Physis Academy

Child Protection - Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Key Contacts:

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (s)	Cheryl Fleetwood (Assistant Head Teacher)	Cheryl.matthews@physisgroup.co.uk 01948 841070
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding / Child Protection	Steve Fleetwood (Governor / Safeguarding lead)	steve.fleetwood@physisgroup.co.uk 01948667164
Chair of Governors/Proprietor	Mel Johnson (Governor / Organisation safeguarding lead)	Mel@physisgroup.co.uk 01948667164
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Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership – First Point of Contact (Compass and First point of contact team)	Mon-Fri, 9am – 5pm Outside of these hours	**Phone:** 0345 678 9021 **Phone:** 0345 678 9040
Police	In an emergency For non-emergency but possible crime	999 101

School Record of Safeguarding Training:

Type of Training:	Date completed:	Next due date:
Whole School Safeguarding Training (Due every three years)	See Training Matrix	See Training Matrix
Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Due every 2 years)	17/10/2025	17/10/2027
Deputy Senior DSL's (Due every 2 years)	17/04/2024	17/04/2026
Whole School Staff Refresher/updates (Annual)	01/09/2025	01/09/2026
Safer Recruitment Training (Due every 5 years)	See Training Matrix	See Training Matrix
Governor Training	2025	2027
Annual DSL Prevent Training Update (for DSLs to disseminate to ALL staff)	See Training Matrix	See Training Matrix

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Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy:

INTRODUCTION:

1.1. It is essential that **everybody** working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect exploitation and harm. Our school is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance. All staff should make sure that any decisions made are **in the best interests of the child.**

1.2. Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern. The governing body will ensure that our school will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and work together with agencies to ensure that our school has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or where significant harm is suggested.

1.3. Our school is a community and all those directly connected, staff members, governors, parents, families and pupils, have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure for all.

1.4. This procedure document provides the basis for good practice within the school for Safeguarding work. It should be read in conjunction with our organisational Policies and Procedures Tri.X, plus the Child Protection - Safeguarding appendix document. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the organisation considers to be safe and professional practice in this context.

2 OUR ETHOS:

2.1 We believe that this school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, spiritual and moral development of the individual child, enabling all children to thrive.

2.2 We recognise the importance of providing an environment within our school that will help children feel safe and respected. We recognise the importance of enabling children to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to. We recognise that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children

2.3 We recognise that all adults within the school, including permanent, supply staff, temporary staff, volunteers, parents and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

2.4 We will work pro-actively with parents / carers to build a solid understanding of the school's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

3 SCOPE

3.1 In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years but in the case of SEN it is up to 25 years of age.

3.2 This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

4 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions (including sixth-form colleges) to make the necessary arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. Section 157 of the same Act places a similar duty on non-maintained and independent schools, including free schools and academies.

4.2 Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, all maintained schools, further education colleges and independent schools, including free schools and academies, are required to co-operate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.

4.3 Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the Local Safeguarding Children Board can require a school or further education institution to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.

4.4 This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, Dec 2023: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

All policies and procedures can be found on the school's website:

Physis Care

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Our governing body recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation, and this policy has regard to statutory guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), Key statutory and non-statutory guidance and any locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

5.2 The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall designated responsibility for safeguarding is Domoni Supple. We have deputy designated safeguarding lead (s), Cheryl Fleetwood to ensure there is always appropriate cover for this role. **The responsibilities of all Designated Safeguarding Lead are described in detail Appendix A.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be on our school's leadership team, and their role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (and the deputy) will be **explicit in their job description**. This person should have the appropriate authority and be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and Safeguarding matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

5.3 The school has a **nominated governor** (Steve Fleetwood) responsible for safeguarding to champion good practice, to liaise with the head teacher and to provide information and reports to the governing body.

5.4 The **case manager for dealing with allegations** of abuse made against school staff members is the head teacher. The case manager for dealing with allegations against the head teacher is the chair of governors Mel Johnson. **The procedure for managing allegations is detailed in Appendix Document**

5.5 The **head teacher** or proprietor will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff and other adults are clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child, including if children go missing from education, including children who are 'absent' from education, or those unexplainable and or/persistent absences, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods.

5.6 The **governing body** is collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day practice.

5.7 **All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers** know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to pupils who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child. They are aware that behaviours and physical signs linked to behaviours that put children in danger. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This may include but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual harassment, sexual violence and assaults, harmful sexual behaviour and sexting. Staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers.

5.8 Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools, colleges and educational settings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2.
Assessment support can be found via Shorespace - https://shorespace.org.uk/

It should be recognised that these issues are likely to occur, and so schools should have procedures in place to deal with them. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, questioning their gender', Transgender+ (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND. We recognise that these children can be targeted by other children, so it is vital your school provide a safe space for these children to speak out and share their concerns with members of staff. Pupils are protected from upskirting, bullying (+ cyber), homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism, and all other forms of discrimination. More guidance in KCSIE2025

Our school acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents.

Online Risk and Harms:

Our school is committed to responding to evolving digital risks, supporting the changes to the online safety act (2023), which protects children and adults online and puts a range of new duties on social media companies and search services, giving them legal duties to protect their users from illegal content and content harmful to children. More information on the changes can be accessed here.

We also acknowledge that generative artificial intelligence (AI) presents exciting opportunities to improve lives and will continue to explore this technology safely to encourage innovation and maximise the benefits for education. The full guidance can be accessed here: Generative AI guidance

The appropriate designated safeguarding lead should be familiar with the full guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (updated Mar 2024)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

The school will look to identify how to meet the digital and technology standards, using self-assessments that can be accessed here.

Adult involvement in youth-produced sexual imagery - The school's full response to youth-produced sexual imagery (YPSI) also known as 'sexting' is outlined in the Youth-produced Sexual Imagery Policy available upon Tri.X.

Sexually motivated incidents

The school will remain aware that not all instances of YPSI will be between children and young people, and in some cases may involve adults posing as a child for the purpose of obtaining nude and semi-nude images from persons under 18.

Staff will be aware of the signs that an adult is involved in the sharing the nude or semi-nude images. These include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing unsolicited sexual images.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Being coerced or pressured into doing sexual things, including producing sexual imagery.
- Being offered money or gifts.
- Being threatened or blackmailed into sharing nude or semi-nude images, and/or further sexual activity.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated incidents of YPSI involving adults may also be called **"sextortion"**, where the offender threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they do something to prevent it, e.g. paying money. In these cases, offenders often pose as children and:

- Groom or coerce the victim into sending nudes or semi-nudes to blackmail them.
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person, e.g. via hacking.
- Use digitally manipulated and/or *AI-generated images of the child or young person.

*(Computer systems and software that can perform tasks that ordinarily require human intelligence, such as decision-making and the creation of images).

Staff will be aware of the signs of sextortion, which include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing sexual images first.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Told their online accounts have been hacked to obtain images, personal information, and contacts.
- Being blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details.
- Being shown stolen or digitally manipulated/generated images of the victim.

It is important that schools record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own schools and make appropriate plans to reduce it.

The guidance covers: It covers what sexual violence and harassment is, schools' and colleges' legal responsibilities, a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and child protection and how to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment Children may not feel ready to, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL.

Incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with your child protection and safeguarding policies. Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. A bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. If you are concerned about something, you can contact the NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

5.9 There is a Digital Safety policy, which covers the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g., i-Pads. For online safety, there is within the policy support about children accessing the internet whilst they're at school using data on their phones (3G or 4G networks). The policy reinforces the importance of online safety, including making parents aware of what your school ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)

Digital literacy and safety are one of the most paramount issues of our time. For teachers and pupils, learning how to use the online space sensibly and in a protected manner is vital. Project EVOLVE by SWGfL presents a plethora of tools to help your staff and pupils, develop a well-rounded educational schema for inclusion into lessons. https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/what-is-projectevolve-edu/

Governing bodies and proprietors are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT system and ensure the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. The leadership team and relevant staff have

an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The policy for remote learning that demonstrates on understanding of how to follow safeguarding procedures when planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely. The school maintains the capability to provide remote education when it is not possible for some or all their pupils to attend in person. Policies — Physis Care

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools

Filtering and monitoring standards are adhered to and a DSL has robust oversight of the arrangements to meet those standards. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges

Artificial Intelligence has the power to transform education by helping teachers focus on what they do best: teaching. This marks a shift in how technology is used to enhance lives and tap into the vast potential of AI in classrooms. We look to consider the risks and challenges alongside the opportunities and benefits continue to work to ensure the safety and reliability of technology, including AI tools, to support teachers and learners. The guidance below supports the assessment of risk:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education

Resources for schools and education settings - https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/using-ai-in-education-settings-support-materials

6 SUPPORTING CHILDREN

6.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. We also recognise children who witness domestic abuse are victims, that witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on children, and that children can be victims in their own relationships too. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help They may feel helpless, humiliated and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives.

6.2 We accept that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

6.3 **Our school will support all pupils by:**

- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning; Through PSHE, RHSE and other curriculum contexts, pupils are encouraged to talk about feelings and deal assertively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn to for help and advice.
- providing pupils with a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties; and ensuring that pupils are taught about safeguarding so that they 'recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it'
- supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence and encourage the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying; Policies — Physis Care

- ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly; plus, Relationship and Sexual Health Education (RSHE) requirements.

- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children; including domestic abuse https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/domestic-abuse-act-statutory-guidance

- ensuring that the curriculum will help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to and will support young people to become more resilient to inappropriate behaviours towards them, risk taking behaviours and behaviours that children may be coerced into including, sexual harassment, child-on-child abuse, 'sexting' and the displaying of 'Harmful Sexualised Behaviour'; https://www.csacentre.org.uk/resources/key-messages/harmful-sexual-behaviour/

- Shropshire's HSB identification toolkit can be found here: https://www.shropshiresafeguardingcommunitypartnership.co.uk/about-us/shropshire-safeguarding-community-partnership-learning-development/brook-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool/

Child-on-child abuse (inc. sexual violence and sexual harassment)

- For the purposes of this policy, **'child-on-child abuse'** is defined as abuse between children.
- The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse,
- All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online risk and harm. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring.
- All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.
- All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. / Upskirting.

- Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element.

- The DSL will ensure they appropriately assess all instances of child-on-child abuse, including in cases of image-based abuse, to help determine whether the alleged perpetrator(s) is under the age of 18 or is an adult posing as a child. The DSL will immediately refer the case if it is found that a so-called child-on-child abuse incident involves an adult, e.g. where an adult poses as a child online to groom a child or young person.
- All staff will be clear as to the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they must play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.
- The school's procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Child-on-child Abuse Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school's Anti-bullying Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy, where relevant.
- Addressing child on child abuse - Resources for schools and colleges
- Responding to Child Sexual abuse – https://www.csacentre.org.uk/child-sexual-abuse-response-pathway/

- The school will consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment (KCSIE 2025).
- having a behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that each pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred; Policies — Physis Care
- The behaviour policy outlines measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.

- Clear procedures are in place for addressing and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviours, sexual violence and sexual harassment - these procedures are easily understood and easily accessible. Children who have experienced sexual violence can display a wide range of responses, so the school will remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to their needs
- playing a crucial role in preventative education and preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. There is a culture of zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy, pastoral support system and a planned programme of RSHE delivered regularly, tackling issues such as: boundaries; consent; body confidence; stereotyping; and sexual harassment
- acknowledging the importance of 'Harm from outside the home' (HOTH), https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/ which considers wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare. (Working together to safeguard children Dec 2023 and KCSIE September 2025).

- liaising with a range of Early Help agencies that support the pupil such as Health Services, Shropshire Social Care (as well as other social care local authorities), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services, Special Educational Support Services, Youth Services and the Educational Psychology Service.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing

- ensuring that, when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection **(CP)** Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within two weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved.
- alert the authority if it is aware of any child being looked after under a Private Fostering arrangement. On admission to school, and at other times, the school will be vigilant in identifying any private fostering arrangement.
- acknowledging that a child that is looked-after (LAC) or has been previously looked after (PLAC) by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after and previously looked-after children safe. It is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.
- applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), by considering the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group.
- recognising that to safeguard a pupil, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, schools and colleges can reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint. Guidance is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools

Policies — Physis Care

6.4 Monitoring Attendance

- A child missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including exploitation. Local Authority guidance and procedures will be followed for dealing with a child who is missing from education, , or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, particularly on repeated occasions or if a child suddenly stops attending. The school will follow the Missing Child Policy. For those children and families who have chronic poor attendance or persistent absenteeism, school will consider whether educational neglect is present and whether a referral to children's services is required, or whether the school should seek consent to begin an Early Help Assessment in order to coordinate a multi-agency plan of support for the child and family.

- Attendance will be closely monitored. In line with the school's attendance policy, contact will be made for any unexplained absences on the first morning of any absence. Follow up calls will then be made throughout the period of absence. In addition, the attendance of children with known welfare and attendance concerns will be monitored closely, particularly those with chronic poor attendance or persistent absentees, or if a child suddenly stops attending. Schools should also scrutinise the attendance of off-site provision to ensure children are attending and are safe. Similarly, the attendance of children who are vulnerable or with known welfare and safeguarding concerns such as children who have a child protection plan, a child in need, are Looked-After Children and/or SEN will be rigorously monitored on a daily and weekly basis. The child's social worker will be informed immediately when there are unexplained absences or attendance concerns.

- It is important that the school's attendance team, including the Local Attendance Officer are aware of any safeguarding concerns. It is critical that when a child is not attending school their welfare is confirmed and expected practice would be for an appropriate professional to visit the home and speak to the child alone, particularly if there are any safeguarding concerns. The timing for this home visit will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The school will seek to ensure it has at least two emergency contacts for each family and consider

what urgent action it may need to take when a vulnerable child and family are not contactable, and the child has not attended school. Where necessary, this may include reporting the child missing to the police. The school will ensure it is aware, in advance, of any difficulties in accessing the premises of a child's family home.

- It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

- Children Missing Education (C.M.E.) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. All staff should be aware that children missing education or those unexplainable and or/persistent absences, are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Children going missing or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, can also be an indicator of mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. When a child is deemed to be missing from education, or those unexplainable and or/persistent absences, school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. Once these enquiries have been undertaken, our school will follow the local protocol for Children Missing Education and make a C.M.E referral to the Local Authority Officer for C.M.E.

- Some parents will decide to remove their child from the school role to educate them at home. For most children, this choice will be with the child's best education at the heart of their decision, and it will be a positive learning experience. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean that some children become less visible to services who are them to keep them safe and supported in line with their individual needs. Where a parent or carer has expressed their intention to remove their child from the school roll with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with other key professionals and will, where possible, attempt to facilitate a meeting with the family to ensure that all parties have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important for those children who have SEND, are vulnerable, and/or who have a social worker. The school will also link with the named officer for Elective Home Education within the Local Authority. Staff are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.

Alternative provision

- Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, (further information provided in KCSIE 2025), should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of any alternative providers and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend.

- Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the

establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff

- School should regularly review any alternative provision placements to make sure the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. If safeguarding concerns occur, the placement should be immediately reviewed and ended if necessary (further compliance can be found in paragraphs 169 and 170 of KCSIE 2025).

7 SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

7.1 We have developed a structured procedure in line with *Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership* which will be followed by all members of the Education community in cases of suspected abuse. **This is detailed in Appendix Document (page 25).**

7.2 In line with the procedures, **Shropshire's First point of contact team** will be contacted as soon as there is a significant concern.

7.3 The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be clearly advertised in the school **and on the website**, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

7.4 We will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by publishing the policy and procedures on our website and by referring to them in our introductory school materials.

7.5 We will use the NSPCC- When to call the police to help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

8 DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE MADE BY A CHILD – ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF

8.1 ***If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should consider ways to:***

Receive - Listen actively, use open body language, accept, be non-judgmental. Use TED method for clarity (tell, explain, describe)

Reassure - 'You've done the right thing by coming to me', re-assure them that you have listened and hear what they are saying; don't promise confidentiality

Respond - Tell them what you are going to do and do it. Ensure they are okay before leaving them alone

Report - As soon as possible, to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) in the setting, or your manager of your service

Record - Vital to stick to the facts, no opinions – Think about the context - When? Where? Who? What?

Review – Take responsibility to follow up any referral (via your DSL or manager)

In addition:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay and follow safeguarding process.

- Complete the Safeguarding incident form on LearnTrek and pass it to the DSL.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL.

Further information about what to do if you are worried that a child is being abused is available here in advice for practitioners: *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2*

The role of an appropriate Adult in Safeguarding:

The Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) act advises that "The role of the appropriate adult (AA) is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons", with there being further elaboration that the AA is expected to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained persons rights and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights. This role is relevant where the police have detained a child or vulnerable person under PACE.

The role of AA is not restricted to specific individuals, in relation to children and young people under the age of 18, PACE guidance sets out that the AA can be: the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.

https://safeguarding.network/content/safeguarding-and-the-role-of-the-appropriate-adult/

RECORD KEEPING

8.2 All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

8.3 We will continue to support any pupil leaving the school about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including Safeguarding and welfare concerns, is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school as a matter of priority.

8.4 Schools should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home in order to reduce the risk of not making contact with family members where welfare and/or safeguarding concerns are identified. (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025)

DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD – ADVICE FOR THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) AND DEPUTY DSLs

9.1 In general, you should always discuss any concerns the school may have with the child's parents / carer's. They need to know that you are worried about their child. However, you

should not discuss your concerns if you believe that this would place the child at greater risk or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation.

9.2 If you make a decision not to discuss your concerns with the child's parents or carers, this must be recorded in the child's Safeguarding file with a full explanation for your decision and the reason for this decision.

9.3 It is important to record and consider the child's wishes and feelings, as part of planning what action to take in relation to concerns about their welfare. Capturing the lived experience of the child is paramount to ensure that actions remain child centred.

9.4 When talking to children, you should take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, which may not be English. It is also important to consider how a SEND child may need support in communicating.

9.5 How you talk to a child will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns. You may need to seek advice from the Integrated Front Door or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised.

9.6 If concerns have arisen as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.

9.7 It is expected that you discuss your concerns with the parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to the Integrated Front Door, unless you consider that this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.

9.8 You do not need the parents' consent to make a referral if you consider the child is in need of protection, although parents will ultimately be made aware of which organisation made the referral. If parents refuse to give consent to a referral but you decide to continue, you need to make this clear to the **First point of contact**.

9.9 If you decide to refer the child without the parents' consent, make sure to record this with a full explanation of your decision.

9.10 When you make your referral, you should agree with the **First point of contact** what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when. The school as a relevant agency, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree to the levels for the different types of assessment as part of local arrangements.

MAKING A REFERRAL - If a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect please report it to the **First point of contact**

Mon-Fri, 9:00am – 5.00pm Tel: 0345 678 9021

Outside of these hours Tel: 0345 678 9040

In an emergency always call police on 999.

If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency call 101.

The online Request for Services referral form can be accessed here:

https://westmids-shropshire.trixonline.co.uk/resources/local-guidance?root=c0989e10-fd3e-43da-92c7-eb324e8df6ad,82f923d3-a33b-4622-95cf-b7b7974f105b

10 SAFER WORKFORCE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (This procedure is detailed in Appendix document)

10.1 We will prevent people who pose risks to children from working in our school by ensuring that all individuals working in any capacity at our school have been subjected to safeguarding checks in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025*. In addition to obtaining the DBS certificate, anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.

A check of any prohibition can be carried out using the Teacher Services' system that may be found here: *https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/*

Prohibition orders are described in the National College for Teaching and Leadership's (NCTL) publication Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers. It can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-the-prohibition-of-teachers--3

10.2 We will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our school. See Appendix document, for information on Single Central Record (SCR). The single central record must cover the following people: all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party and supply staff who work at the school. The Single Central Record is located:

10.3 Every job description and person specification, and job advertisement will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder. The school website will echo this within our 'work for us' section. The school will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online.

10.4 We will ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last 5 years.

10.5 We have a procedure in place to manage allegations against members of staff, supply staff and volunteers (and to respond to low level concerns) in line with SSCP procedures. We will communicate with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), through consultations and referrals when needed. Allegations related to any incidents when an individual or organisation is using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, the school will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO' within 24 hours.

10.6 Supply teachers – we will consider all allegations against an individual not directly employed by, where disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, (for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency) and ensure allegations are dealt with properly and communication with supply agency and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is continued throughout the investigation.

10.7 There is an agreed staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the code of conduct) which is compliant with 'Safer Working Practices', and includes - acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships, low level concerns and communications including the use of social media. Tri.X

10.8. For agency and third-party supply staff, schools and colleges must also include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member of staff. **Further Guidance can be accessed (Feb 2022):**

https://c-cluster-110.uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/d71d6fd8-b99e-4327-b8fd-1ac968b768a4~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital

11 STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

11.1 All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given induction that includes basic safeguarding training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the Child Protection (safeguarding) policy, staff code of conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges and other related policies. All governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online risks and harm) training at induction. There are mechanisms in place, such as safeguarding updates, to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff should also read, "Working Together to Safeguard Children." Dec 2023

11.2 The induction will be proportionate to staff members' and governors' roles and responsibilities

11.3 All Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will undergo updated DSL safeguarding training every two years. DSL's should undertake Prevent awareness training and disseminate the training to all staff annually

11.4 All staff members of the school will undergo face to face training (whole-school training) which is regularly updated and at least every three years. *All governors must undergo governor specific awareness training to equip governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge, so they're assured safeguarding policies/procedures are effective and deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding. This training should be regularly updated.*

11.5 Staff members who miss the whole-school training will be required to undertake other relevant training to make up for it, e.g. Twilight sessions

11.6 The nominated governor for safeguarding will undergo training prior to or soon after appointment to the role; this training will be updated every three years. All governors will receive appropriate safeguarding training annually.

11.7 We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole-school training if it takes place during their period of work for the school.

11.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide briefings to the school on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) in line with Working Together 2023. These will occur annually or more frequently when necessary.

11.9 The school will maintain accurate and up to date records of staff induction and training.

12 CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

12.1 We recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.

12.2 The head teacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only

12.3 All staff members must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep key information a secret or to themselves which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.

12.4 All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.

12.5 All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

12.6 We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.

12.7 Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

12.8 Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a 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. (KCSIE 2025)

School and college 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 children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

13 INTER-AGENCY WORKING

13.1 We will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care. In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support. More information on the early help process can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

13.2 We will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings and forums, including child protection conferences and core groups, to consider individual children

13.3 We will participate in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's), other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits and embed recommendations into practice and compile required actions within agreed timescales.

14 CONTRACTORS, SERVICE AND ACTIVITY PROVIDERS AND WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

14.1 We will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our school's Child Protection-Safeguarding policy and procedures. We will require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.

14.2 We will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with *KCSIE 2025.* If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our school premises may be refused.

14.3 When we commission services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.

15 WHISTLE-BLOWING AND COMPLAINTS

15.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so. The school / college Whistle Blowing policy is located Policies — Physis Care

Whistleblowing: guidance and code of practice for employers is located here
Whistleblowing Advice Line is available for all worker - 0800 028 0285- Email *help@nspcc.org.uk*
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/blowing-the-whistle-to-the-department-for-education

15.2 We will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Safeguarding, which does include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the head teacher, the chair of the governing body or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

15.3 We have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice. We also acknowledge that Low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g. suspicion, complaint or a disclosure. Procedures in place for confidentially sharing and handling of low-level concerns.

15.4 We will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our Safeguarding arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

16 SITE SECURITY & OUT OF SCHOOL PROVIDERS

16.1 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

16.2 We check the identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out in the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge while on the school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

16.3 The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.

16.4 Where schools are used for non-school activities, those providers are expected to meet the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings. More details regarding safeguarding in sport can be found here: safeguarding in sport

17 QUALITY ASSURANCE

17.1 We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.

17.2 We will complete an audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership and using the Section 11 audit tool provided by them for this purpose.

17.3 The school's senior management and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

18 POLICY REVIEW

18.1 This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle

18.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that staff members, including volunteers and sessional workers are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures

18.3 Additional updates to the Child Protection - Safeguarding policy and appendix will take place as and when needed.

Updated Policy Date:	Scheduled review by
01/09/2025	01/09/2026