



Weston Schools Federation

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Weston Schools Federation

Date of last review: September 2025
Date of next review: September 2026

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Safeguarding Contact Details

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Introduction

Policy Statement

Weston Schools Federation fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school.

Everyone working in our federation of schools has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, resilient, valued and respected and are encouraged to talk, believing they will be listened to. We will ensure children know there are adults at the schools whom they can approach if they are worried.

Our commitment to safeguarding

Environment:

- To provide a safe environment within which children can learn and flourish.
- To provide an environment in which all adults recognise that safeguarding and ensuring children and young people's welfare is everyone's responsibility.
- To ensure that all children and young people will feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to approach adults if they are in difficulties and that adults will, at all times, consider what is in the best interests of the child.
- To consider that children may not feel ready / or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and / or they might not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- To recognise that children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL.
- To raise the awareness of all leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers and visitors of the need to safeguard children within and outside of the home, including online.
- To raise the awareness of all leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- All pupils in our schools are encouraged to talk to any member of staff to share concerns or talk about situations which are giving them worries. The staff will listen to the pupil, take their worries seriously and share the information with the safeguarding lead, Nicki Windle.
- In addition, we provide pupils with information of who they can talk to outside of school both within the community and with local or national organisations who can provide support or help appropriate to their age and development.

Safeguarding procedures:

- To ensure that all concerns, however small, are recorded so as to establish the wider picture for a child and ensure that sufficient oversight by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) enables a context to be known and therefore support the identification of for example, risks of exploitation.
- To develop structured procedures within the federation that will be followed by all members of the federation of schools community in cases of suspected abuse/ concerns for well-being/ need to safeguard young people.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure the school, contributes to assessments of need and support plans for those children through timely Children's Resource Service referral (NB Southampton Children's Services re structured in Spring 2022), contact and working with multi-agency partners and children's social care team and other safeguarding partners.
- To refer to the threshold document in any discussion for advice or referral. This then makes it clearer as to why concerns are held and where the information may need to be

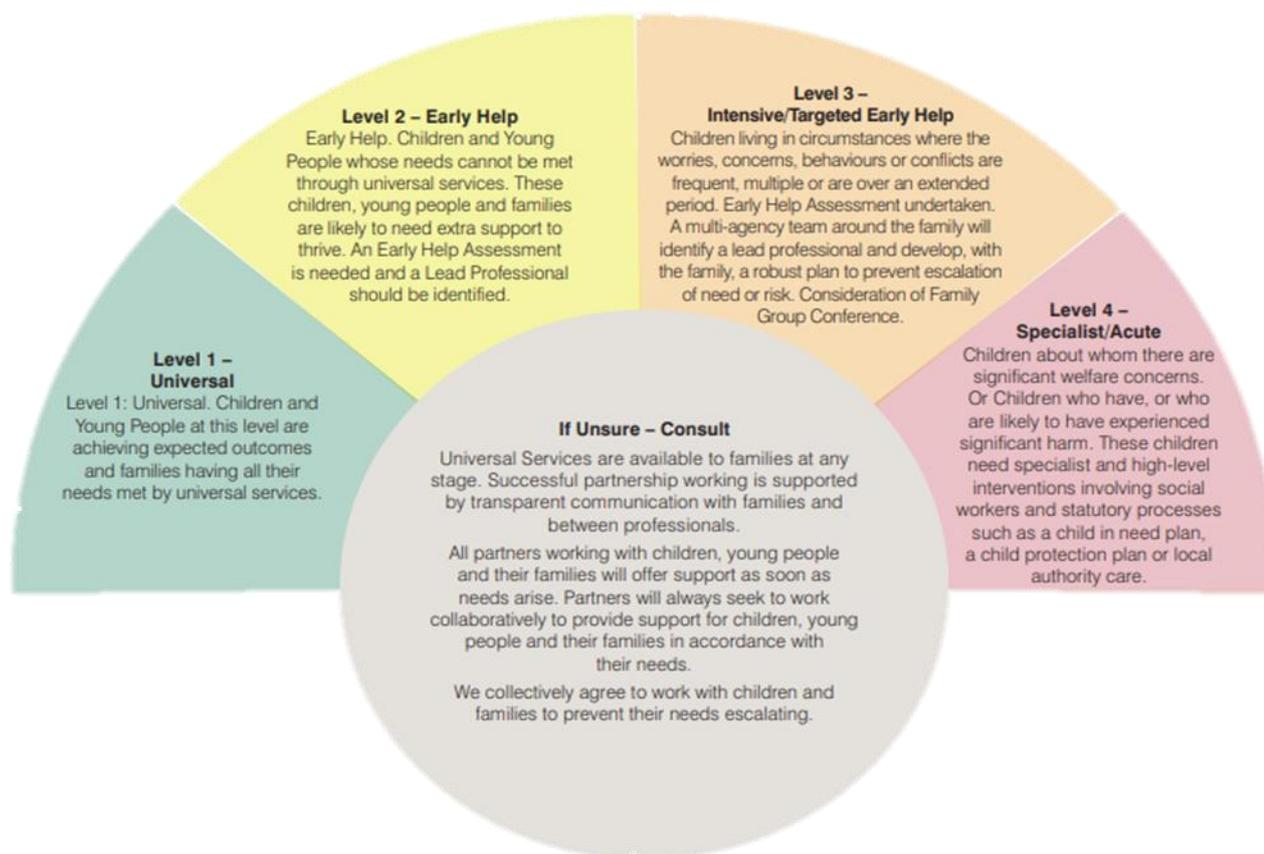
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assessed. E.g. Level 3 and why. The threshold document below clearly provides the layered information that will help professionals make decisions, and record why they feel something is a concern that should or should not be referred. It also clearly indicates that where a professional is not sure they should consult others. This can be undertaken with no identifying details disclosed through the advice line (see helpful contacts sections



- To provide attendance by a nominated member of staff or a report with up-to-date information at multi-agency meetings for all children at their school, and for the DSL to liaise with any future school DSL with any information that is required to plan for an effective transition for the child/family.
- To uphold that no one person or organisation holds all information about a young person. DSLs will regularly review concerns recorded for patterns or trends that need to be considered and addressed with appropriate action. These decisions should be recorded so that the culture around safeguarding and proactively monitoring wider issues can be tracked, and the impact of any changes measured. The DSLs for our schools will proactively work with external agencies where concerns exist around the welfare of any young person to enable reduction of risk or refer for support appropriately.
- To work proactively together with partners such as other education settings where there are siblings, or GP surgeries to ensure that where there are concerns, they are shared and addressed swiftly, with a strong base of information ensuring that the best interests of a child/the children are placed at the centre of referrals.
- To refer to Family Support (previously Early Help Team) through the Children’s Resource Service (formerly MASH) so that children, and their wider families can be supported by professionals, intervening as early as possible before a full referral to children’s social care services is required – also accessed through a Children Resource service (formerly MASH) referral.
- Working within the restorative practice and trauma informed models of behaviour and communication processes, recognising that childhood trauma can manifest as disruptive or challenging behaviour.
- Ensure that all adults within our schools who have access to children have been checked and this is recorded.

External factors:

- Appropriate supervision is given to visitors and adults on-site. Key information or training for visiting staff and adults will be provided to those who may lead for example sports clubs / out of hours activities at or for the schools.
- Have information available for all hirers to ensure the setting must not be used for the promotion of extremism or radicalisation, including the handing out of materials or speakers and that these hirers comply with safeguarding requirements of the school.
- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for children learning remotely, on work placements or alternative provision offsite, or in flexi-school arrangements.
- Where alternative provisions are used, we will ensure that safeguarding practices are adhered to, ensuring consistent safeguarding expectations for pupils in AP settings.
- AP placements will be reviewed at least half termly to ensure children are attending, their needs are met and the setting is safe, with the potential that the placement is ended if any concerns are not addressed.
- Transfer of child protection, welfare concerns and learning records that provide support for pupil development when pupils move on from their current setting will be carried out in accordance with local procedures.

Curriculum:

- To ensure that the Weston Federation of Schools complies with the statutory guidance September 2020 for relationships, sexual relations, health and well-being and that pupil voice is taken into account in planning for this. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>)
- To provide an effective PSHE curriculum that encompasses age and developmentally appropriate content, enabling pupils to build skills and confidence to help them to manage the challenges of growing up in today's society, including knowing how to keep themselves safe and where to get help from if they, or others need it.
- The PSHE programme at our federation of schools considers safeguarding issues using the national and local contexts relevant to our pupils and families so that they can understand personal, local and national issues linked to safeguarding themselves and others, including on-line. Statutory guidance is followed, and pupil voice is used to inform and check on the relevance of what is taught, providing feedback to parents and governors regarding changes to cohort provision, as well as for assurance they feel confident that any concerns they raise will be taken seriously.
- The statutory Relationships, Sex and relationships and Health education guidance is fully implemented at our school. As a school, we review this policy at least annually so as to be in-line with the child protection policy annual review as well as in line with DfE, Southampton Safeguarding children's partnership, SCC expectations and any other relevant guidance and update mid-review where key changes are made to national safeguarding policy or procedure.
- The person/s responsible for ensuring that any necessary updates are completed is: Nicki Windle.
- Weston Schools Federation has four core values: **Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful** and **Be a Learner**. Primarily we want to support families and children to become productive and positive citizens who can make a difference in their own homes, communities and in the lives of others. We prioritise learning but believe that in order to access and progress as a learner we need children to feel and to be safe and work well with others

The protection of children is of the highest priority for the Weston Federation of Schools. Children have the right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so. All children regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, religion, culture, language and beliefs have a right to be protected from harm.

Safeguarding processes are intended to put in place measures that minimise harm to children. There may be situations where new national guidance, local incidents, gaps or deficiencies in the policies and processes we have in place will be highlighted. In these situations, urgent review will be carried out by the DSL and governors

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in order to identify learning and inform the policy, practice and culture of the school. This review may involve the Local Authority or other agencies and may require policies to be amended sooner than the annually scheduled review. Where national guidance changes within the approved policy year or learning from practice reviews becomes available addendum to policies and processes may be made through the governing body.

All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm in accordance with the guidance. We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will proactively engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.

Whilst the schools will work openly with parents as far as possible, the schools, reserve the right to contact the Children's Resource Service in Southampton (formerly Southampton MASH) (in line with current safeguarding procedures) without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests. In all cases, consent must be sought unless it is not in the child's best interests to do so. These decisions will be clearly recorded with their reason and will be held with the child's record of concerns or child protection file with a level of protection determined by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our schools. The policy will inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.
- protect children and young people who attend our schools.
- ensure consistent good practice across the federation.
- demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.

Definitions used within this policy

Safeguarding, as defined in KCSIE 2025, is "providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online, preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes." (Part One paragraph 3).

Child protection is an aspect of safeguarding but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or at risk of significant harm.

The term **staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full-time or part-time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and governors.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our schools; however, the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, stepparents, guardians and foster carers.

The terms victim, alleged perpetrator and perpetrator are used within this policy.

Victim – refers to the person who is adversely affected by a stressful or distressing situation or harmful or humiliating act

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It is important that we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way, for the purposes of this policy we will use the terminology victim where relevant.

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.

DSL refers to Designated Safeguarding Lead.

DDSL refers to Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

HET - Hamwic Education Trust (HET) is the Multi-Academy Trust.

School, refers to one of our school sites

Federation – Weston Park Primary School and Weston Shore Infant School are federated. This term refers to these 2 federated schools collectively.

Perpetrator –refers to someone who cause harm, humiliation, distress or alarm to another

We acknowledge that it is important to consider that the perpetrators may have been subject to or witness to abuse themselves.

Legal Context

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education:

- [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121212/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2024.pdf)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2026: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121212/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2026-statutory-guidance.pdf)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(Sept 2021\) Now merged into KCSIE](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121212/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges-sept-2021.pdf)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for Practitioners \(March 2015\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121212/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused-advice-for-practitioners-march-2015.pdf)
- PREVENT Duty guidance Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) updated 31 December 2023
- CP 903 – CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism 2023 – July 2023 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

It is also based on the following child protection legislation:

- [Children Act 1989](#) and [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#) which states that teachers, education professionals, social workers, health professionals, police officers and members of the public have a statutory duty to report any concerns or suspicions that a child has been abused.
- Sections 175 and 157 of the [Education Act 2002](#) which clearly states that the governing body of an academy shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the federation are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.
- 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.

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Where national guidance changes within the approved policy year or learning from practice reviews becomes available addendum to policies and process may be made through the governing body.

Other Guidance used:

- Staffing and Employment advice for schools (February 2017).
Staffing and employment: advice for schools - GOV.UK last updated October 2021.
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills (updated September 2021).
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings - GOV.UK.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges updated July 2021 for September 2021.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (publishing.service.gov.uk).
- PREVENT Duty guidance Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).
- Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk), June 2021.
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools and Colleges in response to Ofsted's recommendations in its Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (June 2021).

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024) is now statutory (2025)

NB: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges is merging into KCSIE.

NB: Schools all have a legal duty in regard to the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Where national guidance changes within the approved policy year or learning from practice reviews becomes available addendum to policies and process may be made through the governing body.

[The Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton \(HIPS\) safeguarding children partnership and the Southampton Safeguarding children partnership \(SSCP\) safeguarding partnerships website – procedures can be found in the link below: Welcome | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton](#)

Providing a Safe and Supportive Environment

Safer Recruitment

We create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt robust recruitment processes and volunteer checking processes that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. This enables the governing body and if applicable HET to act reasonably in making decisions about prospective employees and volunteers using evidence and checks carried out.

The governing body and our senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring we follow recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might harm children.

All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification from childcare guidance and their obligations to disclose to us relevant information that could lead to disqualification.

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The Weston Federation of Schools follows the safer recruitment process outlined in Part Three of KCSIE 2025. On all recruitment panels there is at least one member who has undertaken safer recruitment training which is updated regularly. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history, checking any gaps in employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job, alongside effective induction processes. It also includes undertaking interviews and, in all cases, instigating Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. As part of our due diligence, we will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online. (as outlined in KCSIE 2025) We will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches will be carried out.

Curriculum Vitae will only be accepted alongside a full application form.

We ensure that our volunteers are appropriately checked and supervised when in school. We check the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks where required by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

When using supply staff, we will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that staff they provide have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children. Trainee teachers will be checked either by the federation or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children.

The Single Central Record (SCR) includes a record of all checks undertaken, the date they were completed and who carried out the checks. It also includes the identification of the person's role to ensure regulated or unregulated activity is accurately recorded. Where an individual's details or role has changed the SCR will be updated and files supporting the SCR will include the updated information. For supply staff, information is received from the supply agency, downloaded, stored securely and checked prior to the individual starting regarding checks carried out for the role.

The SCR also holds information about school staff, HET staff, governors, volunteers, supply and contractors. Regular monitoring of the SCR is undertaken by senior leaders or governors and a record is made of this monitoring and any actions required.

KCSIE 2025 introduced the following further specific guidance -

- suggesting schools consider, as part of their due diligence, consider carrying out online searches (including social media) on shortlisted candidates and exploring anything that is publicly available online which may be worth testing at interview.
- Social media checks / online searches for applicants as part of shortlisting.
- only accepting CVs alongside a full application to ensure full information is available to support safer recruitment

KCSIE 2025 emphasises the need for written confirmation that full safer recruitment steps have been taken on all staff and of arrangements "that might put a child at risk" such as new staff joining the alternative provision so that checks can be made there too. Schools need to know where their students are throughout school hours (i.e. the address where they are being educated).

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Staff Training and Staff Induction

All staff in our Federation of Schools should be aware of the signs of abuse and be able to respond appropriately. All staff will receive an induction programme which will include basic information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child and advice on safe working practice. All staff are expected to read at least Part One of KCSIE 2025. Only staff who do not regularly work with children can choose to read Annex A instead.

All Governors are expected to know and understand their safeguarding responsibilities as described in Part Two and Senior Leaders and the federation safeguarding Governor should read the whole of KCSIE 2025. Our governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) training at induction which equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that there is an effective whole trust approach to safeguarding. This training is updated at least annually.

All governors to receive safeguarding training like school-based colleagues - explicitly setting out that all governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, and this should be regularly updated.

In line with KCSIE 2025 safeguarding training for staff is provided to the whole school every year with separate training to all new staff and volunteers as part of their induction (if this falls at a different point in the year). All staff are provided with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and are informed about safeguarding arrangements on induction to ensure they fully understand their role in identifying concerns and their responsibility to report concerns.

New staff and volunteers receive a briefing during their induction which covers this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and our staff behaviour policy, how to report and record concerns and information about our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs.

The DSL attends Level 3 Safeguarding training for their role and then refreshes this specific training for DSLs every two years. It is the responsibility of the DSL to maintain an overview of new developments so, in addition to having an annual update, they will receive regular updates between training through Local Authority Network meetings, safeguarding updates from the HET and reading safeguarding related articles or research. Records of training and updates will be kept which identifies that staff have attended, read and understood the information shared. A full description of the DSL role can be found in Annex C of KCSIE 2025. A detailed description of the role of the DSL is detailed in Annex C of KCSIE 2025, ensuring a clear and focused understanding of the role. At the Weston Federation of schools, we recognise the key role the DSL plays in day-to-day leadership of safeguarding and provide the role with the necessary authority. We uphold the view that the DSL is an important significant role as part of a SLT that enable them to effectively discharge their duties; whilst offering the right time and support for the DSL to do this.

Roles and Responsibilities

We recognise that all staff and Governors have a full and active part to play in ensuring there is a culture of safeguarding that is effective in protecting our pupils from harm. We recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can compromise good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training, advice to support the process and individual staff within that process. Staff understand that they all have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and provide help for children where necessary through referral to Early Help services or Children's Services at the Local Authority.

Leadership and Management

In this school any individual can contact the DSL if they have concerns about a pupil. The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The names and contact details are listed on page

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2 of this policy. These safeguarding roles are explicit in assigned job descriptions. A detailed description of the role of the DSL is found in Annex C of KCSIE 2025.

Alongside our named DSL we also have Deputy DSLs, trained to same level and regularity as the DSL to be able to act in their absence or unavailability. These staff also have responsibility to keep themselves up to date and are appointed to their role with clear responsibilities set out and the circumstances when they may be required to take on additional responsibilities.

Governance

There is a nominated Safeguarding Governor (see page 2 for details) who leads the monitoring of safeguarding and ensures the federation meets its statutory duties effectively. The Safeguarding Governor meets with the DSL to check that procedures are being followed, that staff training is up to date and to keep abreast of the number of children who are open to social care.

Our safeguarding governor receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the DSL and support the delivery of high-quality safeguarding across the trust. When meeting the DSL, the safeguarding governor checks that procedures are being followed, that staff training is up to date and to keep abreast of the number of children who are open to social care.

Governors will refer to the HET Safeguarding Review document as a template to support their own monitoring. The Chair of Governors receives reports of allegations against the Headteacher and act on the behalf of the Governing Body. Governors are aware of the duties set out in KCSIE 2025 for governing body responsibilities for safeguarding. A record of all governors who have read and understood relevant sections of KCSIE 2025 is held with governing body records. The Safeguarding Governor is required to read KCSIE 2025 in full.

Information Sharing

We are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

We ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. Sharing information is done when it is the best interests of the child and consent is only obtained when it isn't detrimental to the child to do so.
- Where the serious harm test under the legislation is met, we will withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Further details on information sharing can be found:

Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children, which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing.

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Confidentiality

Staff understand they can get advice from the DSL regarding concerns and confidentiality. We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and shared as per the GDPR guidance and DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance. There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies who have a statutory duty for child protection. Decisions to share/not share information will be recorded together with the reasons for this within a child protection or welfare concern recorded. The best interests of the child will be placed at the heart of the decision making to share information, especially where contextual information is included. All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential. Disciplinary action/re-training will be considered for any breach of confidentiality.

Staff should speak to their school Data Compliance Officer or HET Data Protection Officer if they need any advice around sharing safeguarding information; if in doubt, please seek advice before sharing.

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff (paid and voluntary) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families. This can be found in the Staff Code of Conduct Policy and forms part of induction process for all staff, including expectations for volunteers.

Staff/pupil relationships

Staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that it is a criminal offence for them to engage in any sexual activity with a pupil under the age of eighteen.

We provide our staff with advice regarding their personal online activity, and we have clear rules regarding electronic communications and online contact with pupils. It is considered a serious disciplinary issue if staff breach these rules.

Our Staff Code of Conduct, within our Employee Handbook, sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

Related school policies

Safeguarding encompasses issues such as health and safety, attendance, bullying and a range of other issues, for example arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, school securing and positive behaviour. For this reason, other related policies within the federation of school reflect our safeguarding procedures and ethos and are updated regularly.

Safeguarding information for pupils

We are committed to creating an ethos in school where children feel safe and are able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued. All pupils in our schools are aware of a number of staff they can talk to if they are worried about any problems. The federation is committed to ensuring that pupils are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All pupils know that we have a senior member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding and know who this is. We inform pupils of whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm.

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Weston Schools Federation have a child friendly Safeguarding information policy displayed in each classroom and on relevant safeguarding boards across school.

Health and Safety

The site, the equipment and the activities carried out as part of the curriculum are all required to comply with the Health and Safety at Work act 1974 and regulations made under the act.

All risks are required to be assessed and recorded plans of how to manage the risk are in place. The federation has a Health and Safety Policy (2025 – 2027) which details the actions that we take in more detail. We also fully uphold the Health and Safety Policy from Hamwic Education Trust (2025-2027).

Some areas, such as Health and Safety, are a specialist area of safeguarding and a separate lead for this area is in place in the school. There is a named governor with responsibility for health and safety. This is John Martin.

COVID-19 has meant that procedures for the following health and safety processes have changed. Staff should all be aware of the most up to date COVID-19 risk assessment.

Site Security

We aim to provide a secure site but recognise that the site is only as secure as the people who use it. Therefore, all people on the site have to adhere to the rules which govern it. These are:

- All gates are locked except at the start and end of the school day.
- Doors are kept closed to prevent intrusion.
- Visitors and volunteers enter at the reception and must sign in.
- Visitors and volunteers are identified by a visitor's sticker.
- Children are only allowed home during the school day with adults / carers with parental responsibility or permission being given.
- All children leaving or returning during the school day have to sign out and in.
- Emergency procedures are practiced and known by all staff, including those temporarily in positions of responsibility.
- Staff know the expectations for challenging unrecognised adults or young people on site.

Safety in an emergency situation – planned drill or unforeseen occurrence

- We monitor visitors and volunteers; details can be found in our school visitor procedures / policy document.
- Fire drills/ emergency procedures practices will be held regularly throughout the school year (termly as a minimum), at different times of the day, most of which will be unannounced so as to develop the effectiveness of the processes. These will be monitored by the governing body.
- Any contextual information regarding our site or emergency procedures will be prepared so it can be swiftly provided to Hampshire Constabulary and emergency services or response teams to ensure an efficient emergency response should one be required.

First Aid

There is a separate First Aid policy, which can be found via the federation school offices. This is completed in line with other key policies and statutory guidance such as Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions 2014.

Storage and Uses of Medicine

School will administer medicine to children during the school day only when it would be detrimental to their wellbeing not to. This includes medication for long term conditions and for shorter term conditions

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such as antibiotics for an infection. We will NOT administer any medication, prescribed or not prescribed without consent from a parent / carer. We will only accept medication that is in the full correct packaging (such as the box and the bottle / tablet sheet) and labelled accurately (with prescribed medicines).

Medicines will be stored securely, where possible in the school office / designated first aid area (in each school). Where the medication is a controlled medicant (such as medication for ADHD) this will be secured with an additional lock and will require 2 adults present to administer. Where appropriate to need medicines can be secured in the classroom environment (such as an asthma inhaler)/

This guidance is completed in consultation with Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions 2014.

Pupils with medical conditions (in school)

There is a separate policy outlining the school' position on this, which is available from the school offices, at each school site. As a federation, we will make sure that sufficient staff are trained to support any pupil with a medical condition. All relevant staff will be made aware of the condition to support the child and be aware of medical needs and risks to the child. An individual healthcare plan may be put in place to support the child and their medical needs.

Pupils with medical conditions (out of school)

There will be occasions when children are temporarily unable to attend school on a full time basis because of their medical needs. These children and young people are likely to be:

- children and young people suffering from long-term illnesses.
- children and young people with long-term post-operative or post-injury recovery periods
- children and young people with long-term mental health problems (emotionally vulnerable)

Where it is clear that an absence will be for more than 15 continuous school days the Education and Inclusion branch of Children's Services will be contacted to support with the pupil's education. At this point a referral to Southampton Children's Hospital School might also be made.

Taking and the use and storage of images

As a School we will seek consent from the parent / carer of a pupil and from teachers and other adults before taking and publishing photographs or videos that contain images that are sufficiently detailed to identify the individual in school publications, printed media or on electronic publications. We will not seek consent for photos where you would not be able to identify the individual. We will seek consent for the period the pupil remains registered with us and, unless we have specific written permission, we will remove photographs after a child (or teacher) appearing in them leaves the federation or if consent is withdrawn. Photographs will only be taken on school owned equipment and stored on the federation or HET network. No images of pupils will be taken or stored on privately owned equipment by staff members. Staff will not share or forward any images of children; staff will not view any material that may contain images of children (typically online material or that stored on a personal device of a third party).

Staff will not take photos of marks or bruising seen or reported. This should be managed sensitively and only in agreement with the DSL and the appropriate safeguarding partner referral or report processes and / or at the direction of a safeguarding partner (police / social care).

Where remote learning is a feature the game guidance applies and uploaded material and communication with children can only be conducted on school devices – NEVER on a home device and screen shots should not be captured containing images of a child.

Off site visits

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We will always consider and assess the risks when undertaking off site visits. Some activities, especially those happening away from the schools and residential visits, can involve higher levels of risk. If these are annual or infrequent activities, a review of an existing assessment may be all that is needed. If it is a new activity, a visit involving adventure activities, residential, overseas or an 'Open Country' visit, a specific assessment of significant risks must be carried out. The federation has an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who liaises with the Local Authority's outdoor education adviser and helps colleagues in School to manage risks and support with off site visits and provides training in the management of groups during off site visits, as well as First Aid in an outdoor context.

Use of Taxis

As a school there are times, we may need to use taxis to support children and families, such as for the transportation of pupils to and from school, to support families accessing support such as health appointments. In managing these arrangements, the federation will put in place measures to help ensure the safety and welfare of young people carried in taxis. This includes the use of a recommended reputable firm with correct licences, insurance, and DBS checks. It is a non-negotiable expectation that photographic identification is shared by the driver upon arrival at school.

Where a child is transported to and from school in a taxi, staff will be available to support this. Where a child is arriving at school by taxi, staff will be there to ensure the child safely exits the taxi and arrives in school safely. Where a child is leaving school by taxi staff will ensure photographic identification is seen for the driver and the child is supported to get into the taxi safely, with seatbelt on ready to leave.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Whilst all children are to be protected, we recognise that there are some groups of children who may potentially be at a greater risk of harm some of these groups are addressed directly within this policy – but this is not an exhaustive list.

Research identifies that some children, those with SEND or are looked after are more vulnerable to exploitation for example, in our schools we recognise this issue and staff are trained to be aware of such signs and patterns that may indicate a child is being exploited for CSE or CCE.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. When supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child).

Last year, the Government's guidance on gender questioning children is expected to be published before the final version of Keeping Children Safe in Education on 1st September 2025 (para 204), taking into account the Supreme Court judgement that 'sex' means biological sex. The Equality and Human Rights Commission published an interim update in April 2024 with some of the considerations this will have for schools – we work with this interim guidance until the full statutory document and guidance becomes 'live'.

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The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBTQ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

School staff and Governors recognise that children with special educational needs or disabilities may be especially vulnerable to abuse and expect staff to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Indications of abuse will be reported as for other pupils. We are committed to providing a school environment in which pupils with SEND feel confident and able to discuss their concerns. Whenever possible, pupils will be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills. The DSL (or Deputy) will work with the school's Special Educational Needs Team (including the SENCO) to identify pupils with particular communication needs. Whenever possible, pupils will be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills. Across the Weston Federation of Schools Nicki Windle is both the SENCO and the DSL. Parents can seek information, advice and support from The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS).

Children with Mental Health needs

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

School staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO's) liaise with the DSL on matters of mental health when it involves safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) so children's needs are considered holistically. Our staff may liaise with the mental health support team and CAMHS where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

We understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health, and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

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We understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

Weston Federation Schools are both trauma informed schools.

Intimate and personal care

'Intimate Care' can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the sexual parts of the body.

Personal Care' involves touching another person, although the nature of this touching is more socially acceptable. These tasks do not invade conventional personal, private, or social space to the same extent as Intimate Care.

Personal Care encompasses those areas of physical and medical care that most people carry out for themselves but which some are unable to do because of disability or medical need. Children and young people may require help with eating, drinking, washing, dressing and toileting.

Where Intimate Care is required, we will follow the following principles:

- Risk assess the care needed.
- Involve the child in the intimate care.
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.
- Be aware of your own limitations
- Promote positive self-esteem and body image
- If you have any concerns, you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the DSL.
- Helping through communication
- Support to achieve the highest level of autonomy

As a basic principle children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, e.g., giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate / personal care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer and health.

Fabricated or induced illnesses (complex presentation)

There are three main ways that a parent / carer could fabricate or induce illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents;
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

Additionally, we are aware anxiety and mental health reasons could be provided as a reason to not attend school.

Our Weston Federation of School Attendance Champion (Nicki Windle) will liaise with SASS, formally known as EWO and health partners where parents are not able to ensure regular attendance. We will consider and develop an individual health care plan and/or an Early Help Assessment with parents to support

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reducing barriers to attendance, working with partners below statutory service levels first, and if needed, make a referral to CRS if the context of the case indicates the safety of a child is of concern.

If we are concerned that a child may be suffering from fabricated or induced illness we will inform Children's Social Care.

Working Together to improve school attendance 2025 is statutory guidance, so "schools, trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities must have regard to it as part of their efforts to maintain <https://safeguarding.network/> confidence in safeguarding high levels of school attendance" (WT to improve school attendance, para 1). When children are absent from education our policy is that we schools "must work with... children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns" (para 177) as opposed to previous guidance where it was recommended to be "we should work with".

Children who need a social worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. This will be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or to a child missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Where there are concerns that are below the threshold for statutory intervention these should not be ignored, we acknowledge these children are also potentially at increased vulnerability to abuse, neglect or exploitation. In this instance we remain proactive to intervene early to find and refer for early support for an individual or family. This may be by using an Early Help Assessment, Voluntary or charity sector, Family hubs or other support providers relevant to need, some may not need referral to those services, or they could be signposted. This initial support may lead to consultation for advice or referral to CRS and it is recommended this indicates the level from the threshold document the support is requested for, as well as detail around support provided/ offered and any impact or barriers known.

Children Looked After (CLA)

We value that every child who has been taken into care, even if they are now out of care and adopted remain vulnerable. They will have experienced levels of abuse, neglect or exploitation that were eventually deemed unacceptable in order for them to have been removed. These experiences are often likely to have a long-term impact on a child's relationships, emotional wellbeing, and development. We ensure that these children are closely monitored to minimise any gaps in attainment and that emotional development and wellbeing is supported.

The Designated Teacher for CLA will have all details of the child's social worker, the name of the LA Virtual School Headteacher. The Designated Teacher in federation of schools is a qualified teacher, who has received training to undertake their role with regards looked after and previously looked after children. The role

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is clearly set out in their job description and includes the need to promote the educational achievement of these children. The Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure PEP meetings take place regularly and ePEPs are kept up to date;
- Ensure devolved funding is allocated to named children;
- Ensure they work effectively (or in partnership) with the Virtual School Headteacher.

Governors in our federation of schools ensure that the Designated Teacher has the necessary training, skills, and time to carry out this role on at least an annual basis. The Designated Teacher will ensure that they liaise with the Virtual School and ensure that a personal education plan (PEP) is in place and regularly reviewed. Appropriate staff will have information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status and contact arrangements in place for the child.

The Designated Teacher for the Weston Federation of Schools is: Nicki Windle

The name of the Virtual School Head Teacher is: Maria Anderson

Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of sixteen or aged under eighteen if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will tell the DSL and they will notify the local authority of the circumstances.

It is not private fostering if the carer is a close relative to the child such as grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt.

The Law requires that the carers and parents must notify the Children's Services Department of any private fostering arrangement.

If the Schools become aware that a pupil is being privately fostered we will inform the Children's Services Department and inform both the parents and carers that we have done so.

Multi-agency working

Schools do not operate in isolation but are part of a wider safeguarding system for children. KCSIE 2025 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 sets out the pivotal role schools have in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Weston Federation of Schools aims to help protect the children in its care by working consistently and appropriately with a range of agencies.

Our schools work as a named agency with the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Schools and colleges have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies shall ensure that the federation contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Our safeguarding children partnership has three safeguarding partners - the local authority, an Integrated Care System (ICS) – formerly a clinical commissioning group, for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area within the local authority). The partners have a shared and equal duty to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local

children including identifying and responding to their needs. When named as a relevant agency, schools, in the same way as other relevant agencies, are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements. Our schools will adhere to local published threshold guidance and procedures.

We understand our role in the three safeguarding partner arrangements. Governing bodies, proprietors, and their senior leadership teams, especially their designated safeguarding leads, are aware of and follow their local arrangements.

Set out in KCSIE 2025 is the following information that all staff in education settings should adhere to:

<https://southamptonscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Safeguarding-Partnership-Arrangements.pdf> .

We will work with social care, the police, health services and other services, including other schools to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. We will allow access for children's social care from Southampton City Council and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

Safeguarding Issues and Procedures

The voice of the child is central to the ethos of our federation and is also central within incident responses, investigation, and outcomes. Across our federation of schools we have processes that enable all pupils to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, any prejudicial behaviours knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

All staff are aware of the need to respond equally to allegations that are between children that are of the same sex, to those that are made between different sexes. Additionally, it is recognised that incidents can overlap with other characteristics such as homophobic, racial, disability or faith prejudices. It is recognised that pupils will need guidance to support and challenge this themselves life outside of school also and our federation teaches pupils how to respond, act, resolve issues as well as how to report them and where to seek support.

All adults are aware that it is rare for incidents to be standalone events and they often overlap across "labels". Where exploitation or neglect are evident or extra-familial harms there will be multiple harms to which children and young people are vulnerable, often including on-line issues.

Contextual Safeguarding

In KCSIE 2025 the DfE refer to contextual safeguarding as a specific term that has come out of research from the University of Bedfordshire, as detailed below.

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Therefore, Children's Social Care practitioners need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over / within extrafamilial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

For us as a federation, we will consider the various factors that have an interplay with the life of any child about whom we have concerns within the schools and the level of influence that these factors have on

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their ability to be protected and remain free from harm particularly when it comes to child exploitation or criminal activity.

At the Weston Schools Federation, we recognise that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the school environment and/or can occur between children outside of the school. This is contextual safeguarding.

While this term applies to this specific definition, the notion of considering a child within a specific context is also important. What life is like for a child outside the school gates, within the home, within the family and within the community are key considerations when the DSL is looking at any concerns.

Children who have had trauma previously, or who may have concerns raised linked to a **risk from outside the home (ROTH)** rather than a person should also be considered as additionally vulnerable and may need any concerns raised considered in their own individual context, this may require discussion between DSLs from different schools, advice sought from CRS/ other professionals depending on context. Decision making as to the need to consult should be recorded in addition to any outcomes.

Radicalisation, Extremism, and the Prevent Agenda

Prevent duty guidance April 2021 Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Prevent (southampton.gov.uk)

<https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/prevent-radicalisation-and-extremism/>

Extremism- is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

The Weston Federation of Schools is aware of its statutory duty to prevent radicalisation and extremism under the Prevent Duty which became law in 2015. The Prevent Duty requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child may be susceptible to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for any kinds of extremism. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British Values of liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, rule of law and democracy. Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to: negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in the above.

Extremism can include political; environmental; extremist animal rights; or faith-based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised. This list is not exhaustive, and all staff are updated when new ideologies come to light through safeguarding updates.

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All staff must undertake annual Home Office Prevent awareness training and will be alert to signs of radicalisation. The federation will discuss any concerns with the family unless this is likely to put the child at risk. Prevent duty is part of the schools' wider safeguarding procedures and training and we uphold our obligation in this regard.

As part of the preventative process, resilience to radicalisation will be built through the regular promotion of fundamental British values through the PSHE and wider curriculum available at our schools.

Any child who is considered susceptible to radicalisation (and where there are evidence-based concerns which indicate they may be being groomed or radicalised), will be referred by the DSL, who will follow the agreed referral to local safeguarding partnerships, liaising and sharing information with the police and Channel, as required. If the police and colleagues consider the information to be indicating a level of risk, the Channel Panel will be convened, and the federation will be invited to attend and support this process. Consent will be sought.

All staff will complete annual Prevent training and we retain a record of this having been completed and kept alongside other training records.

Staff who make referrals will have undertaken the Home Officer Referrals training annually and additionally those who would attend a Chanel Panel (DSL) if requested will have undertaken the Home Office training or as a minimum a discussion with the LA regarding this responsibility prior to attending panel.

Our setting has undertaken the Prevent audit tool issued in May 2021 with the safeguarding update number 10, May 2021 as a priority for the coming year (24/25) it is expected that all settings will review their audit and update the information, reviewing systems, policies and processes with regards to the Prevent duty in all settings. The governing body have also been included in this audit and the outcomes.

Exploitation

Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive any child or young person under the age of eighteen. At our federation of schools we recognise that any child or young person is vulnerable to this activity and ensure through our annual safeguarding training for all staff that awareness of raising concerns is vital. This includes the use by staff of the Hampshire Constabulary Community Partnership Information (CPI) form for information that could be used to share relevant intelligence information with police that will assist in building a bigger picture of potential exploitation issues in the community. Once a CPI form is submitted it can be destroyed. Information may be relevant to record in a child's record of concern in school as per other concerns or additionally make a separate referral to Children's Resource Service (formerly MASH). Our curriculum includes how children can keep themselves safe and CSE at an age-appropriate level through PSHE.

Exploitation can be sexual, emotional or criminal, or a combination of these and can lead to increased vulnerability, for example, through grooming or radicalisation, modern slavery, or through other aspects of safeguarding.

Online grooming is the process by which one person with an inappropriate sexual interest in children/ or will to exploit children criminally through for example, illegal employment or running errands that are exploitative and criminal in nature will approach a child online, with the intention of developing a relationship with that child, it may be so as to be able to meet them in person and is likely to be planned to intentionally cause harm. It is linked to exploitation of young people that can be for example, sexual or criminal. It can start with very low-level information and with inappropriate communication between any adult or professional and a pupil. It may also be child-on-child which must be managed with both peers as children, our staff will be aware to avoid Adultification, and not balancing decisions and consequences for both parties when working through a child-on-child issue.

The schools will build awareness amongst children and parents about ensuring that the child:

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- only has friends online that they know in real life, and do not overstep professional boundaries inappropriately
- is aware that if they communicate with somebody that they have met online, that relationship should stay online, and may not be appropriate or real
- to never give personal information or share pictures to anyone they do not know in person, and even limit information they share with friends.
- Understanding digital footprint age and stage appropriately

That parents should:

- recognise the signs of grooming, and inappropriate contacts
- recognise it is a form of exploitation
- have regular conversations with their children about online activity and how to stay safe online, including about unsafe online challenges and hoaxes
- try to attend any workshops for parents regarding online safety and educate themselves of the most current issues, ways to restrict and block harmful content at home.

The schools will raise awareness by:

- Running sessions for parents and signposting helpful information – e.g. safe4me website
- Include awareness around grooming as part of their curriculum
- Identifying with both parents and children how they can be safeguarded against grooming
- Establish this learning as a part of the planned relationships education content.
- Consider how to best raise awareness with parents and pupils of harmful online challenges, hoaxes and where to get help

We recognise that any child or young person is vulnerable to exploitation and ensure through our annual safeguarding training for all staff that they are aware of the importance of identifying risks, raising safeguarding concerns- however small they may seem, and sharing intelligence with Police using the CPI form (safe4me website <https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/>) and also using the schools reporting and recording systems.

Our curriculum includes how children can keep themselves safe and CSE at an age appropriate level through PSHE.

Trafficked Children and Modern Slavery

MET HIPS procedures and guidance can be found at and should be followed where concerns are held or reported to the DSL:

Children who are Exploited | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (hipsprocedures.org.uk)

Missing exploited or trafficked children are support by the MET team.

- Within the local area, the acronym MET is used to identify all children who are missing; believed to be at risk of or being sexually or criminally exploited; or who are at risk of or are being trafficked. Given the close links between all of these issues, there has been a considered response to join all three issues so that cross over of risk is not missed.

Human trafficking is defined by the UNHCR in respect of children as a process that is a combination of:

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- Movement (including within the UK).
- Control, through harm / threat of harm or fraud.
- For the purpose of exploitation.

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim. There is significant evidence that children (both of UK and other citizenship) are being trafficked internally within the UK and this is regarded as a more common form of trafficking in the UK.

Young people being forced to work in restaurants, nail bars, car washes and harvesting fruit, vegetables or other foods have all been slaves ‘hiding in plain sight’ within the U.K and rescued from slavery. Other forms of slavery such as sex slaves or household slaves are more hidden but have also been rescued within the UK.

If staff have any concerns relating to this and a child in school, this will be reported to the DSL for referral to be considered to Southampton Children’s Resource Service / Children’s Services. We will also liaise with and work with the MET (Missing Exploited or Trafficked) team.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) (including County Lines)

Children who are Exploited | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (hipsprocedures.org.uk)

County Lines Toolkit for Professionals | The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)

CCE “is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or the threat of violence. (KCSIE 2025)

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Any person in our federation who has concerns that a child is being criminally exploited should report their concerns to the DSL without delay. The DSL will refer immediately to the Children’s Resource Service (CRS, formally MASH) for advice / to make a referral. It may be that the DSL decides to refer to the police. The Local Authority Children’s Services and the police will consider if a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) needs completing alongside child protection procedures.

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As schools we educate all staff in the signs and symptoms of all forms of exploitation, including criminal exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. (KCSIE 2025)

The federation recognises that this may even appear to be consensual, but still constitutes abuse. Indicators a child may be at risk of CSE include:

- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school;
- Associating with other young people being sexually exploited;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc., without plausible explanation;
- Drug and/or alcohol use – may return home or present at school under influence
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours;
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault;
- Frequenting areas known for sexual exploitation or adult sex work.

As a school we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. Staff will also remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of the above risk indicators being present. Our federation will follow safeguarding procedures where there is a concern about a child being at risk of or experiencing CSE/CCE.

We will use the Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (CERAF) available [here](#) and associated guidance to identify pupils who are at risk.

County Lines

County Lines is a form of CCE.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store, and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of school (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Children may miss education or appear to have more material belongings or confidence than previously. They may have keys to places that raise a concern, display increasing disruptive behaviour and come home with injuries or looking dishevelled.

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A number of the indicators for CCE / CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who go missing and subsequently found in areas away from their home, have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handling drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs, are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging' (where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection, are found in accommodation they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house' or 'cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity, owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters and may have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

As a school we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of all forms of exploitation, including county lines.

Serious violence

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individual or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of mental health difficulties, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gang.

All staff are made be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Gangs and Youth Violence

The vast majority of young people will not be affected by serious violence or gangs. However, where these problems do occur, even at low levels there will almost certainly be a significant impact.

As a School we have a duty and a responsibility to protect our pupils. It is also well established that success in learning is one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime. Dealing with violence also helps attainment. While pupils generally see educational establishments as safe places, even low levels of youth violence can have a disproportionate impact on any education.

Primary schools are also increasingly recognised as places where early warning signs that younger children may be at risk of getting involved in gangs can be spotted. Crucial preventive work can be done within school to prevent negative behaviour from escalating and becoming entrenched.

Factors that may indicate a young person is at risk from or involved in serious violence include:

- being male,
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school,
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- Factors that may indicate a young person is a risk or involved in serious violent crime include:
 - Increased absence from school,
 - A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups,
 - A significant decline in performance,
 - Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing,
 - Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

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- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

As a federation of schools we will:

- develop skills and knowledge to resolve conflict as part of the curriculum;
- challenge aggressive behaviour in ways that prevent the recurrence of such behaviour;
- understand risks for specific groups, including those that are gender-based, and target interventions;
- safeguard, and specifically organise child protection, when needed;
- make referrals to appropriate external agencies;
- carefully manage individual transitions between educational establishments, especially into Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or alternative provision;
- work with local partners to prevent anti-social behaviour or crime.

Child employment or performance

The Local Authority will be alerted to any child who is known to be working in paid or unpaid employment. Any queries around child employment should be directed to the Child Employment/Performance /Designated Safeguarding Lead Trainer - Danielle Rutherford.

The same officer (Danielle Rutherford child.employment@southampton.gov.uk) will also ensure the correct performance licencing is in place for children who perform, act, model or take part in paid sporting activities.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

Weston Schools Federation our policy is informed by the Southampton City Council Policy for Children Missing Education (CME) (August 2020).

Absence from school is a safeguarding issue. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect including sexual exploitation, FGM, child exploitation, child criminal exploitation or risk of radicalisation. We recognise our statutory duty to follow the guidance relating to any child we are aware of who for example does not begin school as expected or moves with no forwarding school known. There are various reasons a child may be deemed as CME which include, but are not limited to:

- Child not starting school when they reach compulsory school age and therefore never entering the system
- Failing to transition between schools, at phase transfer or if a family moves from one LA to another
- A delay in applying for a new school place
- Refusing an alternative offer of a school place, when the preferred school is full
- Leaving school, with no forwarding education provision or destination

We recognise that it is important that agencies work cooperatively and information is shared in a timely manner. If anyone at our federation schools becomes aware of a child missing education, a referral is made to the LA CME Officer as soon as possible.

Whilst considering the situation of a child who has gone missing from home or care, we will also consider if any Risks Outside the Home information is known, however small this may be such as a new person/friend in discussions or a location discussed. This information will be recorded, there may be a CPI form and a CRD advice discussion in relation to ROTH processes in Southampton.

If we are aware of a child who is moving and parents/carers have not provided any forwarding address or school, we will contact the CME Officer for advice at the earliest opportunity having attempted to find out the information.

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The LA CME Officer for our federation of schools is: Tina Selby / Eliza Theobald – Morgan.

Absence from school

In addition to statutory CME duties, absence from school at any point may be considered, in individual contexts, as both a potential safeguarding issue as well as an educational outcomes issue. We recognise that educational neglect is a factor that adversely affects a child into adulthood. The federation has clear procedures to monitor, support and challenge attendance of all pupils. Staff are aware of these procedures and that attendance is an aspect of safeguarding. All absence or non-attendance will be considered in context with other known factors or concerns and relevant partners or agencies contacted as per safeguarding duties. Staff in our federation will aim to work with parents/carers to establish regular attendance for all children and young people through an approach including support and guidance, external agency support, including health colleagues where required. Where these are refused or are not effective given time, we will review each on a case-by-case basis, to consider any additional actions. We may also take steps that could result in legal action for attendance, or a referral to children's social care, or both but will do so on a case-by-case basis.

Working Together to Improve Attendance guidance is now statutory (2025), as a federation of schools we adhere to this guidance in order to ensure all our pupils are appropriately safeguarded even when not attending school.

The Weston Schools Federation will inform the LA if a parent/carer has notified the schools in writing of their decision to electively home educate their child and will co-ordinate a meeting with the parent/carers where possible; if the child is unfit to attend on health grounds; is in custody for four months and when a child is issued a suspension or permanent exclusion. Required LA documentation will be completed and submitted to the relevant LA colleague/team.

At the Weston Schools Federation, we will always aim to work with families to support them in securing positive school attendance, as detailed in our Attendance policy (2025-2026). We may also take steps that could result in legal action for attendance, such as working with Education Welfare Officers, or a referral to children's social care, or both but will do so on a case-by-case basis. We may also take steps that could result in legal action for attendance, or a referral to children's social care, or both but will do so on a case-by-case basis.

We work proactively with others where absence from school or challenges in engagement may mean that specific work can be undertaken with the child or parents to ensure education provision is in place and can be accessed to support the child developmentally and effectively prepare them for their next phase of education.

Removing a pupil from roll

Decisions about when to remove a child from roll is always made in accordance with Southampton City Council's Children Missing Education Policy (CME) (August 2020) and all steps in the operational guidance for CME have been followed, as appropriate.

Where a pupil has been 'located' because steps in the operational CME guidance document were followed.

- The child has been confirmed as having moved overseas.
- The new school have confirmed enrolment.
- The new LA has confirmed their awareness of the child.
- School have received a parental deregistration letter for EHE.
- Conditions listed in the removal from roll checklist (contained in the CME Guidance for Schools) have been met.

In this instance the pupil maybe removed from roll and forwarding details recorded on the federation of schools information management system.

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Where a pupil cannot be 'located' (Pupil is still on roll) - As long as a home visit has been carried out and our CME Guidance for Schools followed, then school will consult with the CME Officer who will follow the appropriate actions and at this point the CME officer can agree to remove from roll and take on management of the case. If removal from roll is not agreed, then the pupil must remain on roll.

Children Missing from Home or Care

If a child is missing or absent from where they are expected to be without reasonable explanation, we would consider this a potential safeguarding risk and would follow our Weston Schools Federation procedures and wider policies to try to locate them – we will work with wider agencies such as the police and social care as appropriate to ensure the safety of the child.

“Missing person” is: ‘anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.’

An absent person is: ‘A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be.’

All cases classified as ‘missing’ by the police will receive an active police response – such as deployment of police officers to locate a child. Cases where the child was classified as ‘absent’ will be recorded by the police and risk assessed regularly but no active response will be deployed. The absent case will be resolved when a young person returns, or new information comes to light suggesting that he/she is at risk. In the latter instance, the case is upgraded to ‘missing’.

E-Safety / online safety / e-safety risks

Children may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the Internet and other technologies. Additionally, some children and young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate, or possibly illegal, through social networking sites etc., including cyber-bullying. Some of the risks presented with online activity include:

- Unwanted contact
- Grooming
- Online bullying
- Sexting
- Leaving digital footprint
- Accessing inappropriate material deliberately or by accident
- Accessing inappropriate material beyond a child’s capacity to comprehend

In order to safeguard all our children, the federation will therefore seek to provide information and resources to both pupils and parents through Wake Up Weds initiative, parent sessions and curriculum support, including the following –

- Acceptable use agreements for children, parents / carers, governors as applicable
- Curriculum activities including raising awareness around online dangers and strategies to keeping themselves safe online. Children are taught, across the curriculum, that if they do something wrong, it is better to tell someone before it gets any worse
- Parent sessions – parents are included as much as possible as children often have access to a wider range of technologies at home.
- High profile events and campaigns – e.g., Safer Internet Day, Wake Up Weds

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- Building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites, apps or publications.
- Ensuring the safeguards in place for the federation electronic systems are effective and monitored for any threats to safety. The federation have appropriate virus software and filters on all computers.
- Careful management and handling of reports that include an online element. Including being aware of searching screening and confiscating advice (for schools) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: Advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

Where someone reports a concern linked to online bullying or inappropriate material staff will record the disclosure but not view or capture any of the online material.

These on-line risks can be broadly categorised into four areas (the 4 C's) as set out in KCSIE 2025

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying)
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

Online harms are considered to include misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories, reflecting growing risks in the digital space. As a federation we are committed to supporting our children and community to understand the challenges posed by online harms and how to keep safe.

Educate Against Hate highlighted approaches to take within schools in this important area, and the Pears Foundation reported earlier this year that the best way to tackle misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy amongst young people is through schools, but that they'll need much support to do so. We'll draw some of the key issues out in our members' implementation tool. As a school we follow this approach and guidance to support our children in staying safe.

Governors and the Trust will refer to additional guidance for keeping children safe online (including when they are online at home) in KCSIE 2025. The federation will follow the most up to date DfE guidance regarding remote learning as signposted in KCSIE 2025.

Remote Learning

Schools will be in regular contact with parents during any period of remote learning. The federation will inform parents of their filtering and monitoring systems and why these are in place. Parents will be made aware of what the children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the schools (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Governors and the HET will refer to additional guidance for keeping children safe online including when they are online at home. The federation will follow the most up to date DfE guidance regarding remote learning as signposted in KCSIE 2023 2024 and 2025.

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In developing any future home learning policy, we will follow the most recent DfE guidance regarding remote learning. We will also ensure that appropriate process is set out to protect pupils whilst on-line and provide clear protocols for staff to follow that also protect teachers from allegations.

Home learning will not be used unless it is in line with government guidance, or by any professionals involved with a family. It should not be used in lieu of a child coming into school unless there is a reason supported in national guidance to do so. This is because it reduces the ability of professionals to safeguard, may increase risks to a child and is not in line with Working Together to Improve Attendance and may make it more difficult for a child/ young person to engage with others in education, work or social settings longer term.

Social Media

In addition to the above online safety guidance above, we recognise there are some specific risks with the use of social media platforms increasingly by younger children. Pupils of a young age are now aware of a wide range of social media platforms. They may access them via friends or family member's phones. Many have an age restriction, mainly due to how the platform can be used. Trends may be seen with platforms, especially those aimed at young people where they think their message or photo disappears once read, or children don't understand privacy settings. Whilst they can seem harmless, we will ensure that our educational provision sets out the responsibilities and legalities of usage as well as the dangers and risks that usage can bring.

Filtering and Monitoring

The federation has robust filtering and monitoring systems allowing excellent filtering capabilities. Appropriate staff keep abreast of any issues worldwide and update school systems regularly, and as necessary.

It is the responsibility of all staff to monitor online safety. The designated safeguarding lead will take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. The filtering and monitoring in this school is <insert filtering and monitoring system here> and is in place to prevent against unwanted contact, grooming, online bullying, sexting, leaving a digital footprint, accessing inappropriate material deliberately or by accident, accessing inappropriate material beyond a child's capacity to comprehend.

All staff at the Weston Federation schools are made aware of their own responsibilities linked to monitoring and filtering as set out in KCSIE 2025. The DSL has overall responsibility for ensuring that this aspect of safeguarding is compliant and effective in terms of monitoring, filtering and all associated processes, and this is a explicit part of the DSL job description.

Our governing body oversees monitoring and filtering to check that suitable processes are in place – and ensure that “over-blocking” is not restricting what can be taught about online safety. They also check that online safety is considered in our curriculum design, staff CPD and in any parental engagement through visits to check practice, governor questions at meetings and pupil voice activity.

Online Reputation

Online reputation is the opinion others get of a person when they encounter them online. It is formed by posts, photos that have been uploaded, it includes posts, photos and comments made by others on people's profiles. It is important that children and staff are aware that anything that is posted could influence their current or future professional reputation. The majority of organisations and work establishments now check digital footprint before considering applications for positions or places on courses. For an employee it can bring disciplinary action and staff are encouraged to follow any code of conduct their employer or professional body provides regarding professional reputation of the individual or their organisation or profession).

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We will aim to educate our pupils through our career's education provision as well as our PSHE curriculum.

Cyberbullying

Cyber-bullying is defined as "an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself."

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

Sending Nudes / Semi-Nudes (formerly sexting)

The sharing of naked or 'nude/semi-nude' pictures or video through mobile phones and the internet was previously referred to as Sexting. It also includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging. The terminology is more recognised by young people as "Sending nudes" as well as other slang terms.

While this often takes place in a consensual relationship between two young people, the use of images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more commonplace. It can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers. In our schools we will treat any incidents sensitively and may inform parents if it will not raise risks for either child, children's services or the police.

Where someone reports a concern linked to nude or semi-nude image or inappropriate material staff will record the disclosure but not view or capture any of the online material.

We acknowledge that whilst consensual image sharing may not be deemed abusive it is always illegal.

Non-consensual image sharing is illegal and abusive.

The previous document / guidance Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children In Schools is now part of KCSIE 2003 part 1 and as such is part of the statutory guidance for all staff.

Child on child abuse policy including sexual violence and harassment

NB – this was previously termed peer on peer abuse but has been redefined under KCSIE 2022 guidance to avoid any ambiguity with the concept of adult peers. This change remains in place and a key message in KCSIE 2023 also.

Sufficient time is given to this so that all adults can sign to confirm they have read and do understand the contents of KCSIE 2025 together with any local or individual setting processes such as expected responses in the moment and consider use child on child abuse toolkit (December 2022, Child-on-Child (Peer-on-Peer) abuse toolkit (southampton.gov.uk).

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We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and it can take various forms – we robustly hold the view that it could happen here. Children can be victims, and perpetrators, in their own relationships. This will be dealt with in line with the statutory guidance set out in KCSIE 2025 and as outlined in the guidance Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. In KCSIE 2025, the definition of child-on-child abuse includes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Bullying (including cyberbullying) and
- Upskirting
- Abuse within intimate partner relationships

All these behaviours are not acceptable, and it will be taken seriously. There is a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse.

We uphold the importance of making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment that is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated, it should never be passed off as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘a part of growing up’, or ‘boys being boys or “girls being girls”’. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it is normal and not coming forward to report it.

We recognise, acknowledge, and understand the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported.

We will challenge physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

We will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by –

- Taking a whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection
- Providing training to staff
- Making staff aware that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, including direct disclosures of sexual violence and sexual harassment, they must not take the view it is not happening. All staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’.
- Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the school’s behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the curriculum.
- Engaging with specialist support and interventions.

All persons who need to report any unwanted, inappropriate, or hurtful behaviour whether they be online, in text type communication, on social media or in person to any member of staff can be reassured that they will be taken seriously and supported to take any appropriate actions which may be in school or with external agencies as needed.

We are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected - or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful – this should be held in mind and school staff to remain professionally curious.

Mate crime is a rapidly increasing problem across the country and is defined as:

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“the exploitation, abuse or theft from any vulnerable person by those they consider to be their friends. Those that commit such abuse or theft are often referred to as 'fake friends'.” Mate crime is most prevalent when the victim suffers with a disability and is especially common when that disability is Autism or Asperger’s. Please see the links above for some useful guidance on how to spot, and how to deal with “mate” crime.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment – this can be child on child or violence towards women and children.

Ofsted “Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)” June 2021 provided a clear picture of prevalence of often daily experiences that would constitute harassment, but those incidents were not often challenged when observed by adults or peers, they were accepted as normal or unreported due to this or were not fully investigated when reported. This is not our approach at Weston Schools Federation where we respond and address any concerns of this nature.

All staff in our schools are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. The federation recognise that more vulnerable groups are girls, SEND and CLA. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment as well as their emotional wellbeing. It is important that all victims are reassured they are taken seriously, that they should not feel ashamed and offered appropriate support. The child’s wishes and feelings will be taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

Staff recognise that allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are likely to be complex and will require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure (KCSIE 2023). The DSL must be notified without delay and decisions made on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL taking a leading role using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies. As with other disclosures the person disclosing must be able to disclose the information in a supportive environment with a clear record of factual information made as soon after the disclosure as possible.

The DSL will refer to the Brook’s Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Toolkit for guidance. Nicki Windle, our DSL, has completed the Brook’s Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light training (August 2021).

We will follow the LA flowchart for Youth Produced Sexual Imagery and contact the Safe Schools and Communities Team for advice.

The DSL will follow part 5 KCSIE 2025 on how to record and respond to a report and complete an immediate risk and needs assessment on a case-by-case basis. The risk assessment will consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support;
- Whether there may have been other victims;
- The alleged perpetrator, their support needs and any sanctions;
- All other children at the school;
- The victim and the alleged perpetrator sharing classes and space at school.

Where there has been other professional intervention and/or specialist risk assessments, these professional assessments will be used to inform the school’s approach to supporting and protecting pupils.

The DSL will consider:

- The wishes of the victim;
- The nature of the incident including whether a crime has been committed and the harm caused;
- Ages of the children involved;
- Developmental stages of the children;
- Any power imbalance between the children;

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- Any previous incidents;
- Ongoing risks;
- Other related issues or wider context.

The DSL will manage the report with the following options:

- Manage internally
- Refer to the Brief Intervention Team (formerly Early Help) through the Children’s Resource Service
- Refer to the Children’s Resource Service (formerly MASH)
- Report to the police (generally in parallel with a referral to Children’s Resource Service)

If the alleged abuse involves an online element staff including the DSL will be mindful of the [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools DfE guidance \(2018\)](#) and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) [guidance \(2022\) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#). If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, the DSL will report to children’s social care through contact with the Children’s Resource Service (formerly MASH), and this will be in conjunction with having contacted the police first (irrespective of the child’s age). Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to, such as immediate safety or risk to the child be they the victim or alleged perpetrator. The police will advise what information can or should be shared.

Ongoing response:

- The DSL will manage each report on a case-by-case basis, consider the proportionality of the response, and will keep the risk assessment under review.
- Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- The DSL will consider how best to keep the victim and perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises.
- Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the federation will take suitable action. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils).
- The Weston Federation of Schools will take any disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator in line with the federation behaviour policy. Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the federation will, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in the light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of a permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.
- The Weston Federation of Schools recognises that taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions and will occur at the same time if necessary.
- The victim, alleged perpetrator, and other witnesses (pupils and adults) will receive appropriate support and safeguards on a case-by-case basis. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, the schools will ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult to talk about their needs. The choice of any such adult will be the victims and the federation will respect and support this choice.

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Harmful Sexual Behaviour

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

When considering HSB, both the ages and the stages of the development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviours between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than 2 years difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Confidential and specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector and sources are listed in Annex B of KCSIE 2025.

If a situation arises our schools will assess the risk and identify if there may need to be a temporary revision of education arrangements including class moves, arrangements for arriving and leaving school and at break times to ensure that both pupils are supported in continuing their education whilst any investigation is carried out. A single point of contact for each pupil will be set up immediately and actions will be determined on a case-by-case basis. A risk assessment will include travel to and from school and any other relevant contextual information available and will be reviewed regularly by the DSL. The SSCP Child-on-Child toolkit will support this, in particular the need to consider both parties at all decision making points.

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

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

Teenage Relationship Abuse

It is acknowledged that many young people / teenagers do not understand and ‘see’ abuse in young relationships. We are supporting this with a carefully planned curriculum.

Upskirting

At the Weston Schools Federation we recognise that “Upskirting” is a criminal offence and any incidents will be recorded and reported to the DSL and the police, and may be also reported to children’s services.

It is recognised that incidents are likely to be upsetting and support and sensitivity are required when dealing with both victim and perpetrator. The DSL will determine how the schools will approach any incident on a case by case basis ensuring a clear record is made by the person who it was first reported to.

Bullying

All incidents of bullying (including those involving physical abuse), including cyber-bullying, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying, will be dealt with in accordance with our Anti-Bullying policy. This is linked with our Behaviour Policy and our PSHE curriculum which includes the statutory Relationships, Sex and Relationships and Health Education.

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Weston Schools Federation is committed to treating all bullying seriously. Racial and homophobic incidents are recorded separately to general behavioural issues and appropriate consequences, re-education and support is put in place.

Prejudice-based abuse / Hate crime

This is a criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived disability; race; religion; gender identity; sexual orientation; and/or age. Although this sort of crime is collectively known as 'hate crime' the offender doesn't have to go as far as being motivated by 'hate', they only have to exhibit 'hostility'.

As a federation of schools we will train staff to ensure staff recognise what constitutes hate crime, or early indicative behaviour and take action to challenge it effectively. We will support victims of prejudice-based incidents and hate crimes. We recognise that anyone can be a perpetrator, and this can take place within groups who have a protected characteristic as well as those who do not.

Our schools will use the Pan-Hampshire Prejudicial Language and Behaviour Toolkit (documents available from [here](#)).

Harmful Practices

Harmful Practice encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community or an individual, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, abuse linked to faith or cultural practices such as breast flattening (sometimes referred to as breast ironing). It often can include a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

Any concerns held must be reported to the DSL without delay. The DSL will contact the Children's Resource Service (formerly MASH) for advice and follow up with a written referral and may contact the police. If it is clear that a crime has been committed or the pupil is at immediate risk the police will be contacted in the first place, followed by the Children's Resource Service (formerly MASH).

So called honour based abuse includes Harmful Practice or Harmful Cultural Practices including issues such as FGM, forced marriage as set out in KCSIE 2023

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in England and Wales and it is mandatory for teachers and other regulated professionals to report known or disclosed cases of FGM directly to the police. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crimes Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through a disclosure from the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In these situations, the DSL and/or School Leader must be informed that the member of teaching staff has called the police to report information that they believe indicates that FGM has happened. Advice can be sought from the DSL if required. If the information is gained by a non-regulated professional, they must report to the DSL without delay for advice on actions.

At no time will school staff examine pupils to confirm FGM concerns. For cases where it is believed that a girl (under 18) may be vulnerable to FGM or there is a concern that she may be about to be affected by this issue the staff will inform the DSL who will report it in line with other child protection concern.

Through the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum, pupils will be made aware of the rights they have with regard to their body.

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While FGM has a specific definition, there are other abusive cultural practices which can be considered harmful to women and girls. Breast ironing is one of five UN defined ‘forgotten crimes against women’. It is a practice whereby the breasts of girls typically aged 8-16 are pounded using tools such as spatulas, grinding stones, hot stones, and hammers to delay the appearance of puberty. This practice is considered to be abusive and should be referred to Children’s Social Care.

Breast Flattering

Reports of concerns should be made through the usual process in school and the DSL will determine how and when to report to MASH, depending on circumstance and consider contextual factors such as a female relative staying or arriving, possibly from extended family, another area of UK, or from overseas.

As a school we will raise any concerns where we think this action may be taking place.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a child to enter into a marriage without their full and free consent or where it is seen that they cannot consent, is a crime in England and Wales and is a form of abuse. A forced marriage is one in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are physically, psychologically, socially or emotionally coerced into entering into it. Where evidence is found of forced marriage or forced marriage is suspected, the federation will inform and work with the relevant agencies to support the victim.

Policies and practices in our schools reflect the fact that while all members of staff, including teachers, have important responsibilities with regard to pupils who may be at risk of forced marriage, we do not hold key roles in this regard that are most appropriately discharged by other children’s services professionals such as police officers or social workers, but recognises that direct action may need to be taken if to not do so would increase the risk for the young person.

The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 32-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk. In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

Possession or Witchcraft

Sometimes faith/belief issues are believed to be linked to accusations of “possession” or “witchcraft”. Whilst this is not common, children involved can suffer damage to their physical and mental health, their capacity to learn, their ability to form relationships and to their self-esteem. Such abuse generally occurs when an adult/ carer views a child as being “different” for any reason, and this is the reason for bad things happening to them/family or community. The adult attributes this difference to the child being “possessed” by a spirit or involved in “witchcraft” and attempts to exorcise him or her. This is sometimes attributed to faith/belief, or other protected characteristics.

The Trigger Trio

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The term 'Trigger Trio' has replaced the previous phrase 'Toxic Trio' which was used to describe the issues of domestic violence, mental ill-health and substance misuse which have been identified as common features of families where harm to women and children has occurred.

The above are viewed as indicators of increased risk of harm to children and young people. In an analysis of Serious Cases Reviews undertaken by Ofsted in 2011, they found that in nearly 75% of these cases two or more of the issues were present.

These factors will have a contextual impact on the safeguarding of children and young people.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is defined as the behaviour of a person towards another person if they are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following: physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; psychological, emotional or other abuse.

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

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Children often feel blame, live in fear and uncertainty and therefore are prone to longer term emotional and psychological needs. These children may become aggressive; display anti-social behaviours; suffer from depression or anxiety; or fail to reach their educational potential.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the importance of understanding the impact this can have on children (seeing, hearing and experiencing) and this is reflected in KCSIE 2023 and is acknowledged by the Federation.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

We acknowledge that all children who see, hear or experience its effects can be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. We know that experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. We are aware, in some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic

abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). Where there are concerns about safety or welfare, we will follow our child safeguarding procedures and both young victims and young perpetrators will be offered support.

We will ensure that our PSHE curriculum has planned learning for pupils to enable them to recognise and build healthy relationships and understand where they can get help from if they, or someone they know needs help or advice. This will be in line with the statutory guidance for the RSHE curriculum.

School staff are aware, as referenced in KCSIE 2025, that advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available from:

- NSPCC
- Refuge (offers a 24-hour national domestic abuse helpline)
- Safe Lives (provide a toolkit for professionals to support an assessment)
- Operation Encompass

As schools we will engage with the relevant guidance and continue to work with multi-agency partners where domestic abuse is suspected or known to work in the best interests of children affected who attend our federation schools. Across our Federation of schools, we acknowledge that children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

We will liaise with DSLs from other schools when relevant in the interests to safeguard other children who may/ may not be from a shared family.

Research indicates that living within a home where domestic abuse takes place is harmful to children and can have a serious impact on their behaviour, wellbeing and understanding of what a normal relationship is. We recognise that witnessing domestic abuse, or becoming involved, has an impact on a child and young person, that can be long lasting, and they will need support. All staff know, through training, that they must be alert to signs/indicators and may be asked to support a child at the request of a DSL at short notice if the schools have been alerted to an incident by the police / Operation Encompass.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. The impact of losing a place of safety and security can affect a child's behaviour and attachments.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

In line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 the federation will promote links into the Local Housing Authority for the parent or care giver in order to raise / progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

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We recognise that whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into Children's Social Care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Parental Substance / Alcohol Misuse

Substance misuse applies to the misuse of alcohol as well as 'problem drug use', defined by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs as drug use which has: 'serious negative consequences of a physical, psychological, social and interpersonal, financial or legal nature for users and those around them.

Parental substance misuse of drugs or alcohol becomes relevant to child protection when substance misuse and personal circumstances indicate that their parenting capacity is likely to be seriously impaired or that undue caring responsibilities are likely to be falling on a child in the family.

Children living in a home environment and exposed to this are at risk of harm, including neglect and if staff believe that a child is living with parental substance misuse, this will be reported to the DSL for referral to be considered for Children's Services.

Parenting

All parents will struggle with the behaviour of their child(ren) at some point. This does not make them poor parents or generate safeguarding concerns. Rather it makes them human and provides them with opportunities to learn and develop new skills and approaches to deal with their child(ren).

Some children have medical conditions and / or needs e.g. Tourette's, some autistic linked conditions, ADHD; that have a direct impact on behaviour and can cause challenges for parents in dealing with behaviours. This does not highlight poor parenting either.

Parenting becomes a safeguarding concern when the repeated lack of supervision, boundaries, basic care or medical treatment places the child(ren) in situations of risk or harm.

In situations where parents struggle with tasks such as setting boundaries and providing appropriate supervision, timely interventions can make drastic changes to the wellbeing and life experiences of the child(ren) without the requirement for a social work assessment or plan being in place.

As a School we will support parents in understanding the parenting role and provide them with strategies to make a difference by:

- providing details of community-based parenting courses.
- linking to web-based parenting resources (for example <http://www.familylives.org.uk/>).
- discussing the issue with the parent and supporting them in making their own plans of how to respond differently (using evidence-based parenting programmes).
- Considering appropriate early help services.

Children & the Court System

As a School we recognise that children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. We know that this can be a stressful experience and therefore the federation will aim to support children through this process as appropriate.

As a School we recognise that children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. They may also be involved in family law cases, such as when parents are separate and contact needs to be supported. We know that this can be a

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stressful experience and therefore the federation will aim to support children through this process.

Along with pastoral support, the federation will use age-appropriate materials published by HM Courts and Tribunals Services (2017) that explain to children what it means to be a witness, how to give evidence and the help they can access and will use online materials published by The Ministry of Justice (2018) which offers children information & advice on the dispute resolution service.

These materials will also be offered to parents and carers if appropriate.

Children with family members in prison

Children who have a family member in prison are at greater risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health.

The Weston Federation of Schools aims to:

- Understand and respect the child's wishes.
- Keep as much contact as possible with the parent and caregiver as appropriate.
- Be sensitive in lessons.
- Provide extra support.

Alongside pastoral care the federation will use the resources provided by the National Information Centre on Children of Offenders in order to support and mentor children in these circumstances. School will use age-appropriate materials published by HM Courts and Tribunals Services (2017)

These materials will also be offered to parents and carers if appropriate.

Alongside pastoral care the federation will use the resources provided by the National Information Centre on Children of Offenders in order to support and mentor children in these circumstances.

Taking action to ensure that children are safe at school and at home

The Curriculum

Throughout the whole school, staff raise pupil's awareness of safety knowledge. The aim is to raise awareness, confidence and resilience in all our pupils, enabling them to use strategies and a range of contacts that ensure their protection and that of others. In this way the Weston Federation of Schools seeks to give pupils opportunities to develop the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.

Pupils will be taught that they have a right to be safe and they will be taught how to be safe in a range of situations and how to avoid harming themselves.

We want our children to make safe choices in their lives. Specifically, we are aware that this includes water safety due to our locality and proximity to Weston Shore. Further, our children need to be safe online. We are aware of the time given to online gaming and social media platforms. Our children know that, in school, we are trusted adults who will listen to their concerns and act upon them. We need to remind children that we are a 'talking' school who want to help, and problem solve. We want our children to also understand safety in the following ways, although the list is not exhaustive:

- Strangers – we want our children to understand 'stranger danger' and be safe outside school hours. Our children do not always relish weekends or holiday time. We want them

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to understand how to remain safe in the local area. We want our children to understand that ‘clever never goes’ as not all who will harm them will be strangers.

- Traffic – we want the children to recognise the dangers presented on the roads in the local area.
- Home – we want our children to understand safety in the home. We want them to understand electrical safety, fire risk, potential risk of cleaning products dangerous items that can be misused in the domestic home.
- Agencies – we want our children to understand that professionals want to keep them safe from harm or potential harm. We want the children to respect the work of the police and to be honest and open with professionals including Children’s Social Care in order to help staff and agencies to look after them.
- Health and Well-being – We want our children to make safe choices in relation to their longer term health and happiness. We want our children to be educated to have healthy minds and bodies by understanding the impacts of a healthy diet and regular exercise.

As well as keeping children safe we want to impact on their education to make them successful citizens living in modern Britain.

Physical Intervention (use of reasonable force)

During rare occasions where a child is causing harm to themselves or others, staff are expected to safely intervene. The federation follows the DfE guidance on Use of Reasonable Force (2013). Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use ‘reasonable force’ to prevent a pupil from:

- a) Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- b) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself);
- c) Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the schools or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

‘Reasonable’ in these circumstances means ‘using no more force than is needed’.

Staff have received training to understand their responsibilities around the use of reasonable force and this provides them with the knowledge and skills to physically intervene safely where this is required, using only the force required in the specific situation. . For some staff this includes additional specific physical intervention training relating to their role or responsibilities, and where intervention has been required the development of a Personal Handling Plan will be considered and shared with relevant staff if implemented.

School staff may also be empowered to carry out physical searches for weapons, illegal drugs, pornography etc. Actions by school staff must at all times be in accordance with guidance and procedures. In the event of searches or physical restraint being needed, parents will be informed the same day.

Any child who has more complex behavioural and emotional needs will have a Behaviour Response Plan and a Risk Assessment which will be co-created by nominated school staff and shared and signed by parents/carers. These documents will be shared with other staff and reviewed on a regular basis.

Any restraint incident will be recorded using the HET Incident Reporting System. Parents/carers are always informed of any restraint used immediately.

Reporting and recording concerns about a child or young person

In our schools any individual can contact the DSL or a Deputy DSL if they have concerns about a pupil. Staff understand through training that they must report without delay disclosures or information identifying

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harm to the DSL using the school's process. Staff will make a brief, accurate and verbatim record of the concerns including the child's own words (if a disclosure/allegation) or the evidence that has led to the concerns. This report is given to the DSL who will analyse risk and refer onwards as necessary and appropriate.

Referrals where urgent action is required should never be delayed in order for a full record to be written.

Staff should not delay reporting if the DSL is unavailable. If a DSL or Deputy DSL is unavailable or there are immediate concerns, the staff member will refer directly to Children's Social Care and the police if appropriate.

The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the member of staff to report directly to the police. The DSL should also be made aware.

Generally, the DSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral. However, where this may not be possible or appropriate, particularly when informing parents/carers may place the child at further risk.

Staff will notify the DSL (and attendance officer if nominated) of any child on a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan where there is an unexplained absence, who in turn will inform the allocated Social Worker or Child Protection Chair.

Staff will report to the DSL any additional concerns, disclosures or observations after the initial referral, not assuming that a referral in itself will protect children.

Staff will record any concern using the federation system as it is acknowledged that it is the combination of information that often brings the best oversight of the whole child or family. Child protection records will be stored securely and away from main pupil records. Oversight of records of concerns made by staff will be maintained by the federation SLT, routinely and ongoing. Staff will be held to account for the record, timelines and appropriateness of actions.

Records

We will ensure all records pertaining to safeguarding and child protection (adult and children) will be kept in strict accordance with wider policy and practice and will do the same in respect of the handling and transfer of records,

- Keep records of child protection concerns securely and separately from the main pupil file and use these records to assess the likelihood of risk.
- Ensure that safeguarding records are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) and in a timely fashion when a child transfers school.
- Ensure that where a pupil transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, their information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. Consideration is given to a transition meeting prior to moving if the case is complex or on-going.
- Where a pupil transfers into Weston Schools Federation, information passed on verbally or on paper records is recorded on the contact record information sheet.

Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers

Our federation of schools has clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. If a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff this information should be reported straight away and passed to the Headteacher, James Wiltshire.

In the absence of the Headteacher or if the allegation is against the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Chair of Governors directly.

An allegation, in the context of the statutory obligations or organisations relates to any individual who works or volunteers in any capacity with children and where there is a concern that this person has or may have:

- 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;

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- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they 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.

In all cases where the concern about an individual falls into one of the categories above, which does meet the harm threshold, this will be considered to be an allegation. In all such cases the allegation must be reported to the LADO as soon as possible, but must be within 24 hours.

The federation will also respond to low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold. The term ‘low-level’ concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ that an adult working in or on behalf of the federation may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. (KCSIE 2025)

The term low level concern does not mean that it is insignificant.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children;
- Having favourites;
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language (KCSIE 2025)
- humiliating pupils.

Any low-level concern must be reported to the DSL, recorded in writing by the DSL and dealt with appropriately. Where a low-level concern is raised about the DSL, it should be shared with the Headteacher. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and the action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, unless they wish to remain anonymous. Staff records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where this is identified, the federation will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where it moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it will be referred to the LADO. Any organisations or individuals using school premises will be subject to the same procedures.

We ensure that concerns or allegations made against children or adults are managed appropriately including reporting to the police or LADO where appropriate.

Low-Level Concerns

The Weston Schools Federation will also respond to low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

The term ‘low-level’ concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ that an adult working in or on behalf of the federation may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

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- Being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language;
- humiliating pupils.

The Weston Schools Federation will promote a culture in which safeguarding pupils is the uppermost priority beyond any perceived professional loyalties to colleagues, ensuring that staff are actively encouraged to report concerns, regardless of their relationship with the staff member.

From September 2024, any low-level concerns must be reported through the Hamwic Incident System (via the Hamwic Intranet). This allows staff to report a concern about another member of staff or the Headteacher. The online reporting form ensures details of the concern are captured for the Headteacher to review and investigate. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, unless they wish to remain anonymous.

Our low-level concerns reporting mechanism is in place to:

- Give everyone a way to raise their concerns discreetly and in the right way.
- Help create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the federation values and expected behaviour set out in the staff code of conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff.
- Address unprofessional behaviour, which may lead to a colleague receiving help, support and guidance at an early stage.
- Help identify a colleague who may be finding things difficult but does not feel able to come forward to say they are struggling, which may lead to targeted support.
- Help identify any weaknesses in the safeguarding systems of the school, which will lead to change.

We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

Low-level concerns will be managed in the following way:

- Concerns about members of staff will be read, reviewed and managed by the Headteacher. In some cases, the Headteacher may ask for advice from HR.
- Concern about the Headteacher will be managed by the HET Deputy CEO.
- All concerns will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.
- If concerns are unsubstantiated or do not meet the low-level concerns threshold they will not be recorded.
- In most cases, a Headteacher will arrange a conversation with the member of staff. If the Headteacher is satisfied it is a valid concern, the conversation may lead to a follow up in writing, either an email or letter of professional advice.
- The member of staff will be advised if the concern is being noted – the federation MIS (Bromcom) is used to do this.

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Staff records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where this is identified, the federation will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where it moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it will be referred to the LADO. Any organisations or individuals using school premises will be subject to the same procedures.

The Role of the LADO

The LADO is responsible for:

- Providing advice, information, and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers.
- Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom an allegation is made.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.
- Recommending a referral and chairing the strategy meeting in cases where the allegation requires investigation by police and social care.

LADO Contact Details:

Southampton

Jemma Swann (Jo Williams on Fridays)

023 8091 5535/07500 952037

LADO@southampton.gov.uk

Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's Whistleblowing Policy. If the concern is in relation to a member of staff, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Headteacher immediately who will act in accordance with procedures in Part 4 of KCSIE 2025. Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of the Governing Body, in accordance with HET's Whistleblowing Policy. In the absence of a Chair of Governors, the HET Deputy CEO at should be contacted.

Any concerns which staff feel unable to raise internally or feel they have not been addressed correctly can be taken via the NSPCC helpline via help@nspcc.org.uk .Any concerns which staff feel unable to raise internally or feel they have not been addressed correctly can be taken via the NSPCC helpline via help@nspcc.org.uk .

Escalating professional disagreement

At no time will professional dissent detract from ensuring that any child is safeguarded. If professionals are unable to resolve differences, this will then be addressed by the line manager in conjunction with the DSL in the first instance, and an email record/notes retained by both parties.

If any professional in our schools remains dissatisfied with another professional/agencies response to the raising of a concern then the relevant manager should be contacted and the SSCP/HIPS procedures for escalation should be followed. Advice may be sought from SCC officers.

Appendix 1: Glossary of types of abuse

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Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child’s basic needs. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger, and have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing. Neglect can include physical neglect (not meeting a child’s basic physical needs); educational neglect (a child does not receive an education); emotional neglect (a child doesn’t get the nurture and stimulation they need); and medical neglect (a child isn’t given proper health care).

Physical abuse is when someone intentionally hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. Physical abuse symptoms include: bruises; broken or fractured bones; burns or scalds; bite marks; injuries and health problems. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell. If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn’t match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is sexually abused, they’re forced or tricked into sexual activities. There are two types of sexual abuse; contact abuse (which can include touching, kissing and oral sex) and non-contact abuse. Sexual abuse can happen in person or online.

Emotional abuse (sometimes called psychological abuse) is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet and can happen anywhere online. Children and young people might experience different types of online abuse, such as cyberbullying, emotional abuse, grooming, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Domestic abuse is defined as the behaviour of a person towards another person if they are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is ‘abusive’ if it consists of any of the following: physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; psychological, emotional or other abuse. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse and is when a child or young person is given things like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they’re in a loving and consensual relationship.

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. It can happen in person or online, or both and by a stranger or someone they know. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

Child trafficking is where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

Honour based abuse is an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual or family. This type of abuse can include female genital mutilation (FGM), breast ironing and forced marriage.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is when a female’s genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It’s also known as ‘female circumcision’ or ‘cutting’ but has many other names.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into suburban areas and market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or ‘deal lines’.

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children’s relationships (both

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intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. It can take various forms. Online child on child abuse is any form of child-on-child abuse with a digital element.

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online and can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone.

Appendix 2: Reporting Concerns: Southampton Safeguarding Children’s Partnership

