



THE DWASTRE Education Trust

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Signed:

Chair of Directors

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction –

Safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Children includes anyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play (*Keeping Children safe in Education 2024*). All practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interest** of the child.

Successful outcomes for children depend on strong partnership working between parents/carers and the practitioners working with them. Practitioners should take a child centred approach to meeting the needs of the whole family. (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*)

What this means for every one of us;

- Ensure children and learners are protected from harm and feel safe
- Ensure children know how to complain and understand the process for doing so
- Are effective in preventing and tackling discrimination and bullying including cyber bullying, racist and homophobic bullying
- Apply a consistent approach across the school to the school's behaviour policy.
- Take action following a safeguarding incident including online-safety
- Ensure all adults know and understand the indicators that may suggest a child, young person or adult is suffering, or at risk of abuse, exploitation, neglect or harm and take appropriate action in line with local procedures and statutory guidance
- Ensure that all staff understand that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with children and their families
- Respond to the needs of its pupils to prevent the risks of radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- Effectively manage attendance, punctuality, persistent absence and exclusions
- Engage with the local community, including parents, carers, staff and governors
- Always work in the best interest of the child
- Liaise with other agencies which support the child.

It is a statutory expectation that Thedwastre Education Trust will have a Safeguarding policy for implementation in all its academies, and that this will be reviewed in discussion with the Trust Board annually.

Aim

The aim of Thedwastre Education Trust's safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for each academy in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those pupils who attend. We have developed our policy against:

- The Human Rights Act (1998) - public organisations must respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.
- Equality Act (2010)
- The Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance for schools and colleges, '[Keeping children safe in education](#)' (September 2024), which sets out the responsibilities placed on schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
 - The statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children' (Dec 2023), which applies to organisations and professionals who provide services to children
- Information Sharing (May 2024)
- Prevent Duty
- Serious Crime Act 2015 – mandatory reporting of FGM

- Education Inspection Framework (July 2019)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children (September 2021)
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings – February 2022.
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for educational settings, UK Council for Internet Safety (February 2024)
 - Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in schools and Colleges (DfE March 2023)

The policy aims to ensure that:

- All our pupils are safe and protected from harm
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable pupils to feel safe and adopt safe practices
- Staff, pupils, governors, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours and the Trust's legal responsibilities.
 - All staff are aware of the Trust's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the those dealing with allegations against staff and reporting low-level concerns.

Ethos

Safeguarding at every academy within the Thedwastre Education Trust is considered everyone's responsibility and, as such, each academy aims to create the safest environment within which every pupil has the opportunity to achieve. The Trust recognises the contribution it can make in ensuring that all pupils registered or who use our school, feel that they will be listened to and have appropriate action taken to any concerns they may raise. We will do this by endeavouring to work in partnership with other agencies and seek to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers to develop and provide activities and opportunities throughout our curriculum that will help to equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help protect children. Therefore, our schools will: • Establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe and are encouraged to talk and be listened to.

- Ensure children know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.
- have a clear set of values, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life, which are underpinned by our behaviour policy.
- Create a culture of zero tolerance prejudice behaviour and sexual violence/harassment. • Through our planned PSHE curriculum, including RES and online safety, which considers the age, SEND and vulnerability of pupils, teach children to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways, including bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, being coerced to send sexual images (sexting), physical abuse and up-skirting. All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The schools in the Trust will therefore:

- Create a whole school protective ethos in which child on child abuse will not be tolerated. • Provide training for staff on how to recognise child on child abuse.
- Ensure staff do not dismiss instances of child on child abuse.
- Include information and materials to support the children in keeping themselves safe from abuse in the curriculum.
- Provide high quality RSE, including teaching about giving consent.
- Ensure all staff members follow the procedures outlined in the policy if they become aware of child on child abuse.

Training modules are available from gov.uk ([one-stop page](#))

DfE have also produced [guidance on preventing and tackling bullying in schools](#)

Responsibilities and expectations

The Waste Education Trust has a Board whose legal responsibility it is to make sure that each academy has an effective safeguarding policy and procedures in place and to monitor that each academy complies with them.

Governors

Each Local Governing Body should also ensure that the policy is made available to parents and carers if requested. It is also the responsibility of each Local Governing Body to ensure that all staff and volunteers are properly vetted to make sure they are safe to work with the pupils who attend our academies, and that each academy has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff (including the Head Teacher and volunteer helpers). The Local Governing Bodies will ensure that there is a Named Governor for Safeguarding, a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least one Alternate Safeguarding Lead; these people have responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in each academy.

Governors act as a 'critical friend'. They should provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding, including online safety.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

- The DSL should be a member of the senior leadership team, and should take lead responsibility for safeguarding
- The DSL and/or a deputy/alternate should always be available to staff during school hours in term time. (In the unlikely event that both members of staff are absent at the same time, the academy must have the agreement of the CEO or another DSL to undertake the duties in their absence and staff must be informed of the name and contact details of this person.)
- It is for schools to decide whether to have more than one deputy/alternate DSL. Any deputies/alternates should be trained to the same level as the DSL
- The DSL retains overall responsibility for safeguarding even when the activities associated with the role are delegated to deputies/alternates
- The knowledge and skills of the DSL and his/her alternates should now be updated at regular intervals, but at least annually, to ensure they keep up with developments relevant to the role. This will be provided via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, refresher training or by taking time to read about recent safeguarding developments
- DSLs and deputies/alternates must undergo relevant training that is updated every two years

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are as follows:

Great Barton CE Primary Academy – Claire Ratley, Tel: 01284 787353

Email: claire.ratley@greatbarton.suffolk.sch.uk

Rattlesden CE Primary Academy - Gemma Cannon, Tel: 01449 736355

Email: gemma.cannon@rattlesdenprimaryschool.co.uk

Thurston CE Primary Academy – John Bayes, Tel: 01359 230444

Email: mrbayes@thurstonprimary.net

Woolpit Primary Academy – Emma Jones, Tel: 01359 240625

Email: mrs.jones@woolpitprimary.net

These people can also be contacted with any safeguarding concerns at their respective schools:

Each School has alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads. Further details available from each school.

Each school has a named Safeguarding Governor. Further details available from each school.

The Chair of Thedwastre Education Trust is Mr Gary McDonald c/o Woolpit Primary Academy who is also the Safeguarding lead on behalf of the Board of Directors.

E-mail: chair@thedwastreeducationtrust.org.uk

The Chief Executive of the Trust is Mr Philip Mackay, who is also a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Email: ceo@thedwastreeducationtrust.org.uk

Contact details for Safeguarding Managers who will undertake the role of Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations against all staff, including supply staff, and volunteers are: email on LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk or using the LADO central telephone number 0300 123 2044

Other Useful Contacts:

Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board www.suffolkscb.org.uk

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police: 999

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency www.ceop.org.uk

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Responsibilities

DSL

It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in school are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency.

'The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.' (KCSIE 2024)

The DSL is also responsible for arranging whole-school safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in the academy and that this training takes place at least every three years.

Claire Ratley (DSL at Great Barton CE Primary Academy) has attended the annual 'Training for Trainers' programme and is an approved Level 2 safeguarding staff trainer; she is aware that she may receive a monitoring visit from the Professional Advisor or Local Authority delegated staff. She will undertake all basic training in Trust academies.

The DSL at each academy is required to attend, or ensure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate, all conferences, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child at that academy and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

The DSL at each academy is also required to complete a Self-Review Assessment Report annually which demonstrates that the safeguarding arrangements in the academy are being met. If the self assessment highlights any areas for improvement, this will be detailed in the action plan which will be signed off and monitored by the Named Governor for Safeguarding to ensure these improvements are implemented. The self-review assessment is to be shared annually with the Local Authority, who will have an auditing role in ensuring the school/education setting is meeting its safeguarding requirements under sec 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 for both maintained and independent schools.

The DSL or DDSL must always be available during school hours, during term time to discuss any safeguarding issues and staff are clear about what to do if neither are available. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from social care (KCSIE 2024). All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on immediately. If academy staff are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, and ensure that all information is recorded on the appropriate form.

DSL should liaise with the three safeguarding partners (local authority, clinical commissioning group and police) as appropriate and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 as well as liaising with senior mental health support teams when a safeguard concern is linked with mental health.

DSLs will need to familiarise themselves when safeguarding partners publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided.

DSLs are responsible for ensuring that the DfEs filtering and monitoring standards are met and have primary responsibility for understanding the existing monitoring and filtering systems and processes. All academies in the trust have designated member of SLT and governor who leads filtering and monitoring.

DSLs will need to refer to PACE Code C 2019 (Police Criminal Evidence Act) when they have a child under police investigation and ensure there is an appropriate adult present whilst a child is being questioned or searched.

DSLs are responsible for keeping child protection records that are kept up to date, stored securely and kept confidential. Records should have a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concerns was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken (and reasons for that decision made), decisions reached and outcomes.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse, neglect and extra familial harm. Trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct. (Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022)

All adults, including the DSL, have a duty to refer all known or suspected cases of abuse to Children's Social Care or the police. Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, e.g. Connexions or School Nurse, it is the responsibility of that agency staff to formally report the referral to the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

All pupils must be taught about safety and safeguarding. It will be the responsibility of the headteacher in each academy to monitor that teachers do so effectively within the planned curriculum.

All staff will consider whether children are at risk or abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families- staff will address indicators of child criminal activity through training and follow procedures set out in this policy if concerns arise. It is the responsibility of all staff to monitor internet use and raise any concerns regarding inappropriate use or content to the DSL.

Alternative or off site provision

Where children are educated off site or in an alternative provision, the school remains responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and the provider will have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns. The academy will have regard to the statutory guidance [Alternative Provision - DfE Statutory Guidance](#). Written confirmation that the alternative provider has carried out appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working at the establishment will be sought by the school and staff from the commissioning school will regularly visit the alternative provision setting to assure themselves that the provision is being effective in meeting the agreed objectives for the child.

Where a disclosure is made by a child attending a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or alternative provision, the referral should be recorded and referred to the on-site DSL and a formal notification made to the Academy's DSL where the child is on roll, for information or to agree the appropriate action to be taken. Any records made should be kept securely on the child's Child Protection file (at the Academy). A referral should not be delayed in order to discuss with the academy's DSL if it is felt/identified that a child is at immediate risk.

Designated teacher for looked after children

Schools must appoint a designated teacher for looked after children who work with the local authority to promote educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children. A designated teacher receives appropriate training. The designated teacher should work with the virtual school head, who manages pupil premium plus for looked after children, to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. Virtual heads should provide a strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker and identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children.

What to do if you are concerned

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- Do stay calm and listen carefully.
- Do reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Do let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.
- Do inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- Do submit an online report using CPOMS without delay.
- Do not include your opinion without stating it is your opinion.
- Do refer without delay.

See flowchart of actions (Part 1, page 24 in KCSIE, 2024)

We will ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves school in accordance with KCSIE (September 2024).

At our school, we consider how to build trusted relationships to facilitate communication and encourage a culture of listening to and considering a child's wishes and feelings when responding to any incident or disclosure, including measures the school will put in place to protect them. All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. All staff exercise professional curiosity, are aware of the indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect, are particularly alert for specific children, e.g. those with SEND, mental health needs, young carer, or those more at risk from harm in order to identify issues as early as possible and speak to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. 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.

Early Help

Where risk factors are present but there is no evidence of a significant risk then the DSL will advise on early help and preventative work that can be done within school to engage the pupil into mainstream activities and social groups. The DSL may well be the person who talks to and has conversations with the pupil's family, sharing the school's concern about the young person's vulnerability and how the family and school can work together to reduce the risk.

In this situation, we will utilise Suffolk's Signs of Safety model to consider the needs of the family and in discussion with the parent and the young person (as far as possible).

The DSL may decide to:

- Monitor the situation after taking appropriate action to address the concerns.
- Undertake an Early Help assessment (EHA) to try to meet the needs of the child and family through a multi-agency approach.
 - Seek advice through the MASH Professionals' Line if there is any uncertainty.
- Notify Children's Social Care via a referral (MARF) to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

If it is felt the child would benefit from early help to help support internal support for that child, the DSL will seek advice about undertaking an early help assessment (EHA) and consider, if this does not have an impact on the situation making a referral to children's social care.

If the concerns about the pupil are deemed 'High Risk' and the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, they will be referred immediately to the MASH. This includes concerns about a child/young person who is affected by the behaviour of a parent or other adult in their household.

To assist with the decision-making process, Threshold Guidance can be found [here](#).

It is the responsibility of the DSL to arrange a safe place for the return of forms and to acknowledge

receipt (if not handed to the DSL in person) to ensure that nothing is missed. If this is not done promptly, the reporter must check that the DSL has received the report.

The DSL will record the decision made following an allegation or receipt of a reporting form. All documentation must be recorded in a named Child Protection file, which must be kept in a locked cabinet.

All documentation can be found on the Suffolk safeguarding website <http://suffolkscb.org.uk/>

If there is a concern that a member of staff or adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or young person, or that they might be abusing a child or young person, the concerns must be reported to the Headteacher. Where these concerns relate to the Headteacher, this should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors or the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Trust, using the Trust's Whistle Blowing policy.

Concerns regarding proprietors of the Trust must be reported to the LADO (LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk or using the LADO central tel. number [0300 123 2044](tel:03001232044)).

The schools in the trust will ensure parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties in the school prospectus/website. These discussions will be recorded. Schools will hold a discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this action. Social care will be contacted if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk of harm to the child, for example any disclosure of sexual abuse or physical abuse where the child has an injury or where it may lead to the loss of evidence. If the decision has been made not to inform parents, a record of the reasons why must be recorded. Any written records may be used if child protection proceedings take place.

Recognising concerns, signs and indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect

Child Protection and Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. For our Trust academies, it includes such things as pupil safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, educational visits, intimate care, children missing education and internet safety.

We also understand the importance of wider environmental factors that may be a threat to a child's safety and welfare, known as contextual safeguarding, and the school will monitor the welfare of the child and follow the procedures set out in this policy. The witnessing of abuse can have a damaging effect on those who are party to it, as well as the child subjected to the actual abuse, and in itself will have a significant impact on the health and emotional well-being of the child and a longer lasting impact into their adult life.

Abuse can take place in any family, institution or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse can often be difficult to recognise as children may behave differently or seem unhappy for many reasons, as they move through the stages of childhood or their family circumstances change. However, it is important to know the indicators of abuse and to be alert to the need to consult further.

The following indicators listed under the categories of abuse are not an exhaustive list.

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill-treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse.. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be

abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

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

Physical abuse might be indicated where children have:

- Frequent injuries
- Unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns or bite marks

Emotional abuse

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

Signs that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- Eating disorders or self-harm
- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong • Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons

Sexual abuse

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

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a

parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
 - It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Signs of neglect can include children who are:

- living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- left hungry or dirty
- often angry, aggressive or self-harm

Extra-familial harm

All staff will consider whether children are at risk or abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Staff will address indicators of child criminal activity through training and follow procedures set out in this policy if concerns arise.

General signs and symptoms of abuse

For all ages:

- Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.
- Poor bond or relationship with a parent, also known as attachment.
- Acts out excessive violence with other children.
- Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- Mental health problems

Under 5s:

- Doesn't cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age.
- Reaches developmental milestones late, such as learning to speak, with no medical reason. • Significantly underweight but eats well when given food.

Ages 5-11:

- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- Reluctant to go home after school.
- Unable to bring friends home or reluctant for professionals to visit the family home. • Poor school attendance and punctuality, or late being picked up.
- Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school.
- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns.
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.
- Wets or soils the bed.

Taken from the NSPCC website, for further information: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/>

It is also useful for all staff to be familiar with the document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

Children with SEN, Disabilities

There are additional safeguarding challenges for children with SEN and disabilities which schools must be aware of:

- Awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or Disability.
- There is a higher risk of peer group isolation.
- There could be a disproportionate impact of bullying.
- Issues around communication.

Consideration should be given to extra pastoral support and guidance for these children.

Pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) often have complex needs and it is important for settings to be aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to (see [DfE guidance on APs](#))

Mental Health Concerns

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child is or could be at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a mental health concern about a child which is also a safeguard concern, immediate action should be taken, including seeking support from external agencies.

We help mental health problems at our school by promoting resilience. Our school has a mental health lead which is also our learning mentor, who is supported by a senior member of staff.

Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff, including supply staff, or volunteers and contractors that are working or may come into contact with children and young people whilst in our academies. Allegations can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults and are made for a variety of reasons. Staff should be aware and understand the school's child protection and whistle-blowing policies for managing allegations.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are a shared responsibility and dealt with appropriately, is critical. This should encourage an open and transparent culture and enable schools and colleges to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early and minimise the risk of abuse. A culture of vigilance will help to ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution' (Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022)

We endeavour to create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust, whether they be members of staff, including supply staff, volunteers or contractors, this should be brought to the immediate attention of the DSL who will advise the Headteacher (if not the same person). In the case of the allegation being made against the Headteacher, this will be brought to the immediate attention of the Chair of Governors and the Chair of Directors of the Thedwastre Education Trust. The Headteacher/Chair of Governors must also discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the nature of the allegations in order for the appropriate action to be taken. In Suffolk this role is undertaken by the Area Safeguarding Manager. This will constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion involving the LADO. Dependant on the allegation being made, Head teachers will need to:

- Refer to the LADO immediately and follow up in writing within 48 hours. In Suffolk schools

- should refer in the first instance to the Area Education Manager.
- Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child or young person to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser.
 - Contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO.
 - Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation.
 - Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary.
 - Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting or evaluation meeting.
 - Advise the Teacher Regulation Agency, Independent Safeguarding Authority and DBS where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being founded.

A low-level concern which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Appropriate Behaviours and Low-Level Concerns about members of Staff

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. (Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022)

All staff, including supply staff and volunteers should be aware and understand the school's code of conduct, behaviour, acceptable use of ICT, use of smartphones and social networks policies and act in accordance with these. As well as this, all staff should familiarise themselves with, 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education setting' February 2022 which acts as a guide as to what acceptable behaviour looks like.

Staff should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others, include online. Staff should ensure they establish safe and responsible online behaviours.

There is a duty to report any low-level concern (a concern which is not serious enough to consider contacting LADO and do not meet thresholds of harm, which causes a nagging doubt or sense of unease, which may be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including outside work), regarding the behaviour of a member of staff with the right person, recorded, acted upon and dealt with.

Behaviours such being over-friendly with children, having favourites, holding 1:1 session in a secluded place or behind closed doors, taking photographs of children on their mobile phones or using inappropriate, intimidating or offensive language.

If a member of staff becomes aware of or receives a report that a pupil has become or maybe becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, this should be reported immediately to the headteacher. Parents should be contacted and a plan put in place to manage the situation.

One-to-one situations

Staff working in one to one situations; including visiting staff from an external organisation can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. It is advised to only work one to one with a child when absolutely necessary and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers.

Staff should be aware of any risk assessments and relevant policies and procedures. They should ensure that wherever possible a shared room is used or there is visual access or an open door.

Whenever possible and practicable, it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one additional adult other than the driver to act as an escort. Staff should

not offer lifts to pupils unless it is for a work purposes and pre-agreed by the headteacher and written consent is obtained from the parent or carer. The member of staff must have business level insurance and provide a copy of this along with an MOT (if appropriate) and driving licence. The EVC is responsible for checking and keeping copies of these documents. If a member of staff is transporting a pupil in their private car alone, this must only ever be done as a last resort and for year 5 and 6 children only, who could obtain help if needed and for a child who does not have additional behaviour needs. Seatbelts must be worn and current legislation regarding the use of booster seats must be adhered to. Staff should ensure their behaviour is safe, the car is road worthy and not exceed the maximum carrying capacity. Staff should never offer a pupil a lift outside of their normal working duties unless in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk.

Communication with pupils and parents

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils. Staff should make their headteacher aware of these. If a pupil or parent seeks to establish contact or this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise caution and their professional judgement and inform the headteacher as soon as possible.

Communication with pupils and parents should only be done through agreed school platforms during working hours. If they need to use their private phone, they must use the caller withheld facility. Staff should read and become familiar with our acceptable user for remote education and online communication. Staff should not give out any personal contact details to pupils or parents, including web-based identities. If they locate these via other means and attempt to contact them, the member of staff should not respond and report it to the headteacher.

Any virtual lessons and learning should follow our acceptable user for online learning policy. Staff should pay careful attention to the background, the room it takes place in, dress and use of age appropriate links. The headteacher should be aware when live lessons are taking place and agreed to them being recorded. Parents, carers or pupils must be informed if a live lesson is being recorded and must not record live lessons themselves. Staff should avoid one-to-one situations and ask a colleague to join them if necessary.

Behaviour management

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments is unacceptable. Staff should take extreme care when using isolation or seclusion to ensure they are not breaching the pupil's human rights.

Physical contact and use of physical control

Adults should recognise that any physical contact with a child is open for scrutiny, be prepared to explain actions and if they believe an action they have taken could be misinterpreted, immediately report it. However, there are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with children but it is crucial that they are only done so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's needs.

Staff should acknowledge that some children are more comfortable with touch from adults than others and should seek pupil's permission and be sensitive to any signs that they may feel uncomfortable. Extra precaution should be taken when a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Adults should establish the child's views and consider alternatives if they feel the child will be uncomfortable.

Adults should use their professional judgement at all times and any physical contact should be in response to the needs of the child at that time, be of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form the contact will take. Physical contact should be appropriate, never be secretive or represent a misuse of authority or be for the gratitude of an adult. It is good practice to tell a colleague if they have offered comfort to a distressed pupil.

SEND pupils may require more physical contact and if this is the case, a care plan and/or intimate care plan will be written with the involvement and agreement of the child and parents/carers. Our intimate care plan policy will be followed.

Other times where physical contact may be required is in PE, first aid, drama and music, e.g. to demonstrate a technique, adjust posture or support a child to prevent injury.

Physical force must not be used as a form of punishment. Corporal punishment and smacking are unlawful. The law and guidance for schools states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from: committing a criminal offense, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property or engaging in behaviour which would prevent good order and discipline. Great care must be exercised by adults to insure they do not physically intervene in a manner which could be considered unlawful, and be mindful of the impact on the child of the physical intervention, especially a child with SEND. Adults should always seek to defuse situations and avoid using physical intervention whenever possible. Disproportionate physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offense. If physical intervention is necessary, adults should only use the minimum force and for the shortest time needed. Any case where physical intervention has taken place, the incident must be recorded using CPOMS and the child's parents informed.

Where physical intervention can be anticipated, a behaviour plan and risk assessment should be written with and agreed to by the child and parents. This does not allow for any unlawful physical intervention. The school's behaviour policy should be followed.

Safe-changing

We understand that changing areas could be places where children are more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse such as bullying and understand we need to keep them safe in these situations as well as allowing them their privacy, particularly as they get older.

We are also aware that some signs of abuse become apparent while children are getting changed. For example we may notice changes in behaviour, children being uncomfortable getting changed or unusual marks and bruises. Staff and volunteers are trained to recognize signs of abuse and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns.

We decide on appropriate supervision based on the age and developmental needs of the children. If it is not necessary for adults to remain in the room whilst children are changing, they should set clear behaviour expectations whilst they are unsupervised and adults should be in close proximity and in earshot, e.g. by leaving the door slightly ajar. Children should be aware of this in order to maintain good behaviour and deter any disturbance or bullying. They should understand that an adult will enter the room if necessary. The adult (if possible the same gender) should alert the children in advance that they are entering the room to give them a chance to cover up. Adults should only enter the room if necessary and not repeatedly enter the room without good reason. Children know who to talk to if they are concerned about a member of staff or another child. Any concerns will be taken seriously and safeguard procedures followed.

For those children who need extra support getting changed, we follow our intimate care policy. If it is necessary to give a child assistance, adults always do this openly and in the sight of others.

When using offsite changing facilities (swimming pools), members of the public do not share changing facilities with the children at our school. An adult remains in the changing rooms at all times if children are changing in cubicles. If not, adults will only remain in the changing room if needed but remain in close proximity, within earshot and with the door slightly ajar. Parent helpers who are not DBS checked would not be allowed in the changing facility. Any parent helpers who are DBS checked would follow the safe-changing procedures set out in this policy. They would not be involved in any intimate changing and seek advice and support from the member of staff in charge.

Photography, videos and other images

Consent is given by parents at the beginning of the school year to take and use photos and videos for display and for use on our school Twitter and YouTube account and school website. Staff are made aware of any child who does not have permission. Staff should only take photos for school

use, ensure they are appropriate for display and they have parental permission before using them.

Photos and videos should only be taken using agreed school equipment and should be deleted once used. Photos should only be stored if there is a purpose for doing so, they should not be stored unnecessarily and a member of staff should be able to justify the reasons for having images of pupils in their possession.

Photos must not be taken of a child's injuries, even if requested by social care or recordings made of disclosures made by pupils.

When using images publicly, the use of the child's name should be avoided (as a maximum use the child's first name only).

Sexual conduct

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable and will be a matter of criminal and disciplinary procedures. Any concerns regarding communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative should be reported immediately. Staff should also be aware of behaviours which may constitute 'grooming'.

Training

- All members of staff and volunteers will have access to whole-school Child Protection training at least every **two** years (in addition, staff have 2 yearly online safety training) and have yearly updates.
- **In addition, it is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the completion and record of a risk assessment must happen for all volunteers.**
 - **It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that if staff are employed from alternative providers written confirmation must be recorded on vetting checks.**
- We will also, as part of our induction, issue information in relation to our Child Protection policy, require the member of staff to read (and sign to say they have read) it **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (Part One and Annex A, which gives information about current safeguarding issues)** and any other policy related to safeguarding, and promote our commitment to ensuring the safety of children/young people in our care. Staff training will include their roles and responsibilities in relation to the schools filtering and monitoring systems and procedures and training related to cyber security.

These policies must include:

- The Child Protection Policy
 - The Behaviour Policy
 - The staff behaviour policy/Code of Conduct
 - School's response to children who go missing in education
 - The role of the designated safeguarding lead
 - Guidance for Safer Working Practice, 2019
 - Whistle-Blowing policy
 - Acceptable use ICT agreement
 - Guidance of social networks and smartphones.
- All staff will be issued with regular updates through bulletins and staff updates. Notifications will be available on the staff notice board (safeguarding area).
 - Staff will complete termly safeguarding and child protection refreshers to ensure they keep up to date with current issues and school policies and procedures. Gaps in staff knowledge can then be addressed.
 - Substantive differences in KCSIE September 2024 can be found in Annex F.
 - If relevant and required, staff are updated with issues surrounding safeguard situations in school on a weekly basis in staff meetings.

- The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Alternates will undertake further safeguarding training in addition to the whole school training. This will be undertaken at least every two years which updates their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues. This will support both the DSL/Alternate to be able to better undertake their role and support the Trust in ensuring that our safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieve better outcomes for the pupils in our academies. Designated Safeguarding Leads and Alternate Safeguarding Leads are required to attend higher level training every three years called 'Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (Multi-agency)'.
- All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is regularly updated.
- Each school has a named Governor for Safeguarding who will undertake additional training at least every two years to support their employers' role in Handling Allegations against adults who work with children and young people, including our staff and volunteers. Governors must be trained separately from staff.

Governing bodies and proprietors should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (KCSIE, 2024)

- All staff will be issued with Part 1 of the DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (or Annex A if they do not directly work with children) and are required to sign that they have received and read a copy. All staff and volunteers will be required to follow the Trust's Code of Conduct and will be required to sign that they have received a copy of the document. This will be on display in each academy for staff and volunteers.
- Our safeguarding arrangements are reported on a termly basis to our Governing body and our Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation.
- We will include a summary of our Safeguarding Policy to parents in our academy prospectus/website and will post copies of our policy throughout each academy. We are also able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English on request.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

To promote educational outcomes and the welfare and safeguarding of a child, our schools will share information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with other members of staff and leadership. The Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent school staff sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help protect a child. Confidentiality protocols must be adhered to ensure information is shared appropriately, in line with the DfE advice on Information sharing, May 2024. Information will be shared across agencies where necessary to safeguard a child. In order to aid social care assessments on whether children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, schools should provide as much information as possible.

'Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, exploitation and neglect and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. School and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.' (KCSIE 2024 paragraph 114)

'School and college staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to the risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.' (KCSIE 2024 paragraph 116)

If a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (Data Protection Act 2018), from a pupil or parent, they must refer this request to the DSL or headteacher).

DSL/deputies will only disclose relevant and accurate information on a 'need to know' basis and gain parental consent if required and this does not place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent if a person believes there is a good reason to do so. It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk. There must be a record made when a decision is made to share or withhold information, including who the information has been shared with and why.

In cases where the 'serious harm test' is met, schools must 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 schools within the Trust will seek advice about confidentiality from outside agencies if required. Any media or legal enquiries will be passed onto the CEO.

All concerns, discussions and decisions should be recorded in writing (a clear, comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how it was followed up or resolved and any actions taken (including reasons for any actions taken or not taken) and outcomes of those) and kept confidential and stored securely, preferably in a child protection folder. Any doubts about what should be recorded, staff should talk to their DSL.

All staff receive yearly GDPR training. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information, they should seek guidance from the DSL.

Use of School premises for non-school activities/Out of Hours Use

If an afterschool activity is organised and run by school staff, the school's safeguard policy and procedures apply. If it is run by an outside group, school governors and leaders must liaise and check that they have appropriate safeguard/child protection policies and procedures in place, including appointing a DSL. This should be included on any lease/hire agreement. If there is a safeguarding incident, our academies will follow their own safeguarding policy and procedures, including reporting to the local authority (LADO).

Current safeguarding issues

Child criminal exploitation

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Criminal exploitation is a typical feature of county lines activity. Children who go missing from education can be at an increased risk from criminal exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Sexual abuse might be indicated where children:

- Display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you would not expect them to have •

Ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games

- Have physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy

County Lines

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit for Professionals.

Serious violent crime

- increased absence from school
- change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- significant decline on performance
- signs of self-harm
- significant change in well-being
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- unexplained gifts or new possessions

Boys are more at risk from this type of abuse, as well as children who have been frequently absent from school or have been permanently excluded, have been maltreated or have been involved in crime such as theft or robbery

Extremism

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable and susceptible – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

Source - [Working together to safeguard children 2018](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>

Children and the Court System

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/708114/ywp-5-11-eng.pdf

Children with family members in prison

<https://www.nicco.org.uk/>

An estimated 200,000 children every year have a parent in prison in England and Wales and 10,000 visits are made by children to our public prisons every week. NICCO lists comprehensive information from voluntary and statutory agencies across England and further afield. The three Directories enable practitioners to search for Services, Resources or Research to inform their practice with children and families of offenders.

Drugs (County Lines)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

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 in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. 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, 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.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

The following safeguarding concerns actual or suspected should be referred immediately to Children's' Social Care. The concerns featured below are linked to guidance and local procedures which, where available, can be found on the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board website at: www.suffolkscb.org.uk.

Some members of our communities hold beliefs that may be common within particular cultures but which are against the law of England. Thedwastre Education Trust does not condone practices that are illegal and which are harmful to children. Examples of particular practices are:

Radicalisation and extremism

All academies within Thedwastre Education Trust have a duty to ensure that all staff and governors are trained in 'Prevent'.

From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter -Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("the CTSA 2015"), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard¹³ to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

At each academy, the governor for Safeguarding must ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead has undertaken or is committed to the Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff and governors about protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. Should there be a suspicion of Radicalisation or Extremism, staff will follow the agreed Child Protection/Safeguarding system and report to the DSL in the first instance.

Thedwastre Education Trust ensures that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when

accessing the internet in each academy by ensuring that suitable filtering is in place. All academies are required to teach pupils about online safety more generally.

Channel

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable or susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable/susceptible to radicalisation. School staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. This training will be led by the DSL following Prevent awareness training.

Visiting speakers

It is the responsibility of the headteacher of each academy to ensure that any visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised at all times. A risk assessment should be in place for any one-off volunteers. Prior to a visit, the purpose and content of the session must be agreed, and, ideally, submitted in advance. ID and DBS checks must be made (or ensure their employer has confirmed these have been checked).

Preventing Extremism

Role of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The SPOC/DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware that you are the SPOC in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism.
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of the academy in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and the assembly policy to ensure that these are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.
- Acting as the first point of contact within the academy for case discussions relating pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism.
- Collating relevant information in relation to referrals of vulnerable/susceptible pupils into the Channel process.
- Attending Channel meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed. • Reporting progress on actions to the Channel Co-ordinator and sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

Forced marriage/Child Marriage

It is a crime to purposefully cause a child to marry before the age of 18 (this applies to legal and non-binding marriages). The DfE will follow SCB procedures to refer any child and young person immediately to Children's Social Care if we are aware this has taken place.

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)

Honour based violence

Honour Based Violence 'is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'. It is important to be alert to signs of distress and indications such as self-harm, absence from school and truancy, infections resulting from female genital mutilation, isolation from peers, being monitored by family, not participating in school activities, unreasonable restrictions at home or forced marriage. Where it is suspected that a child/young person

is at risk from Honour Based Violence, the DSL will report those concerns to the appropriate agency in order to prevent this form of abuse taking place.

Trafficked children

Child trafficking involves moving children across or within national or international borders for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation includes children being used for sex work, domestic work, restaurant/ sweatshop, drug dealing, shoplifting and benefit fraud. Where an academy is made aware of either the suspicion of being trafficked/exploited, or actually being trafficked/exploited, the DSL will report the concerns to the appropriate agency.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is against the law in England, yet for some communities, it is considered a religious act and cultural requirement. It is illegal for someone to arrange for a child to go abroad with the intention of having her circumcised. If any of the above areas of concern is brought to the attention of an academy within the Trust, the DSL will report those concerns to the Police and Social Care in order to prevent this form of abuse taking place; it is a mandatory duty to report FGM personally to the police for any girl under 18 years old.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime 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 disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out and should discuss any such case with the designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents, family members, people known but not related to the victim, and strangers.

Other community safety incidents may include people loitering around the vicinity of the school or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As part of our PSHE curriculum, children, especially as they get older and have more independence are given practical advice about how to keep themselves safe, giving them the ability and confidence to deal with situations. Community Police may be invited to talk to the children if needed.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and removal of organs.

Information on signs to look for and support for victims can be found in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance on gov.uk

Cyber Crime

All academies in the trust aim to meet the cyber security standards set out by the DfE, including:

- appropriate firewall protection
- multi-authentication on sensitive information
- anti-malware protection
- security checks on downloads
- up-to-date security software installed and enabled on all authorised devices
- back-up copies of important data
- a recovery plan in response to a cyber-attack
- reporting cyber security attacks
- risk assessment of personal data held

Cybercrime is a criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. There are two categories

- Cyber-enabled (crimes which can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on line)
- Cyber-dependent (crimes which can only be committed using a computer). Cyber dependent crimes include: **unauthorised access to computers** (illegal 'hacking'); **denial of service attacks (DoS or DDos or 'booting')** where attempts are made to make a network, computer or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic; and **making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software)** such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets, and remote access trojans with the intent to commit further offensives.

Children with a particular skill or interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL should consider referring into the Cyber Choices program.

Parents are sent information and information can be found on the school's website about this issue. The older children in our school are made aware of the criminality of these crimes.

Children Missing from Education (CME)/ Children Absent from Education

Too many children are either missing out on full-time education or not getting the part-time education they are entitled to. (Ofsted November 2013)

Children are best protected by regularly attending school where they will be safe from harm and where there are professionals to monitor their well-being. At Thedwastre Education Trust's academies, we will encourage the full attendance of all our children. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods, unexplained and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. Thedwastre Education Trust Academies respond to unexplained and/or persistently absent pupils in order to support identifying such abuse and help prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing from education. We work with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and parents to develop an action plan to improve attendance for that child.

Each school within the trust follows procedures for a child who is absent. If a parent/carer cannot be contacted to determine the reason for absence, the school will contact an alternative contact for that child. Where we have concerns that a child is missing education and/ or because of suspected abuse, we will report to Children's Social Care and the Education Attendance/Welfare Service to effectively manage the risks and to prevent abuse from taking place. Any child absent from education and on an EHCP (Education health Care Plan), the local authority will need to review the plan whilst working closely with parents.

It is the responsibility for all staff to be vigilant and report any concerns about children who may go missing or is absent from education. In each academy, it is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that checks are made for all leavers. The headteacher must check that a child who has left the academy arrives at the destination school. Where there is a concern that a child is missing from education, the head teacher must complete the appropriate CME form via the CME portal without delay (<http://sccschoolsportalprod.azurewebsites.net/dashboard>)

All Trust academies must follow the advice in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

Withdrawal from school to electively home educate

When a school receives written notification from a parent of their intention to home educate their child, it is important the school coordinates a meeting to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of the child, especially children with SEND, are vulnerable or have a social worker. All agencies should attend the meeting. Once the decision has been made by the parents, it is the responsibility of the school to:

- acknowledge the parents' letter in writing and to delete the child's name from the school register. The local authority (LA) requires the school to do this within 3 working days of receiving the parents' letter
- inform the LA immediately of the removal of the child's name from the register (Section 12 (3) of 'The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006')

Schools should inform the LA of the removal of a child's name from the register via the CME portal as above and an EHE referral FORM1, a copy of the deregistration letter/email and any other supporting documents should be emailed securely to ehe@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk and cme@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk to comply with data protection.

If the school has any safeguarding concerns about the child who is being electively home educated, they must inform the MASH team.

Abuse linked to faith and beliefs

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be considered is the use of any physical or psychological violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is abusive and will result in a criminal conviction of those using this form of abuse even if the intention is to help the child.

Sexually active under eighteen years old

It is acknowledged by those working with young people, that some young people under the age of 18 will have an interest in sex and sexual relationships. The Protocol for Sexually Active Young People under 18 years old has been designed to assist those working with children and young people to identify where these relationships may be abusive, and the children and young people may need the provision or protection of additional services. Thedwastre Education Trust will ensure our policy for managing this issue links to the available protocol.

Domestic abuse

The Government defines domestic abuse as "Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, coercive, and controlling) between people over the age of 16 who are or have been personally connected, including intimate partners and ex-partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality". Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.

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). Teenage relationship abuse is a form of child on child abuse. However, if they are under the age of 16, this may not be recognised under the law as 'domestic abuse' as well as child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Domestic abuse is likely to have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn and in some cases a child may blame themselves for the abuse or had to leave home as a result. It will often be appropriate for such children to be regarded as Children in Need under the Children Act 1989.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and defines them as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Where there is evidence of domestic violence, Thedwastre Education Trust will require DSLs to report concerns to the appropriate agencies, including children's social care and the police, in order to prevent the likelihood of any further abuse taking place.

If there are any concerns about the safety or welfare of the child, child safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Private fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made between the parent and the private foster carer, who then becomes responsible for caring for the child in such a way as to safeguard and promote his/her welfare.

A privately fostered child means a child under the age of 16 (18 if a disabled child) who is cared for more than 28 days and where the care is intended to continue and provided with accommodation by someone other than:

- A parent.
- A person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility.
- A close relative.
- A Local Authority.

It is a statutory duty to inform the local authority where we are made aware of a child or young person who may be subject to private fostering arrangements.

Children who have returned home to their family from care

The schools within the trust recognise that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and the school will vigilantly monitor the welfare of these children and notify social care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

Child exploitation

Child Exploitation is a form of abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the child needs or wants, financial advantage or increased status. It can affect both males and females, and can include children who have been moved for the purpose of exploitation (trafficking)

Children and young people can be exploited by their associations and through gang activity. They may suffer exploitation through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites. In order to minimise the risks to our children and young people, our academies will ensure that we have in place appropriate measures such as security filtering, and an Acceptable Use policy linked to our Online-Safety policy. We will ensure that staff are aware of how not to compromise their position of trust in school or outside school and are aware of the dangers associated with the internet and other mobile technology.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can be a one-off occurrence or happen over time and may occur without the child's immediate knowledge (sharing videos or images of them on social media). It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education. • 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to having sex being coerced into engaging in sexual activities (some children may not realise they are being exploited)

(Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

This could involve being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs as part of county lines, working in cannabis factories, shop-lifting or pickpocketing, vehicle crime or even serious violence to others. Victims become trapped as perpetrators threaten victims and their families with violence, or entrap them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons. Although they are committing crimes, they are still victims as they have been criminally exploited. Both girls and boys are at risk of CCE but the signs may be different. Victims may also be at a higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Online safety

The Wastre Education Trust's Online-Safety policy clearly states that mobile phone or electronic communications with a pupil is not acceptable other than for approved academy business e.g. coursework, mentoring. Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse or cyber bullying we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

We have regular online safety training and staff and pupils sign an ICT acceptable use agreement annually (copies are sent home to parents and are available on our website) and we have policies in place for the use of ICT, smartphones and use of social media for both pupils and staff. Appropriate internet security and filters are in place.

Children at our school are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an effective whole school approach to online safety, which enables us to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. Technology and the harms which relate to it, evolve and change rapidly therefore we review our approach to online safety annually.

If pupils are expected to access websites at home as part of the curriculum, the class teacher will communicate this with parents.

Online safety is taught coherently through our PSHE and computing curriculums and monitored by those subject leads. The breadth of issues is considerable and ever evolving but covers the four main areas of e-safety:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal or harmful material
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with others, including online hoaxes and challenges.
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour which increases the likelihood or causes harm
- **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams.

More information can be found in the DfE document, 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools' and 'Education for a Connected World'.

Filtering Systems

We do all that we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, we ensure we have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. Our leadership team and computing lead have an awareness and understanding of the filtering and monitoring standards set out by the DfE (March 2023) and the provisions in place, their limitations and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Our filtering systems are provided by our internet provider.

We are careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

More information can be found on the UK Safer Internet Centre website (appropriate filtering and monitoring) and SWGfL (South West Grid for Learning).

Online hoaxes and harmful challenges

A *hoax* is a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful. The internet and social media provide a perfect platform for hoaxes, especially hoaxes about challenges or trends that are said to be harmful to children and young people to spread quickly. An *online challenge* will generally involve users recording themselves taking a challenge and then distributing the resulting video through social media sites, often inspiring or daring others to repeat the challenge. Whilst many will be safe and fun, others can be potentially harmful and even life threatening.

Our online safety curriculum provides opportunities and a safe space for children to learn, ask questions and critically respond to upsetting or harmful content online, which is appropriate for their age and stage of development.

If we become aware of an online hoax or harmful challenge, we will consider each one on a case-by-case basis, assessing the facts, potential risks to our pupils and establishing if it is local or national. Advice should be sought from either the local police if it is local or from the UK Safer Internet Centre Helpline if it is national. Our response will be calm and measured and avoid creating panic or confusion. We will avoid unnecessarily and needlessly upsetting our pupils by highlighting and exposing them to distressing content. If we are confident that a child is aware of, and engaged in, a real challenge that may be putting them at risk of harm, then this will be directly addressed and we would carefully consider how best to do this in order to support them. It may be appropriate to offer focussed support to a particular age group or individual children at risk. Many of the children may not have seen it and may not be aware of it, therefore we will carefully weigh up the benefits of a school-wide highlighting of the potential harms related to a challenge against needlessly increasing children's exposure to it. This could potentially be counter productive and potentially harmful.

If it has been raised directly, we will acknowledge whatever the latest harmful online challenge or online hoax might be but avoid overly focusing on it. We will aim to focus on what good online behaviour looks like, what to do if you see something upsetting online and who and where to report it.

Parents may be anxious if they become aware of online hoaxes and challenges and we will communicate with them to reassure them and explain our approach, whilst not making the situation worse. We have advice for parents on our webpage regarding online safety and good online behaviours and also send relevant information and helpful messages home regularly to encourage discussion at home about online safety, especially how and where to report concerns about harmful online content and how to block users.

Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to children.

Factors that may be present are:

- Use of family resources to finance a parent's dependency, leading to inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children.
- Children exposed to unsuitable visitors.
- Effects of alcohol or drugs leading to inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour.
- Emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance.
- Unsafe storage of drugs or alcohol
- Possible foetal alcohol syndrome.

When the school receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedure.

Young Carers

Our schools recognise that children who are living in a home environment, which requires them to act

as a young carer for a family member or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection. The school will seek to identify young carers and offer internal support as well as signpost external agencies. They will also be particularly vigilant to the welfare of young carers and follow procedures set out in this policy.

Children Misusing Drugs or Alcohol

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but will consider action if there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe:

- The misuse may cause them to be vulnerable to abuse.
- The misuse is a result of abuse or criminality.
- The misuse is linked to a parent/carer's substance misuse.
- The misuse indicates an urgent health concern.

Child on child abuse

Staff must be aware that safeguarding issues can arise between pupils. Examples include:

- Bullying, including cyber bullying
- Gender based violence/sexual assaults
- Sexting
- Sending nude or semi-nude images (although consensual sharing of images between children of the same age may not be considered abusive, it is still illegal)
- Sexual harassment or violence

Pupils are taught to talk to an adult if they are worried, and taught to recognise bullying, in its many forms. Staff must be vigilant to changes in behaviour and monitor carefully, both in class and at playtimes. Any concerns must be passed to the DSL/ASL.

At our school, we foster an environment so pupils know who to and are comfortable to talk to an adult if they need to report an incident. They know they will be listened to and taken seriously. Should a child make an allegation, we will follow our safeguard procedures. The child will be supported initially by staff and additional professional support will be sought if necessary and the child's wishes and feelings will be considered. Support for the bully/abuser will also be sought, to minimise risk in future. This may be through the Early Help team. Any unlawful behaviour will be reported to the Police. Where appropriate, the headteacher will take statements from all concerned and follow procedures in the Behaviour/Discipline/Bullying policy, ensuring that parents are informed. The DSL will be informed and appropriate reporting procedures followed.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

'Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges and is a widespread issue, although it is more widespread with girls being the victim. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. They can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable'. Sexual violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools (DfE 2021)

Being subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment may breach any or all human rights and rights of the Equality Act. It is important that children understand that the laws on child on child abuse are there to protect them rather than criminalise them.

Sexual Violence includes:

- Rape (sexual intercourse without consent. The age of consent is 16 and a child under 13 can never give consent).
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault (kissing or touching breasts/genitalia)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (making someone strip, touch themselves sexually or engage in sexual activity with a third person)

HSB (harmful sexual behaviour) is when abusive and violent sexual behaviour which is developmentally inappropriate, causes developmental damage and possibly involves a perpetrator who is at least 2 years older than the victim.

Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded and humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive and sexualised environment. It can include (although not an exhaustive list):

- Sexual comments (calling someone sexualised names, sexual remarks about clothing, rude jokes and stories.
- Sexual taunting
- Physical behaviour- purposefully brushing up against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, showing sexual pictures, drawing and photos.
- Online sexual harassment (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, sharing unwanted explicit content, up skirting (illegal), sexualised online bullying (including on social media), unwanted sexual comments and messages, sexual exploitation, coercion and threats).

Children must know who to and feel able to talk to someone if an incident occurs and all reports of sexual violence or harassment should be taken seriously, reported to a DSL, not be dismissed as 'banter' or 'boys being boys' (such as touching breasts, flicking bras, pulling down trousers or lifting skirts) and dealt with in line with this policy and our safeguarding procedures, whether they have occurred inside or outside school and online. We will be mindful that this may not be an isolated incident. We have a zero tolerance for these types of behaviours. Whilst we acknowledge that there are developmental typical behaviours, which are developmentally expected and socially acceptable, any inappropriate sexual behaviour should be addressed before it becomes problematic sexual behaviour (PSB).

Children who are victims of sexual violence and harassment will find the experience distressing and it is likely to have adverse effects on their educational outcomes. It can also be an indication of other safeguarding issues such as child exploitation. Through our RSE curriculum, children are taught about being safe, including online and about respectful relationships.

All victims must feel they are being listened to, taken seriously despite how long ago the incident occurred, supported and kept safe and never to be made to feel ashamed or causing a problem. We are aware that children with SEND are more likely to be abused and have additional barriers such as behaviours which may be mis-read and communication issues. LGBT (and those mistakenly thought to be LGBT) children are also more likely to be targeted. We understand that some children may be more at risk from this type of abuse outside school due to family situations. We are also aware that children may find it hard to report an incident and staff are trained to be aware of changes in behaviour. Reports of an incident may also be given by a friend or overheard by a member of staff.

It is also important to realise that perpetrators may also be victims of abuse and should not only be sanctioned but given education and safeguarding support.

When dealing with an incident, the DfE guidance, 'Sexual violence and Sexual harassment Between Children in School', will be used to ensure it is dealt with in the correct way, depending on the nature of the incident.

This will include:

- Getting (and working with) agencies or social care involved to the victim;
- If possible having two members of staff when dealing with an incident.
- Recording facts, not opinions
- Not promising confidentiality.
- Informing parents unless it puts the child at risk.
- Reporting rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault to the police.
- Writing a risk assessment if a report of sexual violence has been made (consider the risks of victim or victims, other children at school from future harm and the time and location of

the incident and how to make that location safe)

- Considering victims wishes, natures of incident, ages of children, SEND, one-off or sustained, on-going risks, wider links to other safe-guarding issues.
- Considering the impact of the incident and how the other children may deal with it, e.g. social media.
- Consider removing a child's perpetrator from class if they are in the same class. • Consider the intra-familial harms after an incident, especially necessary support for siblings.

Responses can be handled:

- **Managed internally** (one-off/harassment). Always have zero tolerance and follow the behaviour policy. Record all discussion and decisions.
- **Early Help** non-violent HSB and to prevent escalation of sexual violence. Record all discussion and decisions.
- **Referral to Children's Social Care** if a child has been harmed, risk of harm or immediate danger. Record all discussion and decisions.
- **Report to police** generally is social care are involved or rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. Record all discussion and decisions.

If a report is false or unfounded, consider if the person making the report needs help. If deliberate, consider disciplinary action. Victims will need continued support and safe-guarding, especially for HSB. Lots of resources in full guidance on page. The perpetrator will also need to be given the correct support as well as disciplinary action. Good practice to work with parents.

Sharing of nudes or semi-nudes

Also known as sexting, youth produced sexual imagery, indecent imagery or image-based sexual abuse and can also be digitally manipulated or AI-generated (deep fakes or deep nudes).

The making and sharing of nudes and semi-nudes or any indecent image, of children under the age of 18 is illegal, even if it was consensual. This includes images of themselves. Images may be shared between children under a wide range of circumstances and are not always sexually or criminally motivated or harmful. They may have also been created and shared consensually. However, it is also possible that such images may have been created and shared without consent, under coercive situations, or to be used as blackmail or to intend harm.

As with all safeguard concerns, incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible and dealt with in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. Parents and carers should be informed as early as possible, as long as it does not put the child at risk of harm and a referral made to children's social services and/or police immediately if there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm.

It is important that each situation is considered on a case-by-case basis to determine the reason the image was shared and dealt with proportionally. Consideration as to whether it is harmful behaviour and/or underage sexual activity and whether it requires an onward referral to social services and police as a criminal and safeguarding concern if there is risk of harm. If we deem there to be no risk or not harmful, in order to avoid unnecessary criminalisation of children, we may respond to an incident without involving the police. Once determined the child is not at immediate

risk, a conversation with the child to determine the nature of the image and who it has been shared with should follow.

When a situation of consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes arises, it is vital that we support the young person in identifying healthy and unhealthy relationships, understanding consent and the law regarding the making and sharing of these images. It should also be considered whether the situation raises any additional concerns. Consideration should be given to how far the image has been shared, how old the child is and the child's vulnerability so this can be dealt with appropriately.

If dealing with searching a screen, you should refer to our behaviour policy for searching and confiscating and be aware of advice from the DfE. In most cases, indecent images should not be viewed. Images should also not be copied, saved, printed or shared or a child should not be asked to do so. This is illegal. If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL must be satisfied that:

- It was unavoidable (child shows you without warning)
- It is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies as the facts can not be established from the child
- It is necessary to report it to a website, app or reporting agency to have it taken down or support a child or parents or carer in making a report.

If this is the case then:

- The DSL should discuss it with the headteacher or SLT
- Viewing should be undertaken by the DSL or another member of the SG team with delegated responsibility from the headteacher or SLT.
- Viewing should be done with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the headteacher or member of SLT. This member of staff does not need to view the image.
- Viewing should take place on the school premises, ideally in the headteacher or member of SLT's office.
- Viewing should whenever possible be done by a member of staff the same sex as the child in the images.
- A record of how and why the decision was made to view the image, who viewed and who was present and any subsequent actions.

If a member of staff has viewed imagery then support should be offered. It may be necessary to confiscate the device to give to the police for evidence (if this is done, disconnect from the wifi so images cannot be deleted remotely and turn off immediately). Place the device in a secure place, preferably a locked cupboard until the police collect it. If no other agencies are to be involved, images should be deleted (preferably by child and given a time to do this by - a search can be made to check this and a reminder that possession of these images is illegal). Consider if the image or video has been shared more widely than intended and what action needs to be taken, for example others who have been sent the images will need to delete it from their accounts and devices and may need to use IWF to remove images which have been shared online.

Safeguarding children and young people linked to gang activity

The DfE Education Trust will endeavour to protect all children and young people from exposure to gang activity and exploitation by having robust attendance and behaviour policies and to act on relevant information or allegations. We will take all reports seriously and will share this information appropriately with other agencies to safeguard our pupils from harm.

The above list is not exhaustive and as new policy guidance and legislation develops within the remit of Safeguarding we will review and update our policy as appropriate and in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Local Authority to ensure all academies within the Trust are safe places to learn and work.

Safeguarding children with disabilities / protected characteristics

Our schools fulfil their duties under the Equality Act (2010) and public sector equality duty (PSED) in order to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or pupils with a protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Children with disabilities have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse, exploitation and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes as non-disabled children. Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater risks as a result of negative attitudes and 'created vulnerability'. This may lead to disabled children having unequal access to services and resources, and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairment (Safeguarding Children, DCSF, July 2009).

The Wastre Education Trust will ensure that any disabled children in its academies are listened to and responded to appropriately where there are concerns regarding abuse. In order to do this, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers receive the relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding the abuse of a disabled child.

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

N.B. This section remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

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.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It is recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, 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), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools should refer to the DfE Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

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.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

It is a requirement for all agencies to ensure that all staff recruited to work with children and young

people are properly selected and checked (see Safer Recruitment Policy). In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, we consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview. We are required to notify shortlisted candidates these searches may be conducted as part of the pre recruitment checks.

Thewastre Education Trust will ensure that we have a member on every recruitment panel who has received the appropriate recruitment and selection training, that all of our staff are appropriately qualified and have the relevant employment history and checks to ensure they are safe to work with children in compliance with the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards. All appointments are conditional until satisfactory completion of all mandatory pre-employment checks have been carried out, including checking they are not subject to a prohibition order, professional qualifications, right to work in the UK and further checks if the person has lived or worked outside the UK. It is made clear that staff are expected to disclose any relationship (in the real world or online) that may impact on the school's ability to safeguard pupils. Copies of these documents are kept in their personal files.

Thewastre Education Trust requires a 'section 128 direction' check to be carried out on anyone involved in the management of an academy (either as an employee or a governor/trustee). Checks for section 128 directions can be carried out via the Teacher Services system, and are also covered by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) barred list checks. It is best practice to check the name on a potential employee's birth certificate. Copies of the DBS certificates do not have to be kept but the date of the check and the date seen by the academy must be recorded on the SCR.

All academies are required to follow the guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', Part 3.

For further information and advice contact MASH.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)



The Suffolk MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) has been developed from lessons highlighted by reviews of serious safeguarding incidents across the country. A recurrent theme of these reviews is the importance of having effective information sharing and close working arrangements between relevant agencies, with the need to ensure referrals and referrers get the right response first time.

Building on the long-established close partnership between local agencies, the MASH receives and processes all safeguarding referrals in respect of children without an allocated social worker and all vulnerable adults at risk of harm and abuse. Customer First is, and will continue to be, the first point of contact for all referrers to report safeguarding concerns for both children and adults. All non safeguarding referrals for adults will be directed to the cluster teams.

MASH staff work together in an integrated model to identify the most appropriate response to an individual's identified needs. The emphasis is on effective sharing of information to ensure early identification of harm, and to trigger the correct interventions, and route referrals to the right services.

The MASH is staffed by a range of professionals from Health, Police, Education, Social Care, Probation, Youth Offending, Mental Health services and Housing, with the majority of staff being based in Landmark House, Ipswich. The MASH also has a strong partnership working with wider partners including schools, the Ambulance Service and voluntary and community organisations.

The MASH has a leadership team of managers from all of the partner agencies. The MASH Strategic Board is responsible for providing robust governance of the MASH and ensures statutory and local policy objectives are met.

Please feel free to view the [MASH film](#)

Please also see the [MASH Service Structure](#)

If you think someone is at risk

If you are worried that a child, young person or adult is at risk of abuse, exploitation, harm or neglect, please call [Customer First](#) on **0808 800 4005**.

MASH Professional Consultation Line



However experienced professionals are, there may be times where they are not sure what action they should take, or they just need support and guidance to ensure they make the most informed decision.

The MASH Consultation Line is for a professional, such as a teacher, care worker or GP, to discuss the most appropriate and effective way of providing or obtaining help and support and recognising if there is a requirement for a referral to be submitted for a child or adult they feel is at risk of abuse. Where the child or vulnerable adult may need help and protection they will be given advice and guidance about making a referral, including how to involve family members where appropriate. Where a child and family have an allocated Social Worker, the professional will need to contact the named Social Worker or Lead professional to discuss any concerns.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Online-Safety Policy/Acceptable Use Policy

Useful Contacts:

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Professional Helpline: 0345 606 1499

Customer First (Professional Referral Line) for use in emergencies only: 0345 606

6167 Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police (emergency only): 999

Suffolk Police main switchboard: 01473 613500

Suffolk Police Cybercrime Unit: 101

Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board www.suffolkscb.org.uk

Suffolk County Council:

www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/staying-safe-online/e-safer-suffolk/

Appendix A

Actions where there are concerns about a child

