richard Boddy appointed to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and review their effectiveness. This includes:
- Make sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training

5.6.2 They will also Review the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards 5.6.3 Make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate

5.6.4 Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

5.6.5 The chair of governors will act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate

5.6.6 All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety. Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.7 The headteacher

5.7.1 The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this

6. Confidentiality

6.1 In this and subsequent sections, when we make any references to the DSL we mean “the DSL or deputy DSL team

6.2 ReFocus will hold records in line with our GDPR policy and Records Retention schedule. Nonconfidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Therefore, all safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made (and the reasons for those decisions) must be recorded onto the secure ReFocus systems.

6.3 Staff should note.

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child’s best interests
- 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
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL.
- If staff need to share ‘special category personal data’, the DPA 2018 contains ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk .
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment the DSL will have to balance the victim’s wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. The DSL should consider that:
- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)

6.4 The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children’s social care.

6.5 Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

6.6 Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims’ identities.

6.7 If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL. The government’s information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 ‘golden

rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information

6.8 If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly (within 5 days) securely, and separately from the main student file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

7. Recognising abuse and acting

7.1 Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

- If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger
- Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral. Contact details can be found in section 1. Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.
- You can also follow the following link to the GOV.UK webpage for reporting child abuse to our local council: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

7.2 Reporting a concern within school if a child makes a disclosure to you.

- If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:
- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Then upload this information to the school Bromcom system you should type up the details of the conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words, stick to the facts, and avoid judgement opinion or comment. The DSL should be alerted as soon as possible.
- Bear in mind that some children may:
 - Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
 - Not recognise their experiences as harmful
 - Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

7.2.1 None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

7.2.2 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger) log your concerns on Bromcom and where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

7.2.2. The DSL will normally seek to discuss any safeguarding concerns about a student with their parents/carers. This must be handled sensitively. However, if the DSL believes that a student is experiencing or may have experienced abuse or neglect or is at risk of suffering significant harm, they seek advice first from the Local Safeguarding Board.

7.3 Making a referral following a reported concern.

7.3.1 If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. (If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.)

7.3.2 The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

7.3.3 If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

7.4 Actions following a referral.

7.4.1 Where the DSL contacts the Local Safeguarding Board or makes a MASH referral the agreed course of action will be followed. The school will be guided by MASH in this respect.

7.4.2 All Child Protection records will be maintained in a confidential file at the school.

7.5 If you discover that FGM has taken place, or a student is at risk of FGM.

7.5.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs". FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

7.5.2 Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM has been carried out on a student under 18 must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

7.5.3 Please note - The mandatory reporting procedures say: 'It is recommended that you make a report orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number.' 'Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, professionals should report the case immediately to police, including dialling 999 if appropriate'. In most cases 'reports under the duty should be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered, and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day'.)

7.5.4 Unless they have good reason not to, the teacher involved should also discuss the case with the DSL who will involve children's social care as appropriate. Staff should not examine students.

7.5.5 This duty for teachers does not apply in cases where a student is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. (Staff should never examine students.) Where a case of FGM is suspected or there is a risk of FGM being carried out a member of staff

should speak to the DSL. Local advice can also be found at local safeguarding procedures. Below is a very short summary and must be read in conjunction with the mandatory reporting guidance. (See <http://safeguarding.link/fgmreporting>)

7.5.6 Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a student under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow

7.6 If you have concerns about extremism

7.6.1 As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people becoming involved with or supporting terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

7.6.2 Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated

7.6.3 Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have. Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the Police or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

7.6.4 The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

7.6.5 In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

7.7 If you have a concern about mental health.

7.7.1 Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. You may refer to the Department for Education guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools for more information.

7.7.2 If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action following the school policy

7.7.3 If you have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the Key Worker to agree a course of action.

7.8 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor/whistleblowing

7.8.1 Any staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague, temporary/supply teacher or volunteer towards a student must remember that the welfare of the children is paramount.

7.8.2 The school Whistleblowing and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policies describe the actions that enables staff to raise concerns or allegations including behaviour that is defined as "low-level".

7.8.3 If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made they must speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, they must speak to the chair of governors and report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

7.8.4 The guidance in KCSIE should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

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

7.8.5 If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

7.9 Allegations of abuse made against other student .

7.9.1 At ReFocus we recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for students.

7.9.2 We also recognise there is a generalised view of child-on-child abuse being of a gendered nature, we do not hold this view at ReFocus where all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

7.9.3 Most cases of students hurting other students will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students in the school at risk .
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

7.9.4 At ReFocus we will minimise the risk of child on child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Ensuring students know they can talk to staff confidentially through the pastoral and PSHE programmes
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a student harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

7.9.5 More information can also be found in the school Child on Child Abuse Policy

7.10 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting') based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety

7.10.1 If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude, pseudo images (computer generated images), images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a student to share or download it
- (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the student to delete it
- Ask the student(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the student(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved
- You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the student(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

7.10.2 Initial review meeting

7.10.3 The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- there is an immediate risk to student(s)
- a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed) further information is required to decide on the best response
- the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown) immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services relevant facts about the students involved which would influence risk assessment.
- There is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual to contact parents or carers of the students involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

7.10.4 The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

7.10.5 If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy

7.10.6 If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the Headteacher will review the risks and may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. All incidents of this nature will be recorded in Bromcom.

7.10.7 In line with updates in KSCIE (2025) the above actions may include making referrals against the wishes of the young person; and considering the potential impact of social media breaching confidentiality.

7.10.8 Teaching students about the issues surrounding sexting as part of the PSHE education and computing programmes, and ensuring our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- How to report an incident whether they have sent, received, or are made aware that one of their peers has been involved in sending or receiving such images. (Students are always encouraged to speak to
- their safe person and/or their Key Worker
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding, or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

7.10.9 Students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images.
- The receipt of such images

7.10.10 Students are made aware of the school procedures around this issue so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

7.10.11 Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. We recognise the importance of ensuring students feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

7.10.12 To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for students to confidently report abuse are easily understood and easily accessible for students. Ensure that students are familiar with these systems, including the context of every child identifying a safe space and a safe person within school. Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted through Tutor time activities PSHE/RSE curriculum and the assembly programme.
- Make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Ensure that students are aware that any issues regarding student safety, well-being and safeguarding are recorded in Bromcom and reported to the DSL.

7.10.13 Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding

7.10.14 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

7.10.15 The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe

7.10.16 If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk

7.10.17 Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

7.10.18 If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment: There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies. The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

7.10.19 Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities

7.10.20 The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information

7.10.21 If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy) confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping

8. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

8.1 We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration

- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers and cognitive understanding.

8.2 We offer additional pastoral support for pupils with SEN and disabilities. This includes:

- 1-2-1 and group mentoring, individual learning plans and regular reviews with student, parents and any other involved agencies

8.3 As an alternative provision most students that attend ReFocus fit into the category of 'Vulnerable pupil'. As a result they should be treated as students with additional risk of harm. Most students are supported by Partner agencies for either social care needs or additional educational needs.

9. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

9.1 We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health.

9.2 When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability.

9.3 Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

10. Pupils with a social worker

10.1 Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

10.2 The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

10.3 Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

11. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

11.1 We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. We will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

11.2 We have appointed an appropriately trained teacher, **Paula Tucker Executive Headteacher** to take the lead on promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

11.3 As part of their role, they will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children

12. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

12.1 ReFocus is committed to promoting the welfare and safety of our students when using digital technologies.

12.2 We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. With reference to the DfE Teaching Online Safety in Schools guidance, the school recognises the importance of the contribution it can make to protecting and supporting students across the school in their use of these technologies. To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

Please see the Online Safety and Acceptable Use policy for further information.

13 Training

13.1 All staff

13.1.1 All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

13.1.2 This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be inline with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
 - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment o
 - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

13.1.3 All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

13.1.4 Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

13.1.5 Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

13.2 The DSL and deputies

13.2.1 The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

13.2.2 They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

13.3 Governors

13.3.1 All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

13.3.2 As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

13.4 Safer Recruitment training

13.4.1 At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

13.4.1 See appendix of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

14 Monitoring

Monitoring of this policy will take place annually or sooner should there be changes to current legislation, new examples of best practice or following an incident where there learning

15 . Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance

- Online safety
- Mobile phone use
- Equality
- Relationships and sex education
- First aid
- Curriculum
- Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Staff code of conduct
- Attendance
- Equality and Diversity
- Data Protection
- Whistleblowing

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

APPENDIX B – Safeguarding context – local identified issues

APPENDIX C – Flow diagrams/School based procedural guidance

- a) Procedure for concerns about a child's welfare
- b) Allegation of sexual abuse or sexual harassment

APPENDIX A Safer Recruitment policy and procedures

- i. We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.
- ii. **New staff**
- iii. When appointing new staff, we will:
 - Verify their identity - Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available.
 - Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months.
- iv. Separate barred list checks must only be carried out in the following circumstances:
- v. for newly appointed staff who are engaging in regulated activity, pending the receipt of an Enhanced Certificate with Barred List information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (and where all other relevant checks as per paragraph 213 have been carried out)
- vi. where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation (and where all other relevant checks as per paragraph 213 have been carried out)
- vii. Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- viii. Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- ix. Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards.
- x. Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in ReFocus. This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK. In addition, ReFocus will make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Following the UK's exit from the EU, ReFocus will apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world. These checks could include, where available:
 - criminal records checks for overseas applicants - Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK; and for teaching positions
 - obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professions database. Applicants can also

contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

- xi. We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.
- xii. Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- xiii. Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- xiv. Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked
- xv. Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state. An individual who is subject to a section 128 direction is unable to:
 - take up a management position in an independent school, academy, or in a free school as an employee;
 - be a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body of an independent school; or
 - be a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities.
- xvii. We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.
- xviii. We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.
- xix. ReFocus will use the TRA's Employer Access service to make prohibition, direction, restriction, and children's barred list checks. The service is free to use and is available via the TRA's web page. Once registered ReFocus will use a DfE Sign-in account to log onto the service.
- xx. Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (September 2022).
- xxi. Regulated activity means a person who will be:
 - Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
 - Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
 - Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

- xxii. If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.
- xxiii. We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
 - We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or

The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or

The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and

The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

- xxiv. We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

- xxv. We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:
- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
 - An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- xxvi. We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- xxvii. Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- xxviii. We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

- xxix. Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.
- xxx. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.
- xxxi. Volunteers We will:
- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
 - Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
 - Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

Governors

- xxxii. All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.
- xxxiii. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.
- xxxiv. The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

- xxxv. All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:
- xxxvi. A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.] Identity
- xxxvii. Right to work in the UK
- xxxviii. Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK All governors will also have the following checks:
 - Identity
 - Right to work in the UK
 - Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

- xxxix. When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.
- xl. We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

APPENDIX B

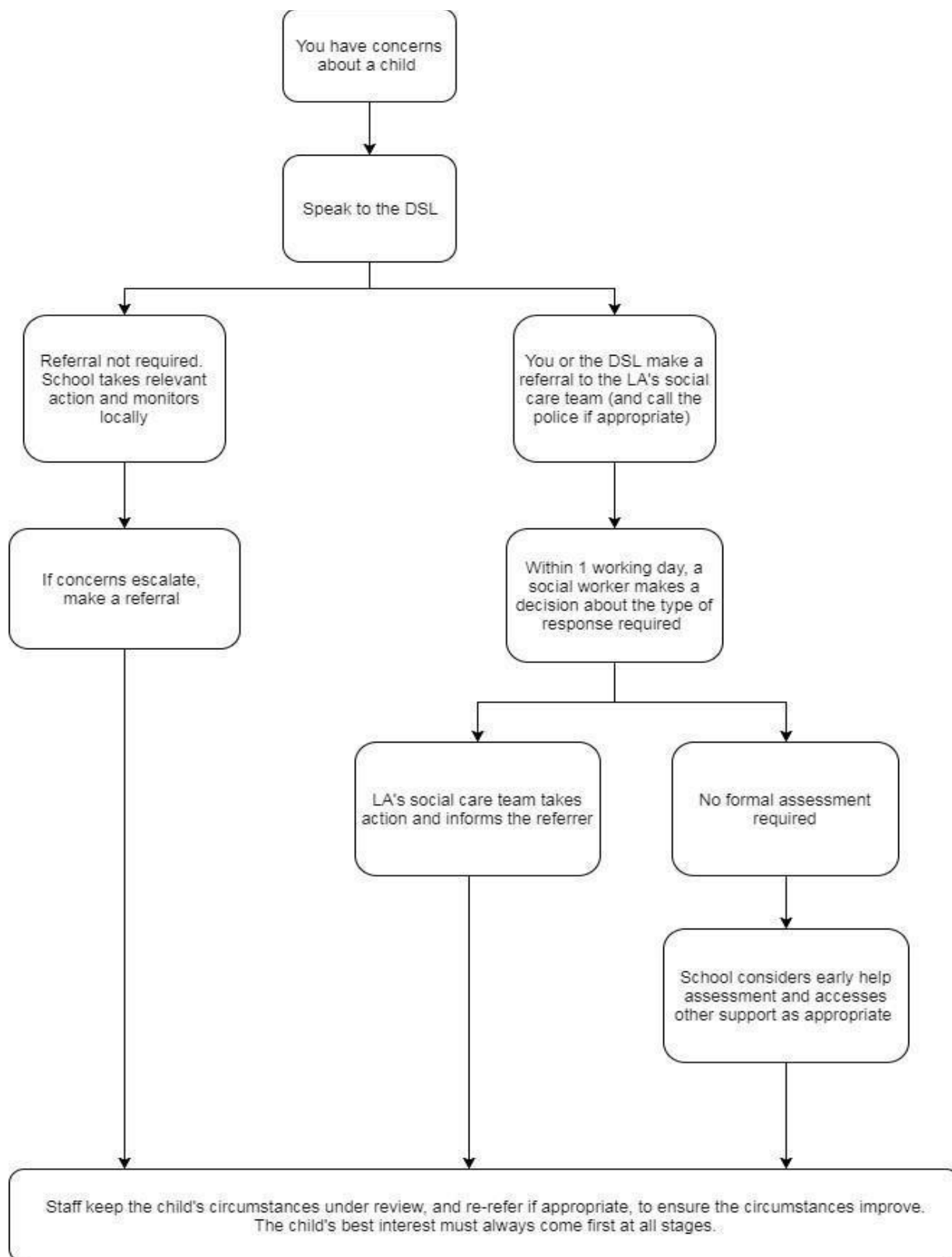
Main issues identified in the area	How our curriculum addresses these issues	Staff training to address these issues
Students with mental health issues. Ranging from low mood, self-harm, anger management, eating disorders.	<p>Mental Health Awareness days</p> <p>Stress management, Diet and nutrition units delivered to all students.</p> <p>Emotional Literacy leads the PSHE lessons and 1-2-1 sessions for those students identified in need of extra support.</p>	Regular CPD resources ensure staff have the support and guidance to meet specific students' needs. All staff have been enrolled to the library of resources on the National College of Education and their CPD links to their job role, with all statutory courses a priority. Specific training scheduled through the training calendar.

<p>Risky on-line behaviours</p>	<p>E-Safety contract signed by all students.</p> <p>Additional PSHE lessons around safe online use.</p> <p>Updated filtering and monitoring systems in place reviewed at least annually and as required.</p> <p>Safeguarding updates sent to parents via either email, text message or phone call as and when required.</p> <p>Service 6 Target group work sessions delivered across the school. Timetabled to deliver one hour sessions once a week for four weeks for each group.</p>	<p>Well planned and resourced scheme of work in PSHE curriculum supports good teaching in this area.</p> <p>DSL annual safeguarding training</p> <p>County DSL termly Forum</p> <p>Contextual Safeguarding forum held between local schools to share current concerns.</p>
<p>County Lines/gang activity</p>	<p>External agencies regularly attend for 1-2-1 or group sessions.</p> <p>External speaker for knife crime awareness.</p> <p>Curriculum units delivered on drug awareness, dealing with conflict and crime and youth justice.</p>	<p>National College of Education library of resources.</p> <p>Staff trained in new CERAF procedures.</p>

APPENDIX C

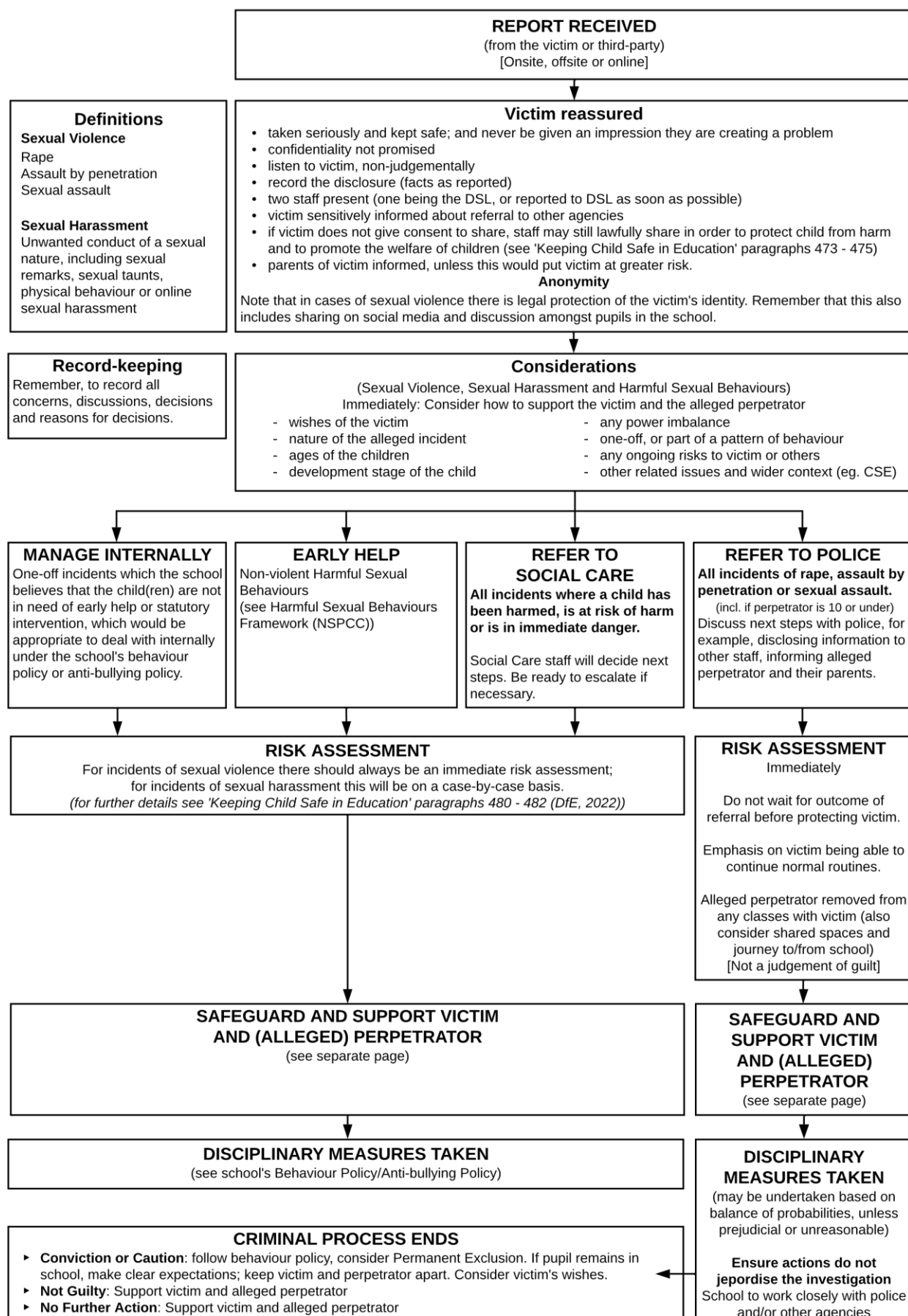
Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



Appendix 3b

*PART FIVE: CHILD-ON-CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT



Source:

*Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022 (DfE, 2022)

2022 SVSH Flowchart

Allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment

When responding to an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual harassment the needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible.

Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school or college is a safe space for them.

Consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse.

Schools and colleges should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).

The victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Consider the proportionality of the response.

Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape.

Schools should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. Children and young people that have a health need arising from sexual assault or abuse can access specialist NHS support from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre.

(SARC). SARCs offer confidential and non-judgemental support to victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse. They provide medical, practical, and emotional care and advice to all children and adults, regardless of when the incident occurred.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a [HSB toolkit](#), which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about HSB by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse.

The NSPCC provides free and independent advice about HSB: [NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#). [Contextual Safeguarding Network](#) – Beyond Referrals (Schools) provides a school selfassessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

StopItNow - [Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.](#)