BE THE BEST THAT YOU CAN BE

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES MELLING PRIMARY

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS RATIFICATION 29 09 2026
POLICY TO BE REVIEWED September 2027

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	VIV AINSWORTH
DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEAD(S)	JO HARGREAVES & LOUISE JONES
NOMINATED GOVERNOR WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING	DINA OUKO
DESIGNATED TEACHER – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	JO HARGREAVES
EARLY HELP LEAD	VIV AINSWORTH
SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD	VIV AINSWORTH & JO HARGREAVES
PREVENT LEAD	VIV AINSWORTH
NOMINATED ATTENDANCE CHAMPION	VIV AINSWORTH
NOMINATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR	DINA OUKO
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	BRIAN LAWLOR

Date Approved	**29 09 2026**
Name	**Brian Lawlor**
Position	**Chair of Governors**

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

At Melling, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*. We strive to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where children feel valued, respected and able to recognise when they may be at risk, as well as how to seek help. We remain vigilant to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, maintaining a culture of professional curiosity and the belief that 'it could happen here'. All staff, governors, volunteers and contractors share responsibility for safeguarding and are expected to act immediately and in the best interests of the child whenever concerns arise.

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy are reviewed and approved annually by the Governing Body, reflects current local and national guidance, and is available to staff, parents and carers through the school website. Safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility, and all staff contribute to developing and maintaining effective safeguarding practice. The school also recognises the important link between safeguarding and regular attendance, understanding that children who are absent from education may be at greater risk of harm, exploitation and poor outcomes. Through a whole-school approach, we promote excellent attendance and work proactively with families and partner agencies to ensure children are safe, supported and able to thrive.

Our governing body recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation, and this policy has regard to statutory guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), Key statutory and non-statutory guidance and any locally agreed inter-agency procedures. **Appendix 1** - **Key Statutory and non-statutory guidance**

Our school staff including Trustees/governors will ensure they comply with the data protection law; develop data policies; understand what staff and pupil data to keep; and prevent personal data breaches.
Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The school will ensure we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of adults to deter and reject unsuitable people from entering the workplace**. Appendix 2 - Safer Recruitment, selection, and pre-employment vetting (Part 3 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.**

Our will work in partnership with the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, following local safeguarding arrangements, policies, and procedures. The school will participate in the DSL network, access multi-agency training, attend safeguarding events, and facilitate meetings for children and families to improve access to local services and support.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- ✓ **Prevention:** Promoting a positive, supportive and safe safeguarding culture through curriculum, pastoral and online safety opportunities for children, alongside robust safer recruitment procedures and a whole-setting commitment to safeguarding.
- ✓ **Protection:** Following agreed safeguarding procedures and ensuring all staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff are trained and supported to recognise, respond to and report child protection and safeguarding concerns appropriately, sensitively and in a timely manner.
- ✓ **Support:** Providing support for all children, parents and staff, including early help and intervention where appropriate. Specific assessments and targeted interventions are implemented for children who may be vulnerable to, or at risk of, harm.
- ✓ **Working with Parents and Other Agencies:** Working collaboratively with parents, carers and partner agencies to ensure timely information sharing, communication and action when safeguarding concerns arise, securing a coordinated, child-centred approach that promotes the best outcomes for children.

2. DEFINITION

For the purposes of this policy and procedures a child, young person, pupil, or student is referred to as a 'child' or a 'pupil' and they are normally under 18 years of age. Wherever the term 'parent' is used this includes birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, and adoptive parents. Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time, or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- ✓ providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- ✓ protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- ✓ preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ✓ ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- ✓ promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- ✓ taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Child protection refers:

- ✓ To the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

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

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

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

- ✓ **The local authority (LA)**
- ✓ **Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) for an area within the LA**
- ✓ **The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area**

3. IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy, and supporting procedures apply to all who encounter children in the school, including teachers, supply teachers, learning support staff, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, admin staff, meals

supervisors, caretakers, cleaners, visiting students, parent helpers/volunteers, governors, contractors, and other visitors.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies and procedures including:

- ✓ Staff code of conduct
- ✓ Whole school Relational Behaviour policy
- ✓ Anti-bullying policy
- ✓ Exclusion policy
- ✓ Relationships - Sex and Health Education
- ✓ Policies and guidance related to Mental and Physical Health
- ✓ Guidance for NPCC helpline and usage –
- ✓ When to call the police guidance from the NPCC
- ✓ Attendance policy and procedures
- ✓ Online policy and procedures including filtering and monitoring.
- ✓ Health and Safety policy and procedures
- ✓ Safer Recruitment, Selection and Pre-Employment Vetting Policy and Procedures
- ✓ School Single Central Record (restricted access)
- ✓ Single Equality Scheme/Objectives
- ✓ Accessibility Plan
- ✓ Data Protection Policy
- ✓ Supporting Pupils with Medical/Health Conditions Policy and Procedures
- ✓ SEND Special Educational Needs Policy
- ✓ Whistleblowing Procedures
- ✓ Intimate Care Procedures
- ✓ Educational Visits Procedures (including procedures for assessing risks)
- ✓ First Aid and Accident Procedures
- ✓ Administering medicines Administering medicines
- ✓ Allergy Safety Policy
- ✓ Missing Procedures
- ✓ Guidance on the use of Photographic Images
- ✓ Guidance the use of mobile phones and cameras
- ✓ Mobile phones and Smart Technology Policy
- ✓ Procedures for protecting children when contractors are working in educational settings
- ✓ Code of Conduct for adults visiting or working on a school site (leaflet)
- ✓ Risk Assessments (incl. Fire Safety)
- ✓ Premises Management including security measures (formal inspections and Buildings Register) Lettings arrangements.
- ✓ Sefton Level of Need Guidance (assists schools to respond appropriately and make timely decisions about how to respond to the needs of the child/children and families they are working with. **This can be found at** Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership - Level of Need Guidance (2024) (seftonscp.org.uk)

Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) Policies and Procedures Online Manual can be found at: Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Procedures | Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual

4. EQUALITY STATEMENT

Our school recognise children's diverse circumstances and are committed to the legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. As a school we understand that children, regardless of their background, could be a

victim of abuse and therefore are entitled to the same degree of protection and support regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children:

- ✓ Who have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions
- ✓ Who are young carers
- ✓ Who may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- ✓ Who have English as an additional language
- ✓ Who are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- ✓ Who are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation?
- ✓ Who are asylum seekers?
- ✓ Who are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs?
- ✓ Who are looked after or previously looked after?
- ✓ Who are absent from school?
- ✓ Who are missing from education?
- ✓ Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated?

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.

5. POLICY COMPLIANCE, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

Melling will review this policy at least annually and update it as required to reflect emerging safeguarding issues, statutory guidance, local procedures, significant safeguarding events, and lessons learned.

All staff, including those appointed during the academic year, will read and confirm their understanding of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. As part of induction, new staff will receive and read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026: Part One and complete safeguarding training, including online safety and the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.

Parents/carers may request a copy of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and related policies, which are also available on the school website.

This policy forms part of the school's safeguarding framework and will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body, which has oversight of safeguarding and child protection arrangements.
The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will provide regular safeguarding reports to the Governing Body to support effective monitoring, compliance, and continuous improvement.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The Role of all staff including supply staff Teacher trainees, volunteers, and contractors

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff including those not directly employed by the school, such as contractors, volunteers, and governors in the school. This policy will be read by all staff as part of their induction.

The Governing Body will be collectively responsible for ensuring that child protection and safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and in the school's day to day safeguarding practice. They will ensure:

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

- Relational Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support systems and practice we have in place.

Planned programme of relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:

- ✓ Healthy and respectful relationship
- ✓ Boundaries and consent
- ✓ Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality
- ✓ Body confidence and self-esteem
- ✓ How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
- ✓ The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support.
- ✓ What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they are always unacceptable

All staff:

- ✓ Must read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and know the school's safeguarding arrangements, including child protection procedures, behaviour and online safety policies, staff code of conduct, and the roles of the DSL and Deputy DSL(s).
- ✓ Create and maintain a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where children feel valued, listened to and able to raise concerns, recognising that some children, including those with SEND, those who are or are perceived to be LGBT+, and those questioning their gender, may face additional risks or barriers to disclosure and require appropriate support and protection.
- ✓ Recognise safeguarding risks and vulnerabilities, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, modern slavery, trauma, adverse childhood experiences, mental health and wellbeing concerns, child-on-child abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, bullying, relationship abuse and online abuse, understanding that these risks can occur at home, in school, in the community and online.
- ✓ Understand the importance of attendance and early help, recognising that absence from education, persistent absence, and children missing education may be indicators of safeguarding concerns. Demonstrates an understanding of the links between safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, mental health, and educational outcomes. Has an awareness of the community-based Family Help process and the criteria for referring cases to targeted early help and statutory services. Is able to identify and support children and families who may benefit from these interventions and make appropriate referrals where required.
- ✓ Identify and respond to online safety risks, including cyberbullying, online exploitation, misinformation, disinformation and risks associated with emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI).
- ✓ Act promptly on safeguarding concerns by identifying needs early, working with safeguarding leads and partner agencies, accurately recording and reporting concerns in line with school procedures, and understanding local referral pathways, including when to contact Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT), Children's Social Care, the Police or other safeguarding partners.

6.2 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The school has a member of the senior leadership team designated by the Governing Body as the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will have lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding including keeping children safe online by understanding the filtering and monitoring processes on our school devices and school networks.

The DSL will provide support to staff members and other adults to carry out their safeguarding duties, and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care and other services that support children. The role of the DSL is explicit in the role-holder's job description as set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Annex B**

In line with KCSIE 2026, the school will maintain appropriate safeguarding cover arrangements when the DSL is unavailable and during holiday periods, ensuring that safeguarding concerns can be responded to promptly where required

The DSL will have knowledge and skills for recognising and acting upon child protection concerns, having received appropriate training. The DSL is also the 'Prevent Single Point of Contact' (SPOC)

Our DSL will have knowledge and a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviours and has had training on the use of The Brook Traffic Light Tool.

Liaison and Referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- ✓ Act as the school's lead safeguarding professional and primary point of contact with Children's Social Care, Family Help Services, safeguarding partners, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Ofsted (where applicable), the Channel Programme and other relevant agencies.
- ✓ Ensure that the DSL, or a suitably trained Deputy DSL, is available during school hours to discuss safeguarding concerns and that appropriate arrangements are in place for out-of-hours activities where required.
- ✓ Make timely referrals in accordance with local and national safeguarding procedures, including concerns relating to abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, children missing education, child-on-child abuse and allegations against adults working with children, ensuring statutory agencies are informed where a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- ✓ Provide advice, guidance and support to staff on safeguarding matters, including referral pathways, information sharing, early help, Prevent, online safety, child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and the Department for Education's *When to Call the Police* guidance.
- ✓ Work closely with the Headteacher, governors, safeguarding partners and other agencies to support effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including strategy discussions, Family Help meetings, child protection conferences, core groups and Team Around the Family meetings.
- ✓ Maintain strategic oversight of safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker, children subject to Child Protection or Child in Need Plans, Family Help support, care-experienced children, children attending alternative provision and other children identified as requiring additional support.
- ✓ Ensure information is shared appropriately, lawfully and in a timely manner with relevant professionals and agencies to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

- ✓ Coordinate support for children and families experiencing safeguarding concerns, including abuse, exploitation, emotional wellbeing and mental health difficulties, online harms, Operation Encompass notifications, the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, AI-generated abuse and emerging risks associated with generative AI, deepfakes and nudification technology.
- ✓ Ensure children are appropriately supported during police investigations and searches, immediately follow up unexplained absences involving vulnerable children, and maintain effective oversight of safeguarding responses and outcomes.
- ✓ Ensure safeguarding records are accurate, secure, up to date and transferred promptly and securely when a child moves educational setting.
- ✓ Provide support, oversight and professional guidance to Deputy DSLs and ensure safeguarding responsibilities are effectively delegated where appropriate.
- ✓ In EYFS settings, ensure Ofsted notifications are made in line with statutory requirements relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse.

Training

The DSL will:

- ✓ Undertake appropriate DSL training at least every two years and receive regular safeguarding updates to maintain the knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role effectively.
- ✓ Engage with local safeguarding partnership arrangements, DSL networks and professional development opportunities to remain informed of local priorities, procedures and emerging risks.
- ✓ Understand and promote local early help processes and referral pathways, including Family Advice and Support arrangements.
- ✓ Ensure all staff, volunteers, contractors and students understand their safeguarding responsibilities and have access to key safeguarding policies and procedures.
- ✓ Maintain a thorough understanding of safeguarding risks affecting children, including online safety, filtering and monitoring, domestic abuse, mental health, radicalisation, exploitation, serious violence, modern slavery, attendance concerns and the specific vulnerabilities of children with SEND and other protected groups.
- ✓ Ensure safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and referrals are recorded accurately, securely and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- ✓ Arrange and facilitate additional safeguarding training in response to local, national or emerging safeguarding issues through the use of 7-minute briefings, SWAY briefings and other publications
- ✓ Promote a child-centred culture in which children's wishes, views and feelings are heard, respected and considered when safeguarding decisions are made.

Raising Awareness

The DSL will:

- ✓ Lead the development, implementation and annual review of the school's Child Protection Policy and other safeguarding procedures, ensuring they remain compliant with current legislation, local guidance and best practice.
- ✓ Ensure all staff, volunteers, contractors and supply staff receive appropriate safeguarding induction and understand the Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy, acceptable use expectations, online safety arrangements, filtering and monitoring systems, professional boundaries and safeguarding responsibilities.
- ✓ Ensure all staff are provided with and understand Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and receive safeguarding updates as required.

- ✓ Ensure safeguarding policies are publicly available and that parents and carers understand the school's safeguarding responsibilities and referral processes.
- ✓ Promote the educational outcomes of children with a social worker and other vulnerable children by ensuring relevant safeguarding information is appropriately shared with leaders and teaching staff so that effective support, challenge and high aspirations can be maintained.

(The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Annex B of KCSIE 2026– Role of the designated safeguarding lead. All designated safeguarding leads and deputy safeguarding leads must read and comply with this.)

6.3 THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to:

- ✓ Ensure staff (including temporary and supply staff), volunteers and contractors are informed of safeguarding policies and procedures as part of their induction.
- ✓ Ensure safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented.
- ✓ Promote a strong safeguarding culture where the welfare of children is paramount and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- ✓ Ensure the Single Central Record is accurately maintained and that safer recruitment practices comply with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*.
- ✓ Ensure all staff receive an appropriate induction, including safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.
- ✓ Communicate this policy to parents and carers through the school website when their child joins the school.
- ✓ Ensure the roles and responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL(s), as set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, are reflected in their job descriptions.
- ✓ Manage and respond to low-level concerns in accordance with the school's procedures, consulting with the DSL and other agencies where appropriate.
- ✓ Ensure the DSL has sufficient authority, time, funding, training, resources and support to undertake the role effectively, with appropriate cover arrangements in place during any absence.
- ✓ Attend relevant safeguarding briefings and training and ensure all staff undertake safeguarding and child protection training and receive regular updates in line with statutory requirements.
- ✓ Ensure all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including the identification, reporting and early help response to concerns about children.
- ✓ Act as the 'case manager' for allegations against staff (including supply staff), volunteers or contractors, where appropriate, and ensure relevant procedures are followed.
- ✓ Ensure recommendations arising from Local Authority reviews, audits, inspections or safeguarding reviews are implemented promptly.
- ✓ Ensure staff, volunteers and contractors can raise concerns about unsafe practice or safeguarding failures and are aware of whistleblowing procedures.
- ✓ Ensure effective partnership working with safeguarding partners, children's social care, the police and other relevant agencies.
- ✓ Ensure appropriate online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place and reviewed regularly to safeguard pupils.

6.4 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

- ✓ Teachers, including the Head teacher, will safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties in line with the Teacher Standards. .

6.5 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body is responsible and accountable for ensuring:

- ✓ A whole-school approach to safeguarding, with safeguarding and child protection underpinning all relevant policies, procedures, practices, and curriculum development.
- ✓ Effective oversight of online safety, including the Online Safety Policy within the Child Protection Policy, and ensuring appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place, taking account of the Prevent Duty risk assessment.
- ✓ Clear roles and responsibilities are identified and assigned for filtering and monitoring arrangements.
- ✓ Harmful and inappropriate online content is blocked without unreasonably restricting teaching and learning.
- ✓ Effective monitoring arrangements are in place to meet safeguarding requirements.
- ✓ Filtering and monitoring provision is reviewed annually to assess effectiveness.
- ✓ An annual review of filtering and monitoring is undertaken by the senior leader responsible, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and IT staff, with records maintained.
- ✓ Compliance with Department for Education Filtering and Monitoring Standards is reviewed and outcomes discussed with leaders, IT staff, and service providers.
- ✓ Online safety arrangements are communicated to staff, pupils, parents, carers, and visitors providing learning opportunities to children.
- ✓ All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety and filtering and monitoring awareness, and read and understand Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*.
- ✓ Staff receive regular safeguarding updates, at least annually, to maintain the knowledge and skills required to safeguard children effectively.
- ✓ All governors and trustees receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and at regular intervals thereafter.
- ✓ Duties under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are fulfilled.
- ✓ An appropriate senior leader is appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), with at least one Deputy DSL also appointed.
- ✓ This policy is reviewed and approved annually, with the Headteacher/Principal held accountable for its implementation.
- ✓ A safeguarding governor is appointed to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and this policy on behalf of the full Governing Body, and receives appropriate safeguarding training and updates.
- ✓ Robust recruitment and selection procedures are in place in line with safer recruitment requirements.
- ✓ Child protection records are created, maintained, transferred, and retained in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and other statutory guidance.
- ✓ An annual safeguarding audit (Section 175 audit) is undertaken or commissioned, and any identified actions are implemented and monitored through to completion.
- ✓ Where an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher/Principal, the Chair of Governors (or equivalent) acts as the case manager in accordance with statutory guidance.

- ✓ Appropriate arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions and to recognise that children with medical or health needs may require additional safeguarding consideration.
- ✓ Appropriate written assurance is obtained from alternative provision providers, off-site providers, and organisations using school premises that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, including:
  - Child protection policies and procedures.
  - Staff safeguarding training.
  - Safer recruitment practices.
  - Allegation management procedures.
  - Suitable risk assessments and support arrangements for vulnerable pupils.
- ✓ Written safeguarding assurances are held for all alternative and off-site providers used by the school.
- ✓ Information is shared and cooperation provided to the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and other safeguarding partners as required.

(The full responsibilities of the governing body are set out in Part Two of KCSIE 2026– The management of safeguarding. The governing body will ensure that the school is fully compliant with their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.)

6.6. THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD

The mental health lead is responsible for creating a whole-school approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing by;

- ✓ developing a whole-school approach to support mental wellbeing.
- ✓ promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness for pupils and staff.
- ✓ ensuring clear processes to report mental health concerns.
- ✓ ensuring clear processes for managing mental health concerns.
- ✓ delivering appropriate training.
- ✓ liaising with the DSL where a mental health problem could indicate that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This could include self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or suicide.
- ✓ observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one
- ✓ ensuring early targeted support is provided, and liaising with/referral to specialist services where needed

7. CHECKING THE IDENTITY AND SUITABILITY OF VISITORS

Our school have robust procedures in place for people visiting the school. For visitors who are there in a professional capacity we will check ID and be assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check. Visitors are always expected to sign in using the electronic system and wear a visitor's badge when in school. We will ensure that visitors to our school are supervised as appropriate.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or the organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

All visitors to our setting, including visiting speakers, will always be accompanied by a member of staff. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out

appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities, is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise children or staff.

8. CHILDREN REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Children are regularly reminded that they can speak to any trusted adult in school if they are worried about themselves or someone else. The safeguarding team is clearly identified across the school through posters, staff photographs, assemblies, tutor time and PSHE/RSHE lessons.

Pupils can raise concerns by:

- Speaking directly to a member of staff.
- Speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL.
- Using the school's worry box system.
- Using the school's online reporting system where available.
- Asking a parent, carer or trusted adult to raise a concern on their behalf.

The school actively promotes a culture where children know they will be listened to, believed and taken seriously. Following any disclosure, children will be reassured that they have done the right thing, that the concern will be acted upon and that support will be available throughout the process.

9. OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING

Our school recognises its important role in safeguarding education. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils are taught how to stay safe, recognise risks, understand appropriate behaviour and healthy relationships, identify when they or others may be at risk, and know how and where to seek help. Safeguarding, including online safety, is embedded throughout teaching and learning and delivered through a whole-school approach.

The governing body ensures safeguarding is taught as part of an effective preventative education programme that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and promotes a culture of respect, inclusion and zero tolerance of sexism, racism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence, sexual harassment, discrimination, derogatory behaviour and all forms of violence or abuse.

Our values, behaviour expectations and pastoral systems are reinforced through an age-appropriate and inclusive PSHE/RSHE curriculum, which takes account of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and additional vulnerabilities. Through this curriculum, pupils develop self-awareness, self-esteem, resilience, emotional literacy, decision-making skills and strategies to help keep themselves and others safe. Pupils are encouraged and supported to speak to trusted adults about any concerns. They are listened to, taken seriously and supported appropriately. Safeguarding concerns and disclosures are recorded in line with statutory guidance.

In Melling we have a ‘Be Safe’ curriculum (see full document on website on the Curriculum page)

EYFS/KS1	AUTUMN ASSEMBLIES	SPRING ASSEMBLIES	SUMMER ASSEMBLIES	KS2
YR -Classroom safety – routines and resources -School safety -Playground safety -Home-time safety -Toilet/bathroom safety -Be Safe expectation -Forest School -STOP – THINK – DECIDE Y1 -Be Safe expectation of behaviour – what does this look like across school day -NSPCC Pantosaurus (alongside Science topic My Body) -Safety when using senses (taste, smell etc) -Road Safety -Online Safety -Forest School -STOP – THINK - DECIDE Y2 -Be Safe expectation of behaviour – what does this look like across school day -Safety by the Sea -Online Safety -Forest School -STOP – THINK – DECIDE	-Be Safe: Keeping safe in and around school -7 Steps to Well-Being – Healthy Eating -Antibullying – Friendship, care and kindness -Halloween -Bonfire Night	-Be Safe Be respectful Be Kind – Telling school -Internet Safety -NSPCC – Speak Out KS1 & KS2 -Healthy relationships -7 Steps to Well-Being – Talk it through	-Water Safety Merseyside Fire and Rescue -Sun -safe -Railway Safety -Keeping safe in the park and on summer holiday -7 Steps to well-being – think positive thoughts	Y3 -Keeping safe near trains and on station -Online Safety -How to stay healthy and recognise risks/First Aid -Safe relationships -Electricity – keeping safe Y4 -Online Safety -Solids, liquids, gases – safety Safe relationships – knowing when to say 'no' -Spotting dangers and staying safe at home and when out; managing risks -CHET residential Y5 -Online safety -Mental health awareness, how to recognise when to seek help, strategies to support -Crucial Crew: fire & home safety; Personal & public safety; social & digital awareness; health & well-being -CHET residential Y6 -Online Safety -Grassing and Grooming (Ariel Trust) -Get Away and Stay Safe – Gang awareness -Relationships – consent -Ormside residential
	BE SAFE CURRICULUM BE THE BEST THAT YOU CAN BE – BE PROUD			
	MY HAPPY MIND & PSHE/RSE	SCIENCE & DT	COMPUTING	
	Safeguarding: Teaching children how to spot unsafe situations, recognize physical boundaries, and name trusted adults. Online Safety: Educating pupils on digital realities, managing uncomfortable online moments, and screen safety. Relationships: Helping students identify healthy versus unhealthy friendships, handle peer pressure, and understand respect Emotional Links: Tying physical and relationship choices directly to mental health and emotional self-regulation	-Learning how to work safely and scientifically -Safety when using electricity -Safety in sunlight -Healthy living -Safe/unsafe substances including liquids and gases -Using tools safely	Knowsley Computing Scheme of Work * Key Stage 1: Use technology safely and respectfully, keeping personal information private; identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns about content or contact on the internet or other online technologies. * Key Stage 2: Use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly; recognise acceptable/unacceptable behaviour; identify a range of ways to report concerns about content and contact. * Each year group has a 'My Online Life' topic which aims to ensure your school meets the requirements of the UKCIS Education for Connected World Framework.	

Safeguarding education reflects both national and local safeguarding priorities for Sefton, including:

- **Online safety, gaming and social media.**
- Child criminal exploitation and county lines.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Knife crime and serious violence.
- **Mental health and emotional wellbeing.**
- Domestic abuse.
- Attendance and children missing education.
- **Healthy relationships and consent.**
- Radicalisation and extremism.

These themes are age appropriate and are delivered through assemblies, PSHE/RSHE, external speakers, themed awareness events and targeted interventions.

The school may use external agencies, speakers and organisations to enhance safeguarding education. Appropriate checks will be undertaken to ensure their suitability and that any materials or messages are consistent with the school's values, safeguarding responsibilities and curriculum aims. External input must not marginalise individuals or groups, promote criminality, violence, extremism or radicalisation, and must be age-appropriate, meet pupils' needs and complement existing curriculum provision.

While maintaining these safeguards, the school encourages pupils to develop critical thinking skills and engage respectfully with different viewpoints and ideologies appropriate to their age and understanding. Additional opportunities to promote pupil voice, participation and safeguarding awareness are provided through These opportunities support pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to safeguard themselves and others.

10. OUR ROLE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO ARE VULNERABLE AND AT RISK THROUGH A CHILD CENTRED AND COORDINATED APPROACH

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We are dedicated to protecting and supporting every pupil, including those who are vulnerable, requiring Early Help and children in need (Family Help) or subject to child protection plans. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and ensure all staff understand and fulfil their safeguarding duties.

We understand that children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or other adverse experiences may face challenges with their emotional wellbeing, behaviour, and relationships. We therefore take a sensitive, child-centred approach, acting in each child's best interests and providing appropriate support to help them feel safe, valued, and able to achieve their potential.

While all children have the right to be safe, we recognise that some may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, or exploitation. All staff have a responsibility to identify concerns, share information appropriately, and take prompt action so that children receive the right help at the right time. Although concerns will usually be discussed with parents or carers, there may be occasions when referrals are made to Social Care and/or the Police without parental knowledge, in line with statutory safeguarding procedures and Part 2 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*. Our Child Protection Policy is available on the school website.

10.1 CHILDREN WHO MAY REQUIRE EARLY HELP /FAMILY HELP

Early Help (Family Help)
At our school, we recognise the importance of identifying concerns early and providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Early help, which may be delivered through Family Help services, is crucial in preventing concerns from escalating and improving outcomes for children and their families. We are committed to working with children, parents, carers and partner agencies to ensure that the right support is provided at the right time.

All staff have a responsibility to identify children who may benefit from early help and should discuss any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL without delay. Where appropriate, our school will work with families, community-based services and other agencies to coordinate and provide support. This may include signposting or referring families to local family support, health, youth, community and voluntary sector services, including Early Support and community-based programmes, to address needs before they escalate.

Our Early Help Offer includes:

- Pastoral mentoring.
- Attendance support and intervention.
- Emotional wellbeing support.
- Family support meetings.
- Team Around the Family meetings.
- School nurse referrals.
- Mental health support.
- SEND support and early intervention.
- Referrals to FAST, CAMHS and other partner agencies.
- Signposting to community-based family support services.

Where appropriate, our school will act as the Lead Practitioner and work collaboratively with children, families and partner agencies to coordinate, monitor and review support plans.

Our staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children who may have additional vulnerabilities, including those with SEND or disabilities, young carers, children experiencing bereavement, persistent absence, mental health or emotional wellbeing needs, risks associated with exploitation, serious violence, online harms, substance misuse, domestic abuse, parental mental health difficulties, parental offending, housing or financial difficulties, children who go missing from home or care, privately fostered children, and those showing early signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should also be aware of children who have experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of exclusion, or who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

We will sign post our families to Sefton Family Life Toolkit Sefton Family Life Toolkit

Our staff understand that recognising the early signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and wider safeguarding concerns is essential. If staff are unsure about a child's needs or the appropriate course of action, they should always seek advice from the DSL or Deputy DSL. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or Deputy DSL is not available, this must not delay action. Staff should seek support from a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) and ensure that any actions taken are shared with the DSL as soon as possible and recorded in line with our safeguarding procedures.

10.2 CHILDREN IN NEED WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development without the provision of services, whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without such services, or who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
Some children and families may also receive support through Targeted Family Help where additional needs have been identified and early intervention is required.

We recognise that experiences of adversity and trauma can impact a child's safety, wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, learning and mental health. The DSL, leadership team and all staff will work effectively with social workers, Targeted Family Help practitioners and other agencies to support vulnerable children.
Where a child has a social worker or is receiving Targeted Family Help support, the DSL will take this into account when making decisions to ensure the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes remain a priority. We are committed to maintaining high aspirations for all children, recognising that the effects of adversity may continue even after professional involvement has ended.

The Virtual School headteacher who has a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of pupils with a social worker works closely with our DSL, Headteacher and SENCO. They engage with other key professionals, including school nurses' mental health leads and other relevant professionals. non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care

Our school will respond to **absence from school** /missing education where there are known safeguarding risks by working in partnership with Sefton Council. In Melling we benefit from 2 hours of Attendance Officer Support each week – this enables close monitoring of children who evidence attendance issues.

10.3 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN, CARE LEAVERS AND CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE

At Melling we will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. Our DSL has details of all the children's social workers and the Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after the child. Heads. Appropriate staff in school have relevant information about looked after children's legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

We will have information about the child's care arrangements and levels of authority delegated to the carer by the Local authority looking after him/her

We will share information swiftly with social workers, the virtual school, care leavers personal advisors and other key partners.

We will recognise that children and young people with a social worker, in care, previously in care and Kinship are vulnerable to educational disadvantage.

Our school has a Designated Teacher. They have lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how looked-after children learn and achieve. Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (Feb 2018) is The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- ✓ Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure safeguarding concerns for looked-after and previously looked-after children are identified and addressed promptly. They will also work with the Virtual School Head to promote high aspirations, educational achievement and positive outcomes, including supporting effective use of Pupil Premium Plus funding, implementing Personal Education Plan (PEP) priorities, providing targeted support where needed, and working with carers to encourage learning and achievement both in school and at home.

Members of staff employed in the Virtual School are detailed below.

Natasha Sandland	Virtual Headteacher	Natasha.Sandland@sefton.gov.uk 07794 074399
Emma Stewart	Deputy Virtual Headteacher CWSW	Emma.Stewart@sefton.gov.uk 07929802362
Jenny Dinning	Virtual School Inclusion Officer	Jenny.Dinning@sefton.gov.uk 07812 098017
Cristina Brett	Education Co-Ordinator	Cristina.Brett@sefton.gov.uk 07816115535
Lee Murphy	Education Co-Ordinator	Lee.Murphy@sefton.gov.uk

		07815 711400
Laura Tickle	Education Co-ordinator	Laura.Tickle@sefton.gov.uk 07870 379770
Ashley Toner	Education Co-ordinator	Ashley.Toner@sefton.gov.uk 07812 087977
Sam Keen	Education Co-ordinator	Samantha.Keen@sefton.gov.uk 07812776368
John Wright	Education Co-ordinator	John.Wright@sefton.gov.uk 07790 776453
Laura Griffin	Education Co-ordinator	Laura.Griffin@sefton.gov.uk
Alan Naylor	Education Co-ordinator	Alan.Naylor@sefton.gov.uk
Francesca Lloyd	Virtual School Support Officer	Francesca.Lloyd@sefton.gov.uk 07773069662

10.4 CHILDREN WHO ARE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS (LGBT+) OR GENDER QUESTIONING

Being LGBT+ is not in itself a safeguarding concern. However, children who are LGBT+, or who are perceived to be LGBT+, may be at increased risk of bullying, discrimination, prejudice-based incidents and poor mental wellbeing. The school is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which all children are supported and protected from harm.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school recognises that children who are questioning their gender may experience a range of vulnerabilities and should be supported through a safeguarding-led, child-centred approach. Any request relating to a child's name, pronouns, presentation or other aspects of social transition will be considered carefully on an individual basis, taking account of the child's age, understanding, wishes, wellbeing, safeguarding needs, and the rights and needs of other children.

Decisions will be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and senior leaders, informed by relevant professional advice where appropriate, and will be recorded appropriately. Parents or carers will normally be involved in decision-making unless there is reason to believe that doing so would place the child at risk of harm.

The school will comply with its safeguarding duties and responsibilities under relevant education, equality, human rights and health and safety legislation, together with any current Department for Education guidance. Arrangements relating to toilets, changing facilities, sports and residential activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the safety, dignity, privacy and welfare of all children involved.

10.5 CHILDREN REQUIRING SUPPORT WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

We recognise the important role the school plays in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing. We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment where children can access help when needed. Staff should remain vigilant to signs that a child may be experiencing mental health difficulties, such as low mood, anxiety, emotional distress, self-harm, or suicidal thoughts. Any concerns should be shared with the appropriate pastoral lead or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), particularly where there is a risk of harm.

Where necessary, pupils will be monitored and supported through the school's pastoral systems, with referrals made to the CHAT Team or other appropriate services. Parents or carers will be informed, where safe and appropriate, and advised to seek support from their GP or emergency medical services if required.

Staff should recognise that mental health concerns may be both a safeguarding issue in themselves and an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse childhood experiences.

Staff play a key role in:

- Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Identifying concerns at an early stage.
- Providing appropriate support and intervention.
- Referring to specialist services when additional support is required.

The school has a designated Senior Mental Health Lead who oversees the whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, ensuring effective support is available for pupils, staff, and families.
The school is committed to maintaining clear procedures for identifying and responding to mental health concerns, providing appropriate staff training, and working collaboratively with families and external agencies to promote positive outcomes for all pupils.

Kooth in Sefton

Kooth is an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through mobile, tablet and desktop and is free at the point of use. Kooth is an early intervention resource which targets improvements in young people's emotional and mental wellbeing.

Online support will address a wide range of health and wellbeing issues such as relationships, bullying, self-harm, suicide, loneliness, self-confidence, self-esteem, pregnancy, abuse, bereavement, anger, and risk-taking behaviours, although this list is not exhaustive.

Young people aged 11 to 19 will self-refer into the service 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, although only dedicated counsellor hours will be provided. Outside counselling hours, young people will be able to access such features as online articles, forums, and message boards. The online facility must be compatible with mobile media devices.
https://xenzone.com/free-online-counselling-sefton/

10.6 CHILDREN WITH SEN/DISABILITIES/HEALTH CONDITIONS

[School Name] Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline.
We recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect or exploitation in this group of children. We will refer to KCSiE 2026 para 247-249, for further clarification and ensure staff are aware of these additional barriers.

Furthermore, we commit to:

- ✓ Train staff to understand the additional barriers that can exist for some children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions.
- ✓ Ensuring close liaison between DSL and the SENCO following reports of abuse involving children with SEND
- ✓ ·Ensuring that staff do not assume that indicators of possible abuse relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- ✓ Ensuring that we consider what additional and different measures we can put in place to support these children to recognise and communicate abuse, neglect or exploitation including consideration of extra pastoral support and attention.
- ✓ Adhering to the safeguarding guidance laid out in the SEND code of practice and the supporting pupils at school with medical conditions guidance.

The school recognises that children with SEND may face additional barriers to reporting abuse and recognising risk.

Additional safeguarding arrangements include:

- Regular wellbeing check-ins.
- Access to trusted adults.
- Adapted safeguarding resources.
- Individual risk assessments where required.
- Close liaison between the DSL, SENDCO and external agencies.
- Enhanced communication support for pupils with speech, language and communication needs.

Our school work closely with (please name any services that support SEND children in your school.) We work with Sefton's KIDS Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS.) who can be contacted by telephone 0151 433 7442 or Email seftonsendiass@kids.org.uk

In Melling we support our children with SEND and/or medical issues with the following:
-An Intimate Care Policy
-Key adults who work with identified children know their children well and are able to identify any issues
-Monitoring of children by SENCO and SLT
-Care Plans informed by relevant professionals eg Catheter training

10.7 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL NEEDS

[School Name] supports pupils at school with medical conditions and allergies and are properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.

Our governing body will ensure that arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical conditions and allergies, including recording, reporting and tracking information / training yearly.

Our governing body will ensure that school leaders consult with health and social care professionals, pupils and parents ensuring that the needs of children with medical conditions and allergies are properly understood and effectively supported.

The school follows the DfE guidance Allergy safety in schools and Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school

10.8 HARM OUTSIDE THE HOME – (EXTRA FAMILIAL HARM)

We recognise safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school including online. All staff, especially the DSL (or deputy), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. It is important that staff provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process.

10.9 CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS

Many adults find themselves looking after someone else's child without realising that they may be involved in private fostering. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 or under 18 if disabled), by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more, it is categorised as private fostering. The Children Act 1989 defines an immediate relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a step- parent. People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons Examples of private fostering include:

- ✓ Children who need alternative care because of parental illness.
- ✓ Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours.
- ✓ Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities.
- ✓ Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children.
- ✓ Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents.
- ✓ Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

Our school will fulfil the mandatory duty to inform the CHAT Team of a private fostering arrangement. . A Social Worker will undertake:

- ✓ An assessment of the needs of the child and consider whether there is any help that should be provided.
- ✓ Check that private fostering carers are suitable people to care for children, and that the accommodation where children will be cared for is adequate.
- ✓ Decide whether the private fostering arrangements are satisfactory and can go ahead.
- ✓ Visit children who are privately fostered to ensure their needs are met, and they are being properly looked after.

10.10 YOUNG CARERS

Melling recognises that a young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a

contract or as voluntary work) and that young adult carers are aged 16 to 25 and may have different support needs as they transition to adulthood.

Melling is alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. We understand that early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support, at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.

Melling has a named young carers champion, who supports young carers in school.

10.11 CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY

The school recognises that children living in poverty may face additional challenges that affect their wellbeing, attendance, learning and achievement. While poverty is not in itself a safeguarding concern, it can increase vulnerability and the need for early help and support. Staff should be alert to unmet needs and ensure concerns are shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) so that appropriate support can be provided.

Staff will :

- Be alert to signs that poverty may be impacting a child's wellbeing, attendance or development.
- Report concerns to the DSL in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Consider and access Early Help where appropriate.
- Work with families and partner agencies to secure support.
- Take steps to reduce barriers to learning and participation.
- Treat children and families with dignity, respect and without stigma.
- Maintain a child-centred approach at all times.

11. RECOGNISING AND IDENTIFYING ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SIGNIFICANT HARM

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect

Abuse is defined as 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, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. 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 by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse. Types of abuse as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026) **Appendix 4 - Definitions of abuse and indicators.**

11.1 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.

11.2 Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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, although it may occur alone.

11.3 Sexual abuse: 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 penetration with an object) 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.

11.4 Neglect: 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, for example, 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs
- providing a suitable education.

12. SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

12.1 Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes

If staff become aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos (including AI-generated, digitally manipulated or "nudified" images), they must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Staff will not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery themselves, or ask a child to share or download it. If a member of staff has already viewed the imagery by accident, they must report this immediately to the DSL.
- Delete the imagery or ask the child or young person to delete it.
- Ask the child(ren) involved to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff except on a need-to-know basis.
- Share information about the incident with other children, parents or carers, unless directed to do so by the DSL.

- Say or do anything which could be interpreted as blaming, shaming or criminalising any child involved.
- Explain to the child that they must report the incident to the DSL in order to keep them safe and will reassure them that they will receive appropriate support.

Initial Review Meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. This may include the staff member who reported the incident and members of the safeguarding or leadership team.

The purpose of the meeting will be to consider the available information and determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk of harm to any child.
- Whether a referral should be made to the Police and/or Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT).
- Whether it is necessary to view the image(s) to safeguard the child or children involved. In most cases, images and videos should not be viewed.
- What further information is required to determine the most appropriate response.
- Whether the image(s) or video(s) have been shared more widely and via which services, platforms or applications.
- Whether any immediate action should be taken to remove the imagery from devices or online platforms.
- Whether AI-generated, digitally altered, deepfake or "nudified" images are involved.
- Whether there are indications of grooming, exploitation, coercion, blackmail, online sexual coercion or financially motivated sexual extortion (sextortion).
- Any relevant facts about the children involved that may influence a risk assessment, including age, developmental stage, vulnerabilities, SEND or mental health needs.
- Whether another school, college, setting or agency should be informed.
- Whether parents or carers should be contacted. In most circumstances, parents/carers will be informed.

Referral to Police and/or Children's Social Care

The DSL will make an immediate referral to the Police and/or Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) where:

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is reason to believe a child has been coerced, blackmailed, groomed or exploited.
- There are concerns regarding online sexual coercion or financially motivated sexual extortion (sextortion).
- There are concerns about a child's capacity to consent, for example because of their age, developmental stage, learning difficulties or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The imagery depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage or appears violent, abusive or degrading.
- The imagery involves sexual activity and any child depicted is under the age of 13.
- The imagery involves an adult and a child.
- The DSL has reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, including where the child presents as suicidal, self-harming or otherwise at significant risk as a consequence of the incident.
- The imagery appears to constitute child sexual abuse material, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated child sexual abuse imagery.

Managing Incidents Internally

Where none of the above circumstances apply, the DSL, in consultation with the Headteacher and other relevant staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident internally without involving the Police or

Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT). Any decision not to refer will be proportionate, clearly recorded and based on a robust assessment of risk and protective factors.

Further Review by the DSL
Where a decision has been made not to refer the matter to the Police or Children's Social Care at the initial review stage, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess risks.

This may include:

- Speaking with the children involved, where appropriate.
- Assessing the level of risk posed to those involved.
- Considering any wider safeguarding concerns.
- Identifying support needs for victims and alleged perpetrators.
- Determining whether wider educational or pastoral interventions are required.

If, at any stage, there is concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) and/or the Police.

Informing Parents and Carers

The DSL will normally inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved throughout the process. However, parents/carers will not be informed where there is a compelling reason to believe that doing so would place a child at risk of significant harm.
The rationale for any decision not to inform parents/carers will be clearly recorded.

Referring to the Police

Where a referral to the Police is required, this will be made through:
Merseyside Police and/or link Officer for the area
In an emergency or where there is an immediate risk of significant harm, 999 will be called.

Recording Incidents

All incidents involving the making and sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated, digitally manipulated and deepfake imagery, together with all decisions, risk assessments, actions taken and outcomes, will be recorded on the school's safeguarding recording system.
Records will be maintained in accordance with safeguarding, information-sharing and data protection requirements.

Addressing making and sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes Through the Curriculum

Children are taught about the risks associated with making and sharing nudes and semi-nudes through the school's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Computing curricula.

Teaching includes:

- What making and sharing nudes and semi-nudes is and how it may occur.
- How such content is most likely to be encountered online.
- The risks associated with creating, requesting, possessing, forwarding or sharing such content.
- Issues relating to consent, coercion, exploitation and online sexual harassment.
- The potential legal consequences of creating, possessing or sharing indecent images of children.
- The risks associated with AI-generated, deepfake and digitally manipulated imagery.
- The impact that sharing such imagery can have on emotional wellbeing, relationships and reputation.
- Strategies for managing requests or pressure to create, send or forward such images.

- What to do if they receive an unwanted image.
- How to report concerns and seek support from trusted adults.
- How to stay safe online and access help if they are worried about themselves or others.

Advice and guidance can be located at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

The NSPCC also provide support if children have been sharing nudes and semi nudes (sexting)
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/sexting-advice-professionals

12.2 ONLINE SAFETY AND THE USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND CAMERAS

See website page: Safeguarding https://www.mellingprimaryschool.co.uk/safeguarding-2

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. We want to equip our pupils with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered, and respectful way, so they can reap the benefits of the online world. Advice about teaching online safety can be found at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf

There are four categories of risk:

- ✓ **Content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- ✓ **Contact:** being exposed to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- ✓ **Conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography) including those generated using AI, and online bullying; and
- ✓ **Commerce**: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams

Staff should be aware that children may be influenced by harmful online content, including misogynistic, extremist or harmful ideological material promoted through social media platforms, online communities, livestreams and influencers. Exposure to content that promotes violence, hatred, exploitation, discrimination, coercive control, unhealthy relationships or harmful attitudes towards women and girls may present a safeguarding concern and should be reported to the DSL.

Children may also be at risk of online sexual coercion and extortion (sextortion), where offenders use threats to share sexual images in order to obtain money, further images or compliance. Any concerns regarding sextortion must be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported immediately to the DSL.

12.3 Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

The school recognises that mobile phones, smartwatches and other internet-enabled devices can support communication and learning but may also present safeguarding risks, including cyberbullying, online abuse, exploitation, inappropriate contact, exposure to harmful content, and the sharing of images or personal information. The Department for Education's *Mobile Phones in Schools* statutory guidance states that schools should be "mobile phone-free environments by default" and should have policies that prohibit the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality throughout the school day, including lessons, between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. The school will promote the safe and responsible use of technology and respond to any safeguarding concerns in accordance with this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and associated online safety procedures.

Source: Department for Education (2026) *Mobile Phones in Schools: Statutory Guidance*; NSPCC Learning (2026) *Online Safety and Schools*.

12.4 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in School

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly accessible and may be used by staff, pupils, and parents/carers. Examples include ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and other AI-powered applications.

Our school recognises the potential benefits of AI in supporting teaching, learning, administration, and safeguarding. However, AI also presents risks, including exposure to inappropriate or harmful content, misuse for bullying, grooming, or harassment, and the creation or sharing of misleading content such as AI-generated images, audio, video, or 'deepfakes'.

Any misuse of AI that places pupils at risk, facilitates bullying, or involves access to harmful content will be managed in accordance with this policy and the school's Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, and Artificial Intelligence policies, as appropriate.

Staff must remain aware of the risks associated with emerging AI technologies and conduct suitable risk assessments before introducing new AI tools. All AI use must comply with the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements and the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*.

Any new AI platform, application or system introduced within school will be subject to appropriate safeguarding, data protection, privacy and risk assessment processes before implementation. Consideration will be given to age appropriateness, data security, filtering and monitoring arrangements and potential safeguarding risks.

Safeguarding procedures will apply to all AI-related concerns, including incidents involving AI-generated nude or semi-nude images, deepfakes, or other harmful content. Such concerns will be addressed promptly in line with statutory guidance and school safeguarding procedures.

The school is committed to promoting the safe, responsible, and effective use of AI while ensuring the wellbeing, safety, and protection of all pupils.

Further guidance is available from the Department for Education.
Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education - GOV.UK Using AI in education settings: support materials - GOV.UK

Our school will:

- ✓ Undertake an annual review of online safety to identify any risks that the school community may be exposed to.
- ✓ Ensure our governors have knowledge in relation to online safety.
- ✓ Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online including sites they will have access to or who they will be interacting with online).
- ✓ Provide online guidance and support to children and their parents to remain free from risk, exploitation, grooming and radicalisation.
- ✓ Ensure staff receive training as part of their induction on using the internet safely and online safeguarding issues, including cyberbullying and the risks of online radicalisation. There will be an annual refresher training session.
- ✓ Educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology including mobile/smart phones.
- ✓ Ensure they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place, in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving **cyber-crime** technologies.
- ✓ Ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children and young people from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The use of filters is routinely monitored and updated by the Network Manager (put in role) and any breaches dealt with in accordance with school procedures and reported to governors.
- ✓ The school utilises filtering and monitoring systems provided by [provider name].
- ✓ The Network Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of filtering and monitoring systems. Safeguarding alerts are reviewed by the DSL and escalated where appropriate.
- ✓ The Governing Body receives annual assurance reports regarding filtering and monitoring arrangements in line with Department for Education standards.
- ✓ Be careful to ensure that these systems do not place unreasonable restrictions on internet access or limit what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- ✓ Ensure a comprehensive whole school curriculum response is in place to enable all children to learn about and manage online risks effectively and will support parents and the wider school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the need to keep children safe online.
- ✓ Ensure all members of the school community are aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.
- ✓ Ensure the governing body has had due regard to the additional information and support set out in **KCSIE (2026) Annex D** and will ensure that the school has a whole school approach to online safety and has a clear policy on use of communications technology in school.
- ✓ Guidance supporting schools to teach their children how to stay safe online, within new and existing school subjects can be found at: **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools**
- ✓ Ensure staff, children and parents are aware that staff have the power to search children's' phones. **https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674416/Searching_screening_and_confiscation.pdf**

Staff can bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when children are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils. Staff will not take pictures or recordings of children on their personal phones or cameras. We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

12.5 REMOTE LEARNING AND SAFEGUARDING

Where pupils access education remotely, our school will continue to meet its safeguarding responsibilities and follow current Department for Education guidance on safeguarding and remote education. Safeguarding remains a priority, and all staff will remain vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and any changes in a pupil's presentation, wellbeing, or engagement.

Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) identifies a pupil as vulnerable, requiring early help, at risk of statutory intervention, subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, a Child Looked After, or ordinarily receiving pastoral support in school, an individual communication plan will be implemented. This may include welfare calls, virtual meetings, contact through approved online learning platforms, communication with parents/carers, home or doorstep visits where appropriate, and multi-agency information sharing where concerns are identified.

All contacts, welfare checks, concerns, actions taken and outcomes will be recorded in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding concerns identified through remote contact will be responded to and recorded in the same way as concerns arising within school. The DSL will regularly review communication plans and adjust support and contact arrangements as necessary to ensure pupils remain safe, supported and engaged in education.
Safeguarding and remote education - GOV.UK

12.6 CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM EDUCATION/ MISSING EDUCATION

Our school works closely with the local authority, in line with the statutory guidance on school attendance set out by the Department for Education (DfE).

A child being absent from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. All staff should be aware that children who are absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Attendance Champion will work closely together to identify patterns of absence that may indicate safeguarding concerns. Attendance information will be regularly reviewed alongside safeguarding, behaviour, welfare and pastoral information to ensure vulnerable children receive timely support and intervention.

Where attendance concerns are identified in relation to children with a social worker, children subject to Child Protection or Child in Need plans, children receiving Family Help support, children who are looked after or previously looked after, or children known to be vulnerable, safeguarding considerations will always form part of attendance planning and decision making.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent and have unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education.' **/ or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:**

- ✓ **Are at risk of harm or neglect.**
- ✓ **Are at risk from criminal/sexual exploitation.**
- ✓ **Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM.**
- ✓ **Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families.**
- ✓ **Come from the families of service personnel.**
- ✓ **Risk of travelling to conflict zones.**
- ✓ **Go missing or run away from home or care.**
- ✓ **Are supervised by the youth justice system.**
- ✓ **Cease to attend a school.**
- ✓ **have a mental health need and has an effect on school attendance and progress.**
- ✓ **Come from new migrant families.**

Our attendance procedures are designed to ensure that a child being absent from school is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

Our school will hold at least **two** contact numbers for every child. These will be used as part of the First Day Calling process. It is good practice to give our school additional options to contact a responsible adult when a child missing education, is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Any concerns about a child missing from school will be acted upon – if a child has not attended school and there has been no contact from parents/carers, it may be necessary to carry out a home visit. In Melling we have the services of Sefton Attendance Officer who can carry out home visits.

Notifying the Local Authority

Our school notify the Local Authority of any child who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. The school (regardless of designation) must also notify the Local Authority of any child who is to be deleted from the admission register.

If a pupil is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from their parent or carer, attempts will be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers, as well as any alternative emergency contacts.

We will consider patterns and trends in a child's absences, together with their personal circumstances, and use our professional judgement when determining whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged.
Consideration will be given to the child's vulnerability, the vulnerability of the parent(s) and/or carer(s), and the child's home circumstances. Any concerns will be referred to local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check may be requested.

Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered missing from education.

Where a child leaves the school without a destination or another school is not identified, our school follow Sefton Council Children Missing Education Procedures and they can be found at: **https://www.sefton.gov.uk/schools-learning/attendance-and-welfare/children-missing-education-(cme).aspx.** The school will liaise with Clare Johanson the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator who can be contacted on 0151 934 3181 or clare.johanson@sefton.gov.uk

Children who are on a managed move supported by the in- year fair access/off-site direction

Our school will work with the receiving school to monitor attendance. We will attend all the reviews and if the decision is taken for the child to return, we will ensure they are fully supported.

Elective Home Education

If a parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove their child from our school roll to be electively home educated, we will work together with key professionals including the Complementary Education Service to coordinate a meeting with the parent or carer to discuss the reasons and options. This is particularly important if a child has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), is vulnerable or has a social worker.

If the parent/carer of a child with an education, health, and care (EHC) plan has expressed their intention to educate their child at home, the LA should review the plan working with parents and carers.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

- Contact all contact numbers on the system – in the meantime look after the child in After School Club (Dolphin Club) until the end of the session (5.30pm); then...
- If not collected at the end of the session, a member of Senior staff (if possible) will stay with the child whilst trying to make contact with parents/carers; then...
- If after a given period of time still no contact has been made the Senior member of staff will make the decision to contact Children's Social Care and in some instances the Police.
- This will be recorded on CPOMs

12.7 Children who attend alternative provision

The school retains responsibility for the safeguarding of all pupils attending alternative provision while they remain on roll. The DSL oversees all placements and safeguarding arrangements, with weekly communication, written reports and review meetings used to monitor attendance, welfare, safeguarding concerns, progress and wellbeing. Attendance is monitored through DC-Pro, providing real-time attendance information, prompt follow-up of absences or safeguarding concerns, and regular attendance reviews to inform safeguarding and placement decisions. Pre

All alternative provision placements are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain safe, appropriate and meet pupils' individual needs. Any safeguarding concerns identified through provider communication or monitoring processes will be acted upon immediately and, where necessary, the school will liaise with the Local Authority, urgently review the placement and terminate it if required to safeguard the pupil's welfare and wellbeing.

12.8 MISSING: CHILDREN WHO RUN AWAY OR GO MISSING FROM HOME OR CARE

The school/college recognises that children who run away or go missing - and are thus absent from their normal residence - are potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, offending and placing themselves in situations where they may suffer physical harm.

As soon as the Local Authority receives notification that a child has gone missing from home or care, contact will be made with parents/carers seeking their consent to a Return Home Interview (RHIs) with their child. Direct contact will then be made with parents/carers and the child, to plan for the interview.

To fulfil the timescale of within 72 hours, it is essential that all opportunities to interview children and young people, including times during the school/college day are utilised. When necessary and in conjunction with the Local Authority, the school/college will facilitate RHIs, both in terms of releasing the from their normal timetable to participate in an interview and in providing an appropriate and safe space on the school/college site for the interview to take place.

RHI's are intended to ascertain the factors that triggered the child's absence. Those factors may include difficulties at home, in school and in the community. The short timescale of 72 hours is imposed to ensure that the RHI remains relevant to the child and enables any required action to be initiated at the earliest opportunity. RHI's are undertaken by professionals who are independent, to facilitate a discussion with the young person that is as open as possible. The school/college will check with the Local Authority whether parents/carers have given their consent to the interview. However, children aged 16 and 17 years old are generally considered to be able to consent and withhold consent to their own information being shared and therefore to participate in a RHI or not.

12.9 DOMESTIC ABUSE

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

Domestic abuse as defined under the DA Act 2021 is:

Behaviour of a person (A) towards another person (B) is "domestic abuse" if:

A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive. The Act says behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- ✓ physical or sexual abuse
- ✓ violent or threatening behaviour
- ✓ controlling or coercive behaviour
- ✓ economic abuse
- ✓ psychological, emotional, or other abuse

Types of domestic abuse include **intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.**

Teenage Relationship Abuse is when there is actual or threatened abuse within a romantic relationship or a former relationship. One partner will try to maintain power and control over the other. This abuse can take many forms: physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or social. This includes coercive and controlling behaviour.

In Sefton, we have many agencies who support people who are experiencing domestic abuse:

- ✓ **Sefton Safer Families Practice Hub -** are part of Sefton Council CHAT and FAST Integrated front door working with children and their families to address domestic abuse.
- ✓ **Sefton Independent Domestic Violence Advisors [IDVA]-** they offer free crisis intervention support to high-risk victims of domestic abuse, provide practical help including safety planning for the whole

family, support through the Criminal Justice System, and home security checks. They work with male and female victims aged 16+ and work with victims even if they choose to remain in their relationship. They can be contacted by phone on 0151 934 5142 between Monday and Friday 9.00am until 5.00pm or at IDVA.Team@sefton.gov.uk

- ✓ **Sefton Women & Children's Aid [SWACA] –** they help women, young people and children survive the impact of domestic violence and abuse by giving free practical and emotional support. SWACA will see people in the community, including the family and well-being centres. They also work with young people who are experiencing relationship abuse. They can be contacted on 0151 922 8606 or help@swaca.com
- ✓ **Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (RASA)-** they provide **essential** crisis and therapeutic support to individuals of all ages who have been affected by sexual violence at any time in their lives. This includes specialised counselling, support, and an Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy (ISVA) service, which includes support through the Criminal Justice process. They also provide an opportunity to give anonymous intelligence in relation to sexual violence if an individual does not want to make a formal complaint. They operate a help line on Tuesdays and Thursdays 6pm until 8pm, Friday 12noon until 2pm, Sunday 10am until 3pm. They can be contacted on 0151 558 1801 or sefton@rasamerseyside.org

OPERATION ENCOMPASS SCHEME

Our school is part of the Operation Encompass Scheme which is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse, and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales. Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school about **all** police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children PRIOR to the start of the next school day. Once a Key Adult (DSL) and their deputy/ies (DDSLs) have attended either an Operation Encompass briefing or completed the online Operation Encompass Key Adult training they will cascade the principles of Operation Encompass to all other school staff and Governors. All schools staff and Governors can undertake the online training. Our DSL undertook training on 19 09 2023 Our DDSLs undertook training on 03 05 2024

Other advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- ✓ https://www.sefton.gov.uk/advice-benefits/crime-and-emergencies/domestic-abuse.aspx
- ✓ NSPCC-UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects
- ✓ Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- ✓ Safelives: young people and domestic abuse
- ✓ Disrespect Nobody https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse/

12.10 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse It occurs when 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 CSE does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through technology. Like all forms of sexual abuse, CSE can:

- ✓ Affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.

- ✓ Still be abused even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
- ✓ Include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- ✓ Take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- ✓ Involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- ✓ Occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying Videos or images they have created and posted on social media).
- ✓ Be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- ✓ Be typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

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 children and 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.

12.11 CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of CCE too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- ✓ Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- ✓ Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- ✓ Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.

- ✓ Misusing drugs and alcohol.
- ✓ Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- ✓ Regularly missing school or education.
- ✓ Not taking part in education.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- ✓ Go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home.
- ✓ Have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- ✓ Are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- ✓ Are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- ✓ Are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity.
- ✓ Owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- ✓ Have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

In Sefton My SPACE is a wraparound exploitation service for Sefton young people who are at risk of significant harm by virtue of Child Sexual and Child Criminal Exploitation. Our school will work closely with the team to implement a plan to protect the child.

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's CHAT team and the police, if appropriate. If the potential victim is under 18 a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral should be considered. This is usually undertaken by the Police or Local Authority.
Further advice on this issue may be found in the Home Office document 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines. **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines**

12.12 SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- ✓ Increased absence from school.
- ✓ Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- ✓ Significant decline in performance.
- ✓ Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.
- ✓ Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- ✓ Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- ✓ Being male.
- ✓ Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.
- ✓ Having experienced maltreatment.
- ✓ Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Abuse and Exploitation can:

- ✓ Affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years.
- ✓ Affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years.
- ✓ Still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.
- ✓ Involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- ✓ Be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children, young people or adults; and
- ✓ Be typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors, including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Where there are concerns that a child or young person may be or is at risk of becoming involved in gang related activity and being exploited, we will complete the checklist in accordance with the local procedures.
Appendix 5 – exploitation checklist

The school understands that Early Help can be crucial in the early identification of children who may need additional support due to gang related activity and as such will provide an early help response when concerns are raised about indicators of gang activity.

If, however information suggests a child may be at risk of significant harm due to gang related activity, a referral will be made to Sefton CHAT team

Our school will use advice produced by the Home Office for staff to have an understanding of the risks associated with gang related behaviour and what measures can be taken to address these issues. The guidance can be found at:-
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741194/HOCountyLinesGuidanceSept2018.pdf.

12.13 MODERN SLAVERY TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

Our school recognises that modern slavery is a serious form of child abuse and can include human trafficking, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines activity, forced labour, domestic servitude, forced criminality and other forms of exploitation. Children may be exploited by individuals, groups or organised criminal networks. We recognise that a child cannot consent to their own exploitation, abuse or trafficking and will always be treated as a victim requiring safeguarding, protection and support.

Staff should be alert to indicators of modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation and must report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will work with Children's Social Care, the Children's Advice and Duty Team (CHAT), the police and other relevant agencies, as appropriate. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking, the DSL will consider a referral through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and ensure that statutory duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 are met. Further information can be found within the Government's Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery

https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/learn-more/frontline-professionals/nrm-overview-and-form

National NRM guidance available at:

https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/learn-more/frontline-professionals/nrm-overview-and-form?gclid=EAIaIQobChMInpLM0pm66wIVEu7tCh2YwAbQEAAYASAAEgKrKfD_BwE.

12.14 HOMELESSNESS

Melling recognises that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is aware of contact details and referral routes into 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 the following: **household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, the family being asked to leave a property.** Our school will work closely with the Housing Options Team and other services if children in our school are homeless or are at risk from becoming homeless. **The Housing Options Team can be contacted on 0151 934 3541.**

12.15 CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

All staff should be aware that any child involved in legal proceedings should be made known to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Where there is a family break up, making arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. There are two age appropriate guides to support children **5-11 year olds** and **12-17 year olds**, they explain each step of the process and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Young witness booklet for 12 to 17 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

12.16 CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health. **NICCO** provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children **https://www.nicco.org.uk/**. Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they know a has a family member in prison. Our school will offer an early help assessment to the family if they need additional support.

12.17 BULLYING, INCLUDING PREJUDICED BASED ABUSE, RACIST INCIDENTS, AND CYBER BULLYING

Melling has an anti-bullying policy which is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms, e.g., cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying.
https://www.mellingprimaryschool.co.uk/policies-3

We keep a record of known bullying incidents which is shared with and analysed by the Governing Board. All staff are aware that children with SEND and/or differences or perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied or victims of abuse.

If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are seen to be ineffective, the Head teacher and DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PHSE education

Prejudice Based Abuse
Prejudice based abuse or hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived: Disability; Race; Religion; Gender Identity; Sexual Orientation.

Although this sort of crime is collectively known as 'Hate Crime', the offender doesn't have to go as far as being motivated by 'hate', they only should exhibit 'hostility';

This can be evidenced by:

- ✓ Threatened or actual physical assault.
- ✓ Derogatory name calling, insults, for example racist jokes or homophobic language.
- ✓ Hate graffiti (e.g., on school furniture, walls or books).
- ✓ Provocative behaviour e.g., wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known right wing, or extremist organisations.
- ✓ Distributing literature that may be offensive in relation to a protected characteristic.
- ✓ Verbal abuse.
- ✓ Inciting hatred or bullying against children who share a protected characteristic.
- ✓ Prejudiced or hostile comments in the course of discussions within lessons teasing in relation to any protected characteristic e.g. sexuality, language; religion or cultural background.
- ✓ Refusal to co-operate with others because of their protected characteristic, whether real or perceived.
- ✓ Expressions of prejudice calculated to offend or influence the behaviour of others.
- ✓ Attempts to recruit other pupils to organisations and groups that sanction violence, terrorism, or hatred.

Racist incidents

Our policy on racist incidents, and online racist incidents, is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Cyberbullying

Central to our School's anti-bullying policy is the principle that '*bullying is always unacceptable'* and that '*all pupils have a right not to be bullied*'.
The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school, and so we will respond to any cyber-bullying we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.

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

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

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

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal. If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate or are required to do so.

12.18 GAMING

Online gaming is an activity that many children and adults get involved in. The school will raise awareness by:

- ✓ Talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate.
- ✓ Supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and safety mode.
- ✓ Talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played.
- ✓ Highlighting relevant resources.
- ✓ Making our children aware of the dangers, including grooming and how to keep themselves safe.
- ✓ Making our children aware of how to report concerns.

12.19 ABUSE LINKED TO FAITH AND BELIEF

The term 'belief in spirit possession' is the belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling him or her. Sometimes the term 'witch' is used and is the belief that a is able to use an evil force to harm others. There is also a range of other language that is connected to such abuse. This includes black magic, kindoki, ndoki, the evil eye, djinns, voodoo, obeah, demons, and sorcerers. In all these cases, genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work. Families and children can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise', or 'deliver' the child. Exorcism is the attempt to expel evil spirits from a child. The belief in 'possession' or 'witchcraft' is widespread. It is not confined to countries, cultures, or religions, nor is it confined to new immigrant communities in this country. Any concerns about a child which arise in this context must be taken seriously.

Where the concerns about abuse linked to witchcraft and spirit possession for the welfare and safety of the child or young person are such that a contact to Sefton CHAT team must be made. Information for those who work with children to help raise awareness, and prevent abuse arising from religion or superstition, a national action plan has been developed. This can be found at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

12.20 GENDER BASED VIOLENCE/VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

The government have a strategy looking at specific issues that women and girls face. Within the context of this safeguarding policy the following sections are how we respond to violence against girls. Female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour-based abuse and teenage relationship abuse all fall under this strategy. This can be found at: **https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls**
Our school take part and attend the events during the 16 days of action

12.21 SO-CALLED 'HONOUR-BASED' ABUSE (INCLUDING FGM, FORCED MARRIAGE AND BREAST IRONING)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

Breast Ironing

Breast ironing is where young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down using hard or heated objects for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. The custom uses large stones, a hammer or spatulas that have been heated over scorching coals to compress the breast tissue, or an elastic belt to press the breasts to prevent them from growing, in girls as young as 9 years old. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (**FGM**) is the ritual cutting or removal of some or all of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM and what procedures they need to follow.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- ✓ A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place.
- ✓ A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out.
- ✓ A family/already being known to children's social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.

A girl:

- ✓ Having difficulty walking, sitting, or standing, or looking uncomfortable.
- ✓ Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously).
- ✓ Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- ✓ Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- ✓ Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE.
- ✓ Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period.
- ✓ Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour.
- ✓ Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
- ✓ Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem.
- ✓ Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

The girl's family having a history of practicing FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider).
FGM being known to be practiced in the girl's community or country of origin. A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out. A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.

A girl:

- ✓ Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
- ✓ Having limited level of integration within UK society.

- ✓ Confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
- ✓ Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
- ✓ Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
- ✓ Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to consider the context of the discussion)
- ✓ Being unexpectedly absent from school.
- ✓ Having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

Any teacher who either:

- ✓ Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- ✓ Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18, and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health, or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve Sefton Children’s Help and Advice Team (CHAT) **as appropriate.**

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child **under 18** should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a child is *at risk* of FGM, or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine children https://www.seftonscp.org.uk/scp/policy-and-guidance/female-genital-mutilation-fgm-1

Forced marriage.

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Being subject to any conduct where the purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages (Law change on Forced Marriage, February 2023)

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the **‘one chance’** rule, i.e., we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a child is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- ✓ Speak to the child about the concerns in a secure and private place.

- ✓ Activate the local safeguarding procedures.
- ✓ Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or **fmu@fco.gov.uk**;
- ✓ Refer the child to the pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published **statutory guidance** and **Multi-agency guidelines**, with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges.

12.22 PREVENTING RADICALISATION (TRAINING)

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the **Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales**, especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically, concerns with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Terrorism is an action that:

- ✓ Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people.
- ✓ Causes serious damage to property; or
- ✓ Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk. We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our children to stay safe online at school.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alerted to changes in children's behaviour.

Signs that a child is being radicalised can include:

- ✓ Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves.
- ✓ Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution.
- ✓ Changes in friendship groups and appearance.

- ✓ Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy.
- ✓ Converting to a new religion.
- ✓ Isolating themselves from family and friends.
- ✓ Talking as if from a scripted speech.
- ✓ An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views.
- ✓ A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others.
- ✓ Increased levels of anger.
- ✓ Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.
- ✓ Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions.
- ✓ Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter.
- ✓ Possessing extremist literature.
- ✓ Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations.

It is possible to intervene to prevent those children susceptible or at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alerted to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who may susceptible or at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel Programme.

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be susceptible to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Prevent, Channel and training is available at: Prevent Countering Extremism

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 **(Martyn's Law)** and is committed to protecting pupils, staff and visitors from the risk of terrorist incidents. Safeguarding includes protection from terrorism, violent extremism and other security threats. The school will take a proportionate, risk-based approach to protective security by maintaining and regularly reviewing site security risk assessments, emergency response arrangements and procedures for evacuation, invacuation, lockdown and emergency communication.

The school will ensure that staff receive appropriate information and training, work collaboratively with the local authority, police, emergency services and other relevant agencies, and regularly review security arrangements in line with legislation, guidance and identified risks. Any security threat, hostile intrusion or terrorism-related concern will be reported and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding, emergency response, lockdown and critical incident procedures to promote the safety and welfare of all children and young people.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. As a Channel partner, the school or college may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred, to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

Further information on the schools' measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including [list any relevant policies here – for example you may cover this in your curriculum policy, behaviour policy, online/e-safety policy, and/or others].

Appendix 6 – Sefton Prevent Referral Process

Further information on the schools' measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including:

-Melling is signed up to 'No-Outsiders' project and uses the recommended books in each class and in assemblies to promote tolerance, respect and appreciation of other beliefs and cultures.
-Our comprehensive RE curriculum encourages children to see children from other faiths and how their faith influences their life.

12.23 Parental Mental Health

The term "mental ill health" is used to cover a wide range of conditions, from eating disorders, mild depression, and anxiety to psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs, but it is essential to always assess its implications for each child in the family. It is essential that the diagnosis of a parent/carer's mental health is not seen as defining the level of risk. Similarly, the absence of a diagnosis does not equate to there being little or no risk.

For children, the impact of Parental Mental Health can include:

- ✓ The parent / carer's needs or illnesses taking precedence over the child's needs.
- ✓ Child's physical and emotional needs neglected.
- ✓ A child acting as a young carer for a parent or a sibling.
- ✓ Having restricted social and recreational activities.
- ✓ Finds it difficult to concentrate - impacting on educational achievement.
- ✓ A child missing school regularly as (s)he is being kept home as a companion for a parent / carer.
- ✓ Adopt paranoid or suspicious behaviour as they believe their parent's delusions.
- ✓ Witnessing self-harming behaviour and suicide attempts (including attempts that involve the child).
- ✓ Obsessional compulsive behaviours involving the child.

If staff in our school become aware of any of the above indicators, or others that suggest a child is suffering due to parental mental health, the information will be shared with the DSL who will undertake an assessment of the situation and seek support from Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) or other relevant agencies.

12.24 SELF-HARM

Self-harm is a coping mechanism which enables a person to express difficult emotions. Young people who hurt themselves often feel that physical pain is easier to deal with than the emotional pain they are experiencing, because it is tangible. But the behaviour only provides temporary relief and fails to deal with the underlying issues that a young person is facing. For some people, self-harm may last for a short time. For others, it can become a long-term problem. Some people self-harm stops for a while, and return to it months, even years, later, in times of distress.

Risk factors that indicate child or young person may be at risk of taking actions to harm themselves or attempt suicide can cover a wide range of life events such as: bereavement, bullying, cyber bullying, mental health problems including eating disorders, family problems such as domestic violence, any form of abuse or conflict between the child and parents.

The most common forms of self-harm are:

- ✓ Cutting.

- ✓ Biting self.
- ✓ Burning, scalding, branding.
- ✓ Picking at skin, reopening old wounds.
- ✓ Breaking bones, punching.
- ✓ Hair pulling.
- ✓ Head banging.
- ✓ Ingesting objects or toxic substances.
- ✓ Overdosing with a medicine.

Self-harm is usually a secretive behaviour, but signs may include:

- ✓ Wearing long sleeves at inappropriate times.
- ✓ Spending more time in the bathroom.
- ✓ Unexplained cuts or bruises, burns or other injuries.
- ✓ Unexplained smell of Dettol, TCP, etc.
- ✓ Low mood - seems to be depressed or unhappy, low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness.
- ✓ Any mood changes - anger, sadness.
- ✓ Changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- ✓ Losing friendships, spending more time by themselves, and becoming more private or defensive.
- ✓ Withdrawal from activities that used to be enjoyed.
- ✓ Abuse of alcohol and or drugs.

Melling recognises that any child who self-harms or expresses thoughts about self-harm and/or suicide, must be taken seriously and appropriate help and intervention will be offered at the earliest point. Any member of staff who is made aware that a child has self-harmed or is contemplating self-harm or suicide will record and report the matter to the DSL as soon as possible as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will contact the relevant agency. Where a child has suffered harm or is at risk from significant harm a referral will be made to the CHAT team

12.25 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 or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Our school provides outdoor-safety awareness in 'Keep Safe' assemblies. In Y6 our children engage in the 'Get Away and Stay Safe' programme that promotes assertiveness and strategies to enable them to stay safe in the community.

Our school will deliver lessons that focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. We will contact the nominated person in Sefton Council who deals with the community safety incidents.

13. WHAT TO DO IF STAFF ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD'S WELARE

If staff members have concerns about a child, they should raise these with the DSL. This also includes situations of abuse which may involve staff members.

All staff are required to report any concerns in writing, using the CPOMs platform. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm; it is crucial that staff record and pass on their concerns in accordance with these procedures to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child in question.

The DSL will decide whether to make a referral to Sefton CHAT team, but it is important to note that where a staff member feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may refer their concerns to the Sefton CHAT team directly. Alternatively, the NSPCC have a whistleblowing advice line for professionals who have concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in either theirs or another organisation **https://www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/news-opinion/new-whistleblowing-advice-line-professionals/**

Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support an Early Help Assessment needs to be undertaken. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require and prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment. The Early Help Assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional that identifies there are additional needs and support is required from outside agencies.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Sefton **CHAT** team immediately. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews /local childcare practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be acting.

14. DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES/LISTENING TO CHILDREN/NOTIFYING PARENTS

The way in which a member of staff talks to a child who discloses abuse could influence the evidence that is put forward if there are subsequent proceedings, and it is important that staff do not jump to conclusions, ask leading questions, or put words in a child's mouth.

If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff or other adult working in school s/he should write a record of the conversation as soon as possible, stating exactly, in the child's words, what has been said, noting any action taken in cases of possible abuse. This must be signed and include the day of the week, date, time and place of the disclosure. A body map needs to be used when appropriate. All records must be locked in a secure place.

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will evaluate the assessment and concern record. The DSL will contact Sefton level of need and make a decision if a referral is to be made to the CHAT team.

If a referral needs to be made, or consultation with any other agency is deemed necessary then we recognise that it is good practice to inform parents and of actions to be taken, unless this puts the child at further risk of harm.

Sefton CHAT Team Tel: 0151 934 4013/4481

Staff must be aware that:

- ✓ It is not the responsibility of teachers, other staff or volunteers to investigate suspected cases of abuse
- ✓ They should not take any action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by the school and Sefton Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP)
- ✓ They cannot promise a complete confidentiality - instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe

Listening to Children

Experience and consultation with children show that a child will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust, and they feel comfortable with. This will not necessarily be a teacher. It is therefore essential that all staff and volunteers in a school or establishment know how to respond sensitively to a child's concerns, who to approach for advice about them, and the importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality.

Any member of staff or volunteer in our school who is approached by a child wanting to talk will listen positively and reassure the child. They will record the discussion with the child as soon as possible and act in accordance with the school's child protection procedures.

If a child chooses to disclose, the member of staff or other adult in the school will:

- ✓ Be accessible and receptive.
- ✓ Stay calm listen carefully at the child's pace.
- ✓ Accept what is said - take what is said seriously.
- ✓ Reassure the child that they are right to tell.
- ✓ Tell the child that this information must be passed on.
- ✓ Make a written record, which should be signed and include the time, day, date, location, and your position in school.
- ✓ Pass to the DSL or deputy with no delay.

Staff or other adults will never:

- ✓ Make the child feel they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for reporting abuse.
- ✓ Take photographs or examine an injury.
- ✓ Investigate or probe, aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse, never ask leading questions.
- ✓ Make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets'
- ✓ Assume that someone else will take the necessary action.
- ✓ Jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger, or horror.
- ✓ Speculate or accuse anybody.
- ✓ Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved.
- ✓ Offer opinions about what is being said or about the person/s allegedly involved.
- ✓ Forget to record what has been said.
- ✓ Fail to pass the information on to the correct person.
- ✓ Ask a to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

For children with communication/language difficulties or who use alternative/ augmented communication systems, staff and other adults may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in the same manner as for other children. In some cases, it may be appropriate to seek the services of a professional interpreter.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- ✓ Not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
- ✓ Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- ✓ Feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.

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

Notifying Parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure. However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, the DSL will explain as to why that decision was taken

Where there are concerns about fabricated illness, forced marriage or honour-based abuse, parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- ✓ Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what is being put in place to safeguard them and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed.
- ✓ Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g., moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

15. Concerns about a child/Support Services for children Sefton CHAT & FAST team

Concerns about a pupil or a disclosure should be discussed with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to the Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) needs to be made. If a referral is needed, then the DSL should make it. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one has not been made, they can and should consider making a referral themselves. *Please refer to the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Level of Need Guidance May 2024.*

If a referral is considered a Child Protection issue (Level 4) parental consent should be obtained. This ensures open and honest working relationships with families. In most cases it is appropriate and good practice to seek consent however there are some cases where it is not. (as taken from the Level of Need Guidance:)

'Consent should not be sought if doing so would:

- ✓ Place a person (the individual, family member, worker or a third party) at increased risk of significant harm (if a child) or serious harm (if an adult).
- ✓ Prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime - this is likely to cover most criminal offences relating to children.
- ✓ Lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm (to a child) or serious harm (to an adult).

If a pupil is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm the police or emergency services should be contacted as priority to ensure the child/family's safety and wellbeing. A referral should then be made to Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT). Anybody can make a referral. CHAT: 0151 934 4013

Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

The person making the referral should provide the following information if available - note - absence of information must not delay a referral:

- ✓ Full name, any aliases, date of birth and gender of child/children
- ✓ Full family address and any known previous addresses
- ✓ Identity of those with parental responsibility.
- ✓ Names, date of birth and information about all household members, including any other children in the family, and significant people who live outside the child's household.
- ✓ Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- ✓ Any need for an interpreter, signer, or other communication aid
- ✓ Any special needs of the child/ren
- ✓ Is the child/ren registered at a school or regularly attending a school? If so, identify the school.
- ✓ Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in the child's or family's life
- ✓ Has the child recently spent time abroad or recently arrived in the area?
- ✓ Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location.
- ✓ The identity and current whereabouts of the suspected/alleged perpetrator
- ✓ The child's current location and emotional and physical condition
- ✓ Whether the child is currently safe or needs immediate protection because of any approaching deadlines (e.g. about to be collected by alleged abuser)
- ✓ The child's account and the parents' response to the concerns if known.
- ✓ The referrer's relationship and knowledge of the and parents/carers
- ✓ Known current or previous involvement of other agencies/professionals.
- ✓ Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to the referral

CHAT team in a conversation with our school will offer help and advice where there is a level 4 safeguarding concern for a child and it is felt there is need for a social worker led intervention; they will talk through the issues with the person calling and will both agree some next steps which might include arranging an assessment, directing families to our Early Help services, or signposting to some general support and advice in the community. The recommendations being made are jointly agreed, therefore if school do not agree with the recommendations discussed, they need to make this known to the CHAT Social Worker. It is also expected that School will speak to the families about possible outcomes (such as C&F assessment/EH Support) when they make a referral to CHAT to ensure continued open and honest working with families. Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) (sefton.gov.uk)

Early help intervention can be accessed by contacting The FAST team (Family advice support team) on 0151 934 4545. FAST is a team dedicated to supporting the Early Help offer for Sefton children and families. FAST is the first point of contact for accessing support and advice about Early Help. Referrals are consent led by

parents and carers. The referrer needs to provide family details and provide a clear understanding of the support requested to ensure families receive intervention promptly.

The FAST team work closely with Early Help services and partner agencies to achieve the best outcomes for children and their families. The team will have a discussion with the referrer/family to identify how we can help families get the right support at the right time. This may include help with: Behavioural difficulties, domestic abuse, managing family conflict, parental support, maintaining positive relationships and strategies to improve home life.

Early Help is everyone's responsibility, working together will get the best outcomes for families.
Please referrer to the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Level of Need Guidance May 2024 and consider Level of Need 3/2 when making a referral to FAST.

Our school access support from Sefton FAST Team by telephone who offer the same service as CHAT but in an Early Help setting where a family may need some support across a range of issues. They can be contacted on 0151 934 4545. Please refer to the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Level of Need Guidance May 2024 and consider Level of Need 3/2 when making a referral to FAST. Information can be found at Family Advice and Support Team (sefton.gov.uk)

16. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

At Melling, we recognise that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school, including online.

Child-on-child abuse will never be tolerated or dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Such attitudes can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, create an unsafe environment for children and prevent abuse from being recognised and addressed.

The school recognises that unchallenged sexism, misogyny, misandry and gender-based prejudice can contribute to a culture of unacceptable behaviour and may escalate into harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence. Misogynistic attitudes and behaviours, whether expressed in person or online, will be challenged and addressed at the earliest opportunity and treated as potential safeguarding concerns.

We recognise that child-on-child abuse can cause significant harm to children and young people and can have lasting impacts on their health, wellbeing and development. We also recognise the gendered nature of many forms of child-on-child abuse, whilst acknowledging that all children can be affected and that all concerns will be taken seriously.

All staff understand that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves through child-on-child abuse. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm, including behaviours that facilitate, threaten or encourage physical abuse online.
- Sexual violence, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, including sexual comments, remarks, jokes, gestures and online sexual harassment.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.

- Initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals involving harassment, abuse or humiliation.
- Abuse related to protected characteristics.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, including where children are groomed or coerced into exploiting or abusing their peers.

Child-on-child abuse may occur face-to-face, online or through a combination of both. Online abuse may include abusive, threatening, misogynistic, sexist, discriminatory; non-consensual sharing of images; coercion; exploitation; sexual harassment; online stalking; and the sharing of harmful, inappropriate or extremist content. The school recognises that children may be exposed to online content, influencers, communities or ideologies that promote misogyny, male supremacy, gender-based hatred, entitlement, harmful relationship expectations or violence against women and girls. Such concerns will be treated seriously and responded to through the school's safeguarding procedures.

The school recognises that children who experience child-on-child abuse are more likely to find educational outcomes negatively affected and may experience emotional distress, social isolation and barriers to learning.

All staff understand that even where no reports have been made, it does not mean that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. Staff will maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and remain vigilant to signs and indicators of abuse.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Melling operates a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.
We recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex and may occur through a group of children targeting an individual or another group. They can occur online and offline and are never acceptable.

Sexual harassment may include:

- Sexual comments, stories, jokes and remarks.
- Sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual comments about appearance or clothing.
- Deliberately brushing against another person.
- Displaying or sharing sexual images.
- Upskirting.
- Online sexual harassment including unwanted sexual comments, messages, images, coercion, exploitation and threats.
- Any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates a child's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and includes:

- Rape.
- Assault by penetration.
- Sexual assault.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable at Melling. Behaviours such as sexual comments, grabbing bottoms, breasts or genitalia, sexualised touching, or sharing sexual images will never be dismissed as banter, horseplay or part of growing up.

Children who are victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be believed, taken seriously and supported. No child will ever be made to feel ashamed, blamed or responsible for the abuse they have experienced.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a continuum from developmentally expected behaviours to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent behaviours. Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) refers to sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause harm to the child displaying the behaviour or others. When assessing such behaviours, the ages, developmental stages, capacity and understanding of the children involved will be carefully considered.

The school will utilise the Brook Traffic Light Tool to support the identification and assessment of sexual behaviours and inform proportionate safeguarding responses. The school recognises that children displaying HSB may have experienced abuse, trauma, neglect or other adverse childhood experiences and may require both safeguarding intervention and therapeutic support. Any concerns will be managed within the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Children Potentially More Vulnerable

The school recognises that some groups of children may be more vulnerable to experiencing child-on-child abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, including:

- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ+) or who are perceived by peers to be LGBTQ+.
- Children who are or have been looked after.
- Children experiencing social, emotional or mental health difficulties.
- Children who may be isolated or lacking social support networks.

Responding to Child-on-Child Abuse

All concerns, disclosures and reports of child-on-child abuse will be treated seriously and recorded on the school's safeguarding recording system.

Melling will ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to safeguard and support the victim, the alleged perpetrator and the wider school community.
The school will make decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL taking a leading role and using professional judgement, supported by other agencies including Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT), Children's Social Care and the Police where appropriate.

Where a report is made:

- The DSL or Deputy DSL will be informed immediately.
- A factual record of the concern will be made.
- The victim will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.
- Appropriate pastoral support, safeguarding support and safety planning will be provided.
- A referral to specialist services will be made where required.
- The needs, welfare and educational outcomes of both the victim and alleged perpetrator will be considered.
- Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate and in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- The DSL will consider whether a referral to Sefton CHAT, Children's Social Care, the Police or other agencies is required.

- Where a criminal offence may have occurred, the Police will be contacted as soon as possible.
- A risk assessment and safety plan will be implemented where necessary.
- The school will work closely with partner agencies to safeguard all children involved.
- The DSL will monitor outcomes and review any patterns, trends or wider cultural issues.

The DSL will meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim present where appropriate, to discuss the arrangements being put in place to safeguard and support the victim. The school will seek to understand the victim's wishes regarding support and how they would like the report to be progressed.

The wishes of the victim will be considered carefully throughout the process. However, the school will balance these wishes with its safeguarding responsibilities and duty to protect all children.
The school will complete a risk and needs assessment for all reports of sexual violence and will consider whether a risk assessment is appropriate for reports of sexual harassment. The assessment will consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator.
- Any identified risks to other children.
- Any actions required to safeguard the wider school community.
- The ongoing management of risks both within and beyond the school site, including transport arrangements where necessary.

If there are delays within the criminal justice process, the school will continue to work with the Police and partner agencies whilst taking any necessary action to safeguard children and maintain educational provision.

Unsubstantiated, Unfounded, False or Malicious Reports

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who made the allegation requires additional support or safeguarding intervention. The school recognises that a false allegation may be an indicator that a child has experienced abuse, trauma or other difficulties and may represent a cry for help. The DSL will consider whether a referral to Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) or another service is required.

Where a report is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether disciplinary action is appropriate in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy whilst continuing to consider any safeguarding needs that may be present.

Prevention and Education

The school is committed to creating and maintaining a culture of respect, safety and inclusion. Through the curriculum, assemblies, pastoral support and wider safeguarding work, pupils will be taught about:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Consent and personal boundaries.
- Appropriate behaviour and respect for others.
- Online safety.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Gender stereotypes and discrimination.
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- How to identify abuse and seek support.
- The importance of reporting concerns and supporting others.

The school will regularly review safeguarding procedures, staff training and curriculum provision to ensure that child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, is effectively prevented, identified and addressed.

Upskirting

The school will ensure that staff and pupils are aware that upskirting is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.

Upskirting typically involves someone taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge or consent for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification or causing humiliation, distress or alarm. Incidents of upskirting will be treated seriously, managed through safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, reported to the Police.

Specialist Support

The school recognises the importance of accessing specialist advice and support when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour.

The **Lucy Faithfull Foundation** provides support, advice and guidance relating to:

- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Healthy sexual development.
- Online safety.
- Preventing child sexual abuse.
- Resources, advice and helplines for professionals,
- children and families.

What is harmful sexual behaviour - Lucy Faithfull Foundation

Where appropriate, the school will signpost children, families and staff to appropriate specialist agencies and services to support safeguarding, recovery and positive outcomes.

17. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly, and honestly.

We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so to protect a child.

The school will, in most circumstances, endeavour to discuss all concerns about their children with parents. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances when the school will discuss concerns with Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) and/or the Police without parental knowledge. The school will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents.

18. WORKING WITH PROFESSIONALS/MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

Our school recognises its responsibility to work in partnership with other professionals and agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We will identify children and families who may benefit from additional support, including Family Help, and make appropriate referrals where necessary. Effective

information sharing is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and will take place in accordance with statutory guidance, legislation and local safeguarding procedures.

Family Help is a multi-agency approach that provides coordinated support to children, young people and families to improve outcomes and prevent needs from escalating. Our school will work with Family Help, education, health and other partner agencies to assess needs, coordinate support and contribute to relevant multi-agency meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Group Meetings, Strategy Meetings, Family Help Meetings, Team Around the Family (TAF) Meetings and Team Around the School (TAS) Meetings.

The school is not the lead agency for statutory child protection investigations and will refer concerns to Children's Social Care, the Police and other relevant agencies, as appropriate. The school will continue to support children and families throughout Family Help, assessment, child protection and intervention processes and will work with safeguarding partners, families and communities to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation and other forms of harm, seeking specialist support where required.

19. SAFEGUARDING SUPERVISION AND STAFF SUPPORT

At **Melling** we recognise that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and that effective safeguarding practice requires staff to be appropriately supported, challenged and developed. Supervision promotes the welfare of children, supports professional practice and fosters a culture of reflective practice, mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement.

Supervision provides opportunities for staff to:

- discuss concerns regarding a child's welfare, development or wellbeing;
- reflect on safeguarding practice and decision-making;
- identify solutions and actions to address concerns as they arise;
- receive support, guidance and challenge in relation to safeguarding responsibilities;
- identify training and development needs; and
- enhance professional effectiveness and resilience.

All staff have access to safeguarding advice, support and guidance through **Teach Plus and with the school's DSLs.**
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is supported by **other DSLs**, the Safeguarding Governor, other Headteachers and Teach Plus.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs receive safeguarding supervision at least termly to provide professional support, challenge and opportunities for reflective practice. The DSL also receives support and challenge from the Safeguarding Governor.

Where appropriate, complex safeguarding cases may be discussed through external supervision, consultation or multi-agency arrangements.

Following significant safeguarding incidents, disclosures, allegations or other distressing events, staff will have access to appropriate support and debriefing. The school recognises that safeguarding work can be emotionally demanding and will provide appropriate wellbeing support to staff involved in safeguarding and child protection work.

Regular appraisal and performance management processes are undertaken to review practice, identify training and development needs, and support continued professional development

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for a child's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL. The DSL can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish.

20. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment, and service provision to keep children safe. Previous Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record and thereby understand the significance of sharing information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare of children

We will adopt the information sharing principles detailed in statutory safeguarding guidance contained within:

- ✓ **DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**
- ✓ **HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**
- ✓ **Sefton Safeguarding Children's Partnership policies and procedures.**

Timely information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding. This school/college will share safeguarding information as appropriate in keeping with the principles outlined in the government guidance document, **Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (DfE 2018)**. This guidance has been produced to support practitioners in the decisions they take to share information, which reduces the risk of harm to children and young people and promotes their well-being.

Safeguarding and child protection information is confidential and personal. Other than the agreed communication lines in school, it is for the DSL(s) to decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, how and when, and whether consent needs to be gained for this process.

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

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- ✓ There is no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.
- ✓ The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

The DSL should consider that:

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

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- ✓ Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
- ✓ Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- ✓ Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.
- ✓ The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- ✓ If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

Neither the Data Protection Act 2018 nor GDPR prevent, or limit, the sharing, or withholding, of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Information which is sensitive and personal will be treated as 'special category personal data' for the purposes of compliance with GDPR.
Legal and secure information sharing between schools, Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) and other local agencies is essential for keeping children safe and ensuring they get the support they need. Information can be shared without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a at risk.

Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of promoting the welfare and protecting the safety of children. As with all data sharing, appropriate organisational and technical safeguards will be in place.

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, schools are permitted to withhold children's' personal data where, for example, a child is in a refuge or other form of emergency accommodation and to provide the information would place a child at risk.

All staff are made aware that they cannot keep secrets and absolute confidentiality with children, and that if a child discloses abuse or gives information that suggests they may be at risk, this MUST be passed on to the DSL as soon as possible. The child should be told who their disclosure will be shared with and what will happen next.

21. RECORD KEEPING/CHILD PROTECTION FILE

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing as soon as possible, using the CPOMs recording platform. All records will provide a factual and evidence-based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions. Records will be signed, dated and, where appropriate, witnessed. Where an opinion or professional judgement is recorded this should be clearly stated as such.

At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person; this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures. The body map should be used in accordance with the guidance. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services e.g., CHAT team or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.

A chronology will be kept in the main school file. Staff, particularly pastoral staff, will record any minor concerns on the chronology and will take responsibility for alerting the Designated Safeguarding Lead should the number of concerns rise or, in their professional judgement, become significant.

Child Protection File

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. This is kept on CPOMs and a chronology and full report on a child can be downloaded when needed. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in KCSIE 2026

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as DSL's and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Where there is an existing risk management plan/assessment in place for behaviours that are deemed potentially harmful to the pupil or others (i.e., self-harming or harmful sexualised behaviour), this information must be shared with the destination provision prior to the pupil starting so that appropriate care and control measures can be put in place to mitigate the potential of any risk of further harm occurring. The DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a leaving, for example prior to a transfer programme.

Why recording is important.

Our staff will be encouraged to understand why it is important that recording is comprehensive and accurate and what the messages from previous serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information. It is often when a chronology of information is pieced together that the level of concern escalates or the whole or wider picture becomes known.

We acknowledge without information being recorded it can be lost. This could be crucial information, the importance of which is not always necessarily apparent at the time. On occasions, this information could be crucial evidence to safeguard a child or be evidence in future criminal prosecutions.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect.

A record will be made of all incidents where pupils have expressed racist, homophobic, extremist, or radical views which will be monitored at a senior level.

A record of the number of children open and subject to Early Help, CP, CiN and LAC concerns is maintained and shared with the governing body annually.
A record or data on the cohort of children having or have had a social worker and social care involvement will be maintained.

Our *school/college* will maintain, keep and storing records, where a concern about a child has been identified in accordance with statutory guidance in KCSiE 2026.

Our school will ensure all our files will be available for external scrutiny, for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit.

22. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OR SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT ANY STAFF, INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS, TRAINEE TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS OR CONTRACTORS.

These procedures must be followed in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff (including supply staff and contractors), governor, visiting professional or volunteer has met the harm test, this includes where an adult has:

- ✓ Behaved in a way that has harmed a or may have harmed a child
- ✓ Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- ✓ Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- ✓ Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. **This includes any behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make the individual unsuitable to work with children. This is known as transferable risk.**

All adults working in school have a duty to disclose to the head teacher/principal (or chair of governors where appropriate), where their relationships and associations both within and outside of the workplace (including online) may have implications for safeguarding children in school.

Examples of behaviours that would warrant an allegation or safeguarding concern by a member of staff could include:

- ✓ Physical, for example intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or rough physical handling.
- ✓ Emotional, for example intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes which discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, sex, disability, or sexuality.
- ✓ Sexual, for example sexualised behaviour towards pupils, grooming, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape, sending inappropriate messages through social media and other technologies.
- ✓ Neglect which may include failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out appropriate/proper risk assessment etc.

A safeguarding complaint that meets the above criteria must be reported to the Head teacher ("case manager") immediately. If the complaint involves the head teacher, then the next most senior member of staff must be informed and the chair of governors. In our school the named case manager is Viv Ainsworth They will follow the processes outlined in this section.

Where a Headteacher determines that a safeguarding allegation does not meet the harm threshold in line with the criteria above they will refer the matter to be managed in line with Part 4 KCSIE 2026 by a designated manager with appropriate safeguarding training. It is important for Head teachers to carefully consider who in school is best placed to manage concerns that do not meet the harm threshold and ensure appropriate action is taken given the sensitive and confidential nature of the information relating to staff over time. In many cases Head teachers may decide to retain this role if they have appropriate safeguarding training.

All staff must fully understand that any adult behaviours that deviate from the Guidance for Safer Working Practice, including inappropriate conduct outside of work are a concern, even if they are low-level. Staff in our school can share low-level concerns confidentially.

Low-level concerns are concerns that do not meet the harm test/allegations threshold. Examples of such behaviour as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 include:

- ✓ Being over familiar with children
- ✓ Having favourites
- ✓ Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- ✓ Engaging with a on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- ✓ Humiliating pupils

If we are in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult out Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The case manager should ensure that the child is not at risk and where appropriate ensure that the child is referred to the Sefton CHAT team.

The case manager should gather as much information about the alleged incident as necessary in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. In situations where the case manager determines that the harm test has not been met the case manager must ensure that there is a clear record of the incident, include any actions (including whether any Schools Personnel Team/ HR advice had been sought and actioned) taken to address the concern raised. This will be completed on the Low-level concerns form (See Appendix 8)

This record must be kept confidential, stored securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR (2018). All low-level concern records will be kept for the time that member of staff is employed at the school, if no further concerns have been recorded.

In situations where the case manager has sufficient information to suggest that the harm test/allegations threshold has been met, the case manager must use the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) notification form **(see Appendix 9)** in order to assess the level of concern, **prior to contacting the LADO**. As part of this initial consideration, the case manager should consult with their school's HR Advisor/provider/contact or in the case of a supply member of staff the supply agency safeguarding lead/senior manager. The completed LADO notification form must be sent to **SafeguardingUnitAdmin@sefton.gov.uk** within one working day of the allegation being made. This will assist the case manager and HR/supply agency senior manager in consultation with the LADO to decide on the most appropriate course of action. This includes when to inform the member of staff of the concerns raised. Parents or carers of the child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it.

The case manager must not carry out an investigation or directly interview an individual about whom there is a concern until the above process has been duly completed, and relevant partners have been consulted.

A multi-agency allegations management strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the allegation in its widest context. The case manager must attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the LADO. All issues must be recorded, and the outcome reached must be noted to ensure closure.

In many cases it may be appropriate to provide further training and support to staff/volunteers and ensure that they are clear about the expectations for their conduct.

In more serious cases, allegations may be investigated under the formal disciplinary procedures and, where allegations are upheld, formal warnings issued as well as specific training and support. In cases where children/young people may be at further risk and/or evidence/witnesses may be compromised and/or the allegations are so serious that they may, if upheld, constitute gross misconduct, suspension of the member of staff/volunteer may be appropriate and should be considered in line with the school's Disciplinary Policy.

Any staff/volunteers who are dismissed by the school for gross misconduct or cumulative misconduct relating to safeguarding of children/young people will be referred to the DBS for consideration of barring. Similarly, where the school has a reasonable belief that the member of staff/volunteer would have been dismissed by the school had they been employed at the time of the conclusion of investigations, they will be referred to the DBS. The school will keep written records of all the above. Teaching staff may also be referred to the TRA.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.
LADO Contact: Tracey Holyhead 0151 934 3783 / 07814059604
Vicky Lowndes 0151 934 4272 | 07971623428

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they can contact:
The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

23. WHISTLEBLOWING AND RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

The school is committed to a culture of openness and accountability where all staff feel able to raise concerns about safeguarding practice, the conduct of colleagues, or any matter that may place a child at risk of harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and staff should always maintain the attitude that"it could happen here." Concerns must be raised and acted upon without delay.

Staff should report concerns in the first instance to the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL. Concerns about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors. Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, or believe appropriate action has not been taken, they should contact Sefton Children's Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate, or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285).

Adults working in school may be the first to recognise concerns but may feel reluctant to report them due to fear of repercussions, damaging relationships, being mistaken, not being believed, or causing disruption. Such concerns must never prevent action being taken where a child may be at risk of harm. The welfare of the child is paramount and vulnerable children rely on trusted adults to act on their behalf.
Staff should raise concerns in order to:

- Safeguard and protect children and young people.
- Identify and address unsafe or inappropriate practice.
- Prevent concerns from escalating.
- Protect others from harm.
- Promote accountability and professional integrity.
- Avoid becoming complicit in unsafe practice.

When raising a concern, staff should:

- Report concerns, suspicions or allegations as soon as possible.
- Clearly explain the nature of the concern.
- Follow the school's safeguarding and reporting procedures.
- Make a written record including relevant dates, times and details wherever possible.
- Seek advice if unsure.
- Escalate concerns if they believe appropriate action has not been taken.

Staff are not expected to prove abuse, misconduct or malpractice has occurred; however, concerns must be raised honestly and in good faith.
Any safeguarding concern or allegation, however small, about a member of staff, volunteer, supply staff member or contractor must be reported and managed in accordance with the school's procedures for managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children.

The school will take all concerns seriously, maintain appropriate records, investigate concerns in line with relevant procedures and protect staff who raise concerns in good faith from victimisation or detriment. No action will be taken against a member of staff who raises a genuine concern that is subsequently unsubstantiated. However, malicious or deliberately false allegations may be managed through disciplinary procedures.

Self-Reporting

Staff have a responsibility to inform their line manager of any physical health, mental health or personal circumstances that may affect their ability to carry out their role safely and effectively. Appropriate support will be offered wherever possible. Confidentiality will be respected, although this cannot be guaranteed where there are concerns regarding the safety or welfare of children.
Further Advice and Support

INTERVENTION
SPECIFIC AGENCIES FOR SUPPORTING STAFF WELL-BEING
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT LINE 08000 562 561 can be contacted by any member of staff at any time (24 hour service)
TEACHING/SUPPORT STAFF UNIONS: staff are advised to make use of their professional bodies to access appropriate support agencies.
HR SUPPORT – school has an SLA with HR and Personnel. If deemed appropriate the service will be used to provide advice and support for members of staff.
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH staff will be offered a referral to Occupational Health for issues regarding mental health and well-being. Counselling and programmes such as CBT can be accessed when deemed appropriate
ACCESS SEFTON: Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service in Sefton, Southport, Formby and the surrounding areas. The aim is to provide psychological therapies, sometimes called talking therapy, to help people who have common mental health problems such as feeling stressed, feeling low in mood (depressed) or very nervous (anxiety).
QWELL: Online counselling can be accessed by all staff

24. Restrictive Interventions and the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools

In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, there may be occasions when it is necessary for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and maintain a safe environment. The term *reasonable force* covers a broad range of actions involving physical contact, from guiding a child to safety or standing between

pupils, to more significant interventions such as preventing violence, injury, or breaking up a fight. Any force used will be proportionate, necessary, and limited to the minimum required to manage the situation safely.

When responding to incidents involving children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), mental health needs, or medical conditions, the school will carefully assess risks, recognise additional vulnerabilities, and consider its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination, and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The school is committed to promoting positive behaviour through proactive planning and support, including the use of individual behaviour plans for vulnerable pupils developed in partnership with parents and carers where appropriate. The use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions is governed by the school's Behaviour Policy and Positive Handling Policy. All incidents involving reasonable force are recorded, reviewed by senior leaders, and shared with parents/carers as appropriate. Staff authorised to use restrictive physical interventions receive accredited training and regular refresher training to ensure interventions are carried out safely, lawfully, and in the best interests of the child.

The use of reasonable force is recorded on the school's behaviour and safeguarding recording systems. Parents and carers are informed as soon as reasonably practicable following any significant incident involving reasonable force

Staff authorised to use restrictive physical intervention are trained through Teach Plus (all staff trained September 2026) and receive refresher training in accordance with the school's training programme.

25. USE OF SCHOOL/COLLEGES PREMISES FOR NON SCHOOL/COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

When our school hires or makes its premises available to external organisations or individuals, we will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to help keep children safe.
Where activities are provided under the direct supervision and management of school staff, this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will apply in full.

Where activities are delivered independently by an external organisation or individual, the school will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place, including:

- A current child protection and safeguarding policy.
- Appropriate safer recruitment, vetting and DBS arrangements.
- Suitable staff safeguarding training.
- Clear procedures for responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns.

The school will ensure there are effective arrangements for providers to share safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, where appropriate, other relevant agencies, in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*.

Safeguarding requirements will be included within any lease, licence or hire agreement for the use of school premises. Compliance with these requirements will be a condition of use, and failure to meet them may result in the termination of the agreement.

Where a safeguarding concern or allegation relates to an activity delivered by an external organisation or individual on school premises, the school will follow its own safeguarding procedures and make referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and other agencies, where appropriate. The school will also expect the provider to cooperate fully with any safeguarding enquiries or investigations.

When assessing external providers, the school will have regard to the Department for Education guidance, Using After-school Clubs, Tuition and Community Activities, and any other relevant safeguarding guidance.

26. Regulations and safeguarding requirements relating to school premises Toilets Changing rooms showers and sport

At our school, the safety, welfare, dignity and privacy of all pupils are paramount. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the School Premises (England) Regulations, we provide appropriate, safe and well-maintained toilet, changing and shower facilities that support the safeguarding and wellbeing of every child.

The school ensures that pupils aged 8 years and over have access to separate toilet facilities for boys and girls, except where facilities are provided in individual lockable rooms. In addition, pupils aged 11 years and over are provided with separate changing facilities for boys and girls and must not undress in the presence of pupils of the opposite biological sex.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils when accessing toilets, changing rooms, showers and sports facilities, ensuring privacy, dignity and respect at all times. Where individual needs require alternative arrangements, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that the safety, comfort, privacy and dignity of all pupils are maintained. Risk assessments, appropriate supervision, clear expectations for behaviour and robust safeguarding procedures help ensure that all pupils feel safe, supported and protected whilst accessing school facilities and participating in physical education and sporting activities.

27. Safeguarding in PE and Sport

The school recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend to all PE lessons, sporting activities, clubs, fixtures and competitions. Appropriate supervision, risk assessments and behaviour expectations will be maintained to ensure children are safe, respected and supported.

All staff, coaches, volunteers and external providers involved in sport must maintain professional boundaries, follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The school will ensure that any external sports providers have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place, including safer recruitment and safeguarding training where required. Any concerns arising during PE or sporting activities will be managed in accordance with this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

28. COMPLAINTS

Our school has a published complaints procedure available to parents/carers and for anyone across the school community who wishes to report concerns. Any concerns that are related to an allegation against a member of staff including volunteers and contractors will be dealt with under the Managing allegations against staff procedures that are in place.

29. USEFUL CONTACTS:

NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER
Sefton CHAT Team	0151 934 4013
Sefton FAST Team	0151 934 4545
Out of Hours Service	0151 934 3555

PREVENT (Single point of contact) Chris White	0151 934 3370
Merseyside Police	101 / Emergency 999
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Tracey Holyhead	0151 934 3783// 07814059604
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Vicky Lowndes	0151 0151 934 4272 | 07971623428
Children Missing Education Co-ordinator Clare Johannsen	0151 934 3181
CAMHS (single point of access)	0151 282 4527
Bully Busters	0800 169 6928
Sefton Women & Children's Aid (SWACA)	0151 922 8606
OPERATION ENCOMPASS -	
Independent domestic abuse advisors (IDVA)	0151 934 5142
VENUS	0151 474 4744
Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre [RASA] Sefton	0151 558 1801
Parenting 2000	01704 380047 / 0151 932 1163
Housing Options	0151 934 3541
Change Grow Live drug and alcohol service Bootle/Southport	**0151 203 9755** Sefton.Services@cgl.org.uk
LSCB Business Manager Zara Hakobyan	0151 934 4706
LSCB Administrator Danielle.Cannon	0151 934 4706
SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service)	0151 433 7442 Email Sefton SENDIASS - Kids

Contacts for children who go to school in Sefton but live in neighbouring local authorities.

Local Authority	Telephone number	Out of hours
Liverpool Children's Social Care / CASS	0151 459 2606.	0151 459 2606 (same as CASS)
Knowsley MASH	0151 443 2600	0151 443 2600 (same as MASH)
Lancashire Care Connect	0300 123 6720	0300 123 6722

Appendix 1: STATUTORY FRAMEWORK KEY STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY GUIDANCE

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, Melling will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and the Governance Handbook. Our school comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by the Children's Safeguarding Partnership

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Maintained schools and pupil referral units insert:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training

Academies, including free schools, and independent schools insert:

- Part 3 of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

Non-maintained special schools insert:

- Part 1 of the schedule to The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015, which places a duty on non-maintained special schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils at the school

All schools add:

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and The Crime and Policing Act 2026), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a specific group of pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as: sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination
- Operation Encompass statutory guidance, which explains that the police must notify our school of any incidents involving domestic abuse

All schools with pupils aged under 8 add:

- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the '2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations') and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children

All early year's providers add:

- This policy also meets the requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Academies, including free schools, check and add/amend if applicable:

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

All schools note: your safeguarding policy should refer to locally agreed multi-agency procedures that have been put in place by the school's 3 safeguarding partners. You should adapt this policy where necessary to reflect local procedures.

Appendix 2: SAFER RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT VETTING

Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026. Amend or add to this as applicable to reflect your own approach.

The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework contains its own requirements for safer recruitment (see paragraph 3.13 to 3.27).

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.
We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising - When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms- Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting- Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

✓ Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we may ask for includes:

- If they have a criminal history
- Whether they are included on the barred list
- Whether they are prohibited from teaching
- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information
- If they are known to the policy and children's local authority social care and
- If they have been disqualified from providing childcare

- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history
We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references (for example, "To whom it may concern")
- Not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children. If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- Contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- Establish the reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. **When appointing new staff, we will:**

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check:

For newly appointed staff or volunteers if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available:

- Where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to their appointment to the school
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher

Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:

- For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
- For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

Academies, including free schools, and independent schools add:

✓ Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

✓ *Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

Schools with pupils aged under 8 add:

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a frequent basis in a school or college, for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children, providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children, or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once

The above applies to both paid staff and volunteers.

Existing staff and volunteers

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff or volunteers as if the individual was a new member of staff or a new volunteer. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff or the volunteer's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

This duty applies equally to paid staff and volunteers where they were engaged in regulated activity.

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors, or request to see the certificate if the self-employed person has obtained their own check and ensure that it is at the level required by the school.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Schools with pupils aged under 8:

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never allow an unchecked volunteer to work in regulated activity, or leave them unsupervised
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- Obtain references for volunteers before they are recruited
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors

All schools include:

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor)

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

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

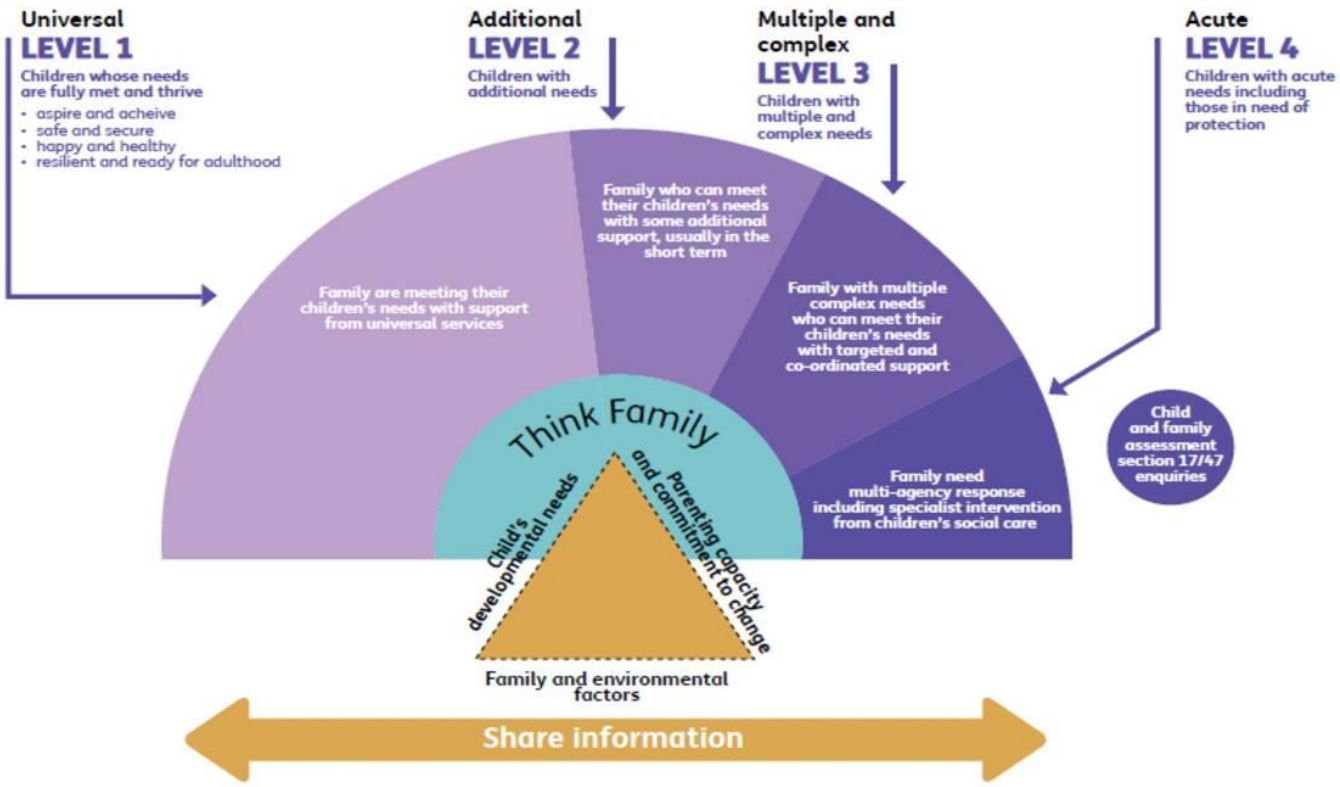
Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people. Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

The Safeguard Windscreen

The safeguarding 'windscreen' illustrates that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and takes place across the continuum of need from universal services through to statutory interventions.

Understanding needs across the continuum and how they relate to the appropriate action to be taken, ensures that the response to identified needs supports children to achieve their potential, at the right time and in the right way.



Appendix 3: SUMMARY OF SEFTON LEVEL OF NEED

Levels of Need – Level Descriptors

(REMEMBER: Levels of Need descriptors are to be used as a guidance only)

Where need is identified an appropriate response must be taken. As every child and family is unique descriptors of need provided are not prescriptive or exhaustive. All needs must be considered on a case-by-case basis and decisions should be made using professional judgement.

Level 1 – Children whose needs are fully met and thrive: Needs met through universal services. Voice of the Child; "Mum knows where to get help if she needs it and so I stay safe and warm in her womb".

Level 2 – Children with additional needs: Consider Early Help Assessment. Voice of the Child: "Most of the time I feel happy but sometimes my family need help from other people to keep me safe".

Level 3 – Children with multiple and complex needs: Initiate Early Help Assessment. Voice of the Child: "I'm struggling. I need help with many things. I need more help than my family can provide".

Level 4 – Children with acute needs includes those in need of protection - Social worker led specialist intervention required. Voice of the Child: "I am frightened when I go home, but if I don't go back something will happen to mum or my brother. Someone makes it stop".

Where a professional is unsure of the most appropriate response to identified needs, discussion with a manager, or a designated safeguarding lead, for support must take place to ensure and oversee that appropriate actions are taken.

Appendix 4: DEFINITITIONS AND INDICTATORS OF ABUSE

Safeguarding concerns may arise from abuse, neglect, exploitation or a combination of these factors. Abuse, neglect and exploitation are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or label. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap. All staff should maintain a child-centred approach and recognise that children may not feel ready, may not know how to tell someone they are being harmed, or may not recognise their experiences as abuse, neglect or exploitation.
The indicators listed in this appendix are not intended to be exhaustive or used as a checklist. Staff should remain professionally curious and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

1. 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 misuse. 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 caregivers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Provide suitable education.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
Parent Carer: A person aged 18 or over who provides or intends to provide care for a disabled child for whom they have parental responsibility.

Possible Indicators of Neglect
(This is not designed to be used as a checklist.)

- Constant hunger.
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food.
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness.
- Frequently dirty or unkempt appearance.
- Often poorly or inappropriately clothed for the weather.
- Poor school attendance or persistent lateness.
- Poor concentration.
- Affection or attention-seeking behaviour.
- Illnesses or injuries left untreated.
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth or weight.
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially.
- Responsibility for activity that is not age-appropriate, such as cooking, ironing or caring for siblings.
- Regularly not being collected from school.
- Being left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.

2. PHYSICAL ABUSE
Physical abuse 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.

Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse
(This is not designed to be used as a checklist.)

- Multiple bruises in clusters or of uniform shape.
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or belt.

- Bite marks.
- Round burn marks.
- Multiple burns and burns on unusual areas of the body, such as the back, shoulders or buttocks.
- An injury inconsistent with the explanation provided.
- Changing or conflicting accounts of how an injury occurred.
- Bald patches.
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning.
- Unexplained covering of limbs, even in hot weather.
- Fear of going home or parents/carers being contacted.
- Fear of medical assistance.
- Fear of changing for PE.
- Inexplicable fear of adults or excessive compliance.
- Violence or aggression towards others, including bullying.
- Isolation from peers.

3. SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, 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 clothing.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as:

- Involving children in looking at, or the production of, sexual images.
- Watching sexual activities.
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet.

Sexual abuse can occur online and may include:

- Online grooming.
- Sexual exploitation.
- Coercion and manipulation.
- The creation, possession, sharing or viewing of sexual images and videos.
- Other forms of technology-facilitated sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse

(This is not designed to be used as a checklist.)

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour.
- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge.
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Excessive tiredness.
- Refusal to communicate.
- Thrush or persistent complaints of stomach pain.
- Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia.
- Attention-seeking behaviour, self-harm or substance misuse.
- Aggressive behaviour, including sexual harassment.
- Unusual compliance.
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis or soiling.
- Frequent or public masturbation.
- Inappropriate touching of others.
- Depression, withdrawal or isolation from peers.
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming.

- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

4. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include:

- Not giving children opportunities to express their views.
- Deliberately silencing them.
- Making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations.
- Preventing participation in normal social interaction.
- Overprotection that limits exploration and learning.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person.
- Serious bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger.
- The exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment.

Possible Indicators of Emotional Abuse

(This is not designed to be used as a checklist.)

- Consistently describing themselves in very negative ways, for example as stupid, naughty, hopeless or ugly.
- Overreaction to mistakes.
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development.
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders.
- Inappropriate emotional responses or fantasies.
- Rocking, head banging, regression, tics or twitches.
- Self-harm.
- Drug or solvent misuse.
- Fear of parents/carers being contacted.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing.
- Eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia.
- Soiling, smearing faeces or enuresis.

NB: Some situations where children stop communicating suddenly (sometimes known as *traumatic mutism*) can indicate abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

5. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation. Staff should be aware that indicators of abuse can be more difficult to identify and may be wrongly assumed to relate to a child's disability or additional needs.

Additional vulnerabilities may include:

- Assumptions that behaviour, mood changes or injuries relate solely to a child's disability without further exploration.
- Children with SEND being disproportionately affected by bullying, harassment or abuse.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming them.
- Greater dependency on adults for personal care and communication.

Possible Additional Indicators

- Bruising that would not normally be concerning on an ambulant child but is concerning on a non-mobile child.
- Not receiving adequate assistance with feeding, leading to malnourishment.

- Poor toileting arrangements.
- Lack of stimulation.
- Unjustified or excessive use of restraint.
- Rough handling.
- Extreme behaviour modification practices, such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing.
- Disabling wheelchair batteries or mobility equipment.
- Unwillingness to learn or use a child's preferred communication method.
- Ill-fitting equipment, for example callipers, sleep boards or splints.
- Misappropriation of a child's finances.
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

Appendix 5: CHILD EXPLOITATION (CE) CHECKLIST

Sefton Council

Team…

Tel:

Fax:

Multi-Agency Exploitation Screening Tool

Details of Child:

Family Name		Given Names	
Actual DOB		Gender	
Ethnicity		Primary Language	
Primary Address		Telephone	
Secondary Address		Case Number	

Multi-Agency Exploitation Screening Tool

The purpose of the tool is to enable professionals to identify indicators which suggest a child is, or is at risk, of Exploitation, in a consistent way which facilitates sound judgement. The screening tool can be used for all children (male and female) at any point in the child's journey and with young people up to 21yrs. It can be used by any practitioner working with and supporting childre or young people where there is a concern a child may be exploited.

Important points to remember when considering exploitation:

- Both girls and boys can be victims of exploitation and are equally vulnerable.
- The coercer(s) and perpetrator(s) are usually adult(s), but children and young people can also act in an exploitative, abusive way towards other young people or exert power e.g. group/gang members of either gender.
- Although it is rare, parents/carers may be involved in the exploitation of their children.
- Groups of children and multiple perpetrators may be involved (organised abuse).
- No child under 13 years should be assessed as Low Risk if behaviours indicate a risk of exploitation.
- Children with additional needs require special consideration up to the age of 21 years.
- No child with a learning disability or additional learning needs should be assessed as Low Risk if behaviours indicate involvement in or risk of exploitation.
- Be aware: disclosure of information by the child may take time and evident risks may only emerge during ongoing assessment, support and interventions with the child and/or family.

Guidance on the use of the Screening Tool

1. Completion of the Screening Tool should always involve liaison with other agencies to ensure multi-agency Information sharing and support.
2. The screening tool is intended to assist professional judgment by considering a range of features and indications of exploitation and associated behaviours. Professionals are encouraged to go beyond the child's presenting behaviour e.g. missing or challenging behavioural to explore what else might be going on for this child/young person. This often requires a prediction of harm.
3. If a child presents with one indicator, action is required. Early intervention improves the chances of positive outcomes. One indicator is unlikely to require Children's Social Work Services or specialist services intervention unless it is a Significant Risk category. Early help and prevention services within the community should always be considered.
4. Assessing or screening for child exploitation should not be seen as a one- off event. Young people can move very quickly between risk categories, therefore regular assessments should be undertaken using the Screening Tool. Any escalation of risk should be referred to the named Children's Services worker or CHAT, if unknown.
5. Using the Screening Tool will determine which level of intervention is required dependent on the assessed level of risk. If in doubt, please contact Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) on **0151 934 4013**.
6. Disruption and prosecution of the perpetrator/s is also of significant importance therefore, any information which comes to light about the victim/s or perpetrator/s (however insignificant this may seem) should be passed on to the Police.

IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS:

If you are concerned that a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm then you should dial '999' and tell the Police. If you have information which might help protect a child, you should dial 101.

To report any 'intelligence' that does not require immediate action, you can use the Merseyside Police Reporting form via this link.

Personal Details:	
Date form completed:	
Details of Person completing the Screening Tool:	
Name:	
Organisation/role:	
Telephone No:	
Email address:	
Young Person's Information:	
Full name	
Gender	
DoB	
LL ID Number	
Address:	
School/Education Setting	
EHCP?	Yes/No/Unknown*
*If unknown, when is it going to be obtained?	

Social Care Case Level	CP/Cared For/CIN/Not open at time of referral/YOT/Early Help
Ethnicity	
Age at time of assessment	

Alleged Perpetrators' Details (if known)

Family Name	First Name(s)	Middle Name(s)	Alternative Name:	Date of Birth:	Gender:	Ethnicity:	Age:

Risk Assessment

Did the Child/Young Person participate in this assessment?	Yes/No *
*If yes, what are their views?	
*If no, why not?	

Significant Risk **Select all appropriate options**

- ◯ Previous victim of CE
- ◯ Unexplained gifts or additional mobile phone/Simcard
- ◯ Visiting hotels with adults/ or other young people
- ◯ Visiting nightclubs with adults
- ◯ Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- ◯ Meeting known or unknown adults inappropriately
- ◯ Being groomed to meet via the internet
- ◯ Transported from town to town for sexual /or criminal activity with adults (including purchase of train tickets and taxi fares)
- ◯ New Clothes / phones / money / jewellery / drugs / cigarettes
- ◯ Over sexualised appearance
- ◯ Associating with known CE perpetrators/ drug dealers or other victims of exploitation
- ◯ Presence at hotspot CE areas such as taxi ranks, bus stations, off licences and take-aways
- ◯ Information of direct involvement in exploitation
- ◯ Engaging in sexual activity with adults or with peers at young age
- ◯ Presence or frequenting red light areas
- ◯ Other
- ◯ No factors identified

Please provide further information:	

Strong Indicators of exploitation **Select all appropriate options**

- ◯ Considerable change in school performance / attendance / behaviour
- ◯ Multiple callers to address
- ◯ Receiving calls/text from unknown person / additional unexplained mobile phone or other mobile device
- ◯ Self-harming and/or suicide tendencies / Substance misuse
- ◯ Association with other victims of exploitation
- ◯ Multiple Perceived boyfriends/girlfriends
- ◯ Involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour
- ◯ Regular STI's or Emergency Contraception
- ◯ Forming relationships via internet
- ◯ Missing or Absent from home episodes
- ◯ Entering or leaving unknown vehicles
- ◯ Found in areas with no known connection
- ◯ Overly sexualised behaviour for age
- ◯ Victim of exploitative relationships
- ◯ Involved in gang type activity.
- ◯ Possessing large amount of unexplained cash. Suspicious bank account activity
- ◯ Association with risky adults
- ◯ Pregnancy and/or termination
- ◯ Unexplained relationships with adults
- ◯ Evidence of self-harming
- ◯ Older boyfriend/girlfriend or friendship groups
- ◯ Unexplained physical injuries
- ◯ Exclusion from school due to behaviour – may not have been excluded - reduced timetable/alternative provision
- ◯ Change in physical appearance - weight loss/ weight gain / external signs such as extreme fatigue or sudden increase in make-up, tattoos, piercings etc
- ◯ Other
- ◯ No factors identified

Please provide further information:	

Early Indicators of CSE **Select all appropriate options**

- ◯ Absent/truanting from school
- ◯ Detached from age related activities
- ◯ Lack of interest in education
- ◯ Physically aggressive to other family members
- ◯ Frequent poor behaviour
- ◯ Secretive relationships
- ◯ Returning home late
- ◯ Secretive behaviour
- ◯ Becoming estranged from family
- ◯ Mood swings
- ◯ Hostility towards other family members
- ◯ Secretive about internet use
- ◯ Change in appearance – including sudden increase in make-up or tattoos or piercings etc
- ◯ Change in sporting or leisure activities/ interests (e.g. no longer interested in football / dancing when they used to be)
- ◯ Other
- ◯ No factors identified

Please provide further information:	

Vulnerability Factors **Select all appropriate options**

- ◯ Live in a chaotic or dysfunctional family
- ◯ Mental health problems
- ◯ Recent bereavement or loss
- ◯ Previous victim of CE

○ Low self-esteem or confidence	○ Sexually active	○ Homeless	○ Lack of protective factors within family unit
○ Parents/carers with mental health problems	○ Subject of bullying	○ Parents/carers with drugs or alcohol abuse	○ History of domestic abuse within the family
○ Live in residential or foster care or unstable adoptive placement	○ History of sexual abuse within the family	○ Migrant, refugee or asylum seeker	○ Other
○ Drugs or alcohol abuse	○ Social or learning difficulties	○ Unsure of their sexual orientation/ difficulties with identity	○ No factors identified

Please provide further information:	
Additional Comments:	

Name(s) and Signature(s) of Professional(s) making this assessment

Name:	
Organisation/role:	
Add professional? (yes/no)	
Choose the manager to authorise this form:	

Management oversight:

Please provide your oversight:	

Child Exploitation Team Decision:

Progress to Child Exploitation?	Yes/No
Is the Child/Young Person:	○ **Suffering** significant harm through exploitation?* ○ At **risk** of suffering significant harm through exploitation?** *Start Exploitation process managed by Child Exploitation. **Start Exploitation process and re-assign to Social Work Team Manager.
Please provide comments:	

Personal Details:

Date form completed:	
Details of Person completing the Screening Tool:	
Name:	
Organisation/role:	
Telephone No:	
Email address:	
Young Person's Information:	
Full name	
Gender	
DoB	
LL ID Number	
Address:	
School/Education Setting	
EHCP?	**Yes/No/Unknown***
***If unknown, when is it going to be obtained?**	
Social Care Case Level	**CP/Cared For/CIN/Not open at time of referral/YOT/Early Help**
Ethnicity	
Age at time of assessment	

Alleged Perpetrators' Details (if known)							
Family Name	First Name(s)	Middle Name(s)	Alternative Name:	Date of Birth:	Gender:	Ethnicity:	Age:

Risk Assessment

Did the Child/Young Person participate in this assessment?	Yes/No*
*If yes, what are their views?	
*If no, why not?	

Significant Risk Select all appropriate options

- Previous victim of CE
- Unexplained gifts or additional mobile phone/Simcard
- Visiting hotels with adults/ or other young people
- Visiting nightclubs with adults
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Meeting known or unknown adults inappropriately
- Being groomed to meet via the internet
- Transported from town to town for sexual /or criminal activity with adults (including purchase of train tickets and taxi fares)
- New Clothes / phones / money / jewellery / drugs / cigarettes
- Over sexualised appearance
- Associating with known CE perpetrators/ drug dealers or other victims of exploitation
- Presence at hotspot CE areas such as taxi ranks, bus stations, off licences and take-aways
- Information of direct involvement in exploitation
- Engaging in sexual activity with adults or with peers at young age
- Presence or frequenting red light areas
- Other
- No factors identified

Please provide further information:	

Strong Indicators of exploitation Select all appropriate options

- Considerable change in school performance / attendance / behaviour
- Multiple callers to address
- Receiving calls/text from unknown person / additional unexplained mobile phone or other mobile device
- Self-harming and/or suicide tendencies / Substance misuse
- Association with other victims of exploitation
- Multiple Perceived boyfriends/girlfriends
- Involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour
- Regular STI's or Emergency Contraception
- Forming relationships via internet
- Missing or Absent from home episodes
- Entering or leaving unknown vehicles
- Found in areas with no known connection
- Overly sexualised behaviour for age
- Victim of exploitative relationships
- Involved in gang type activity.
- Possessing large amount of unexplained cash. Suspicious bank account activity
- Association with risky adults
- Pregnancy and/or termination
- Unexplained relationships with adults
- Evidence of self-harming
- Older boyfriend/girlfriend or friendship groups
- Unexplained physical injuries
- Exclusion from school due to behaviour – may not have been excluded - reduced timetable/alternative provision
- Change in physical appearance - weight loss/ weight gain / external signs such as extreme fatigue or sudden increase in make-up, tattoos, piercings etc
- Other
- No factors identified

Please provide further information:	

Early Indicators of CSE Select all appropriate options

- Absent/truanting from school
- Detached from age related activities
- Lack of interest in education
- Physically aggressive to other family members
- Frequent poor behaviour
- Secretive relationships
- Returning home late
- Secretive behaviour
- Becoming estranged from family
- Mood swings
- Hostility towards other family members
- Secretive about internet use
- Change in appearance – including sudden increase in make-up or tattoos or piercings etc
- Change in sporting or leisure activities/ interests (e.g. no longer interested in football / dancing when they used to be)
- Other
- No factors identified

Please provide further information:	

Vulnerability Factors Select all appropriate options

- Live in a chaotic or dysfunctional family
- Low self-esteem or confidence
- Parents/carers with mental health problems
- Live in residential or foster care or unstable adoptive placement
- Drugs or alcohol abuse
- Mental health problems
- Sexually active
- Subject of bullying
- History of sexual abuse within the family
- Social or learning difficulties
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Homeless
- Parents/carers with drugs or alcohol abuse
- Migrant, refugee or asylum seeker
- Unsure of their sexual orientation/ difficulties with identity
- Previous victim of CE
- Lack of protective factors within family unit
- History of domestic abuse within the family
- Other
- No factors identified

Please provide further information:	
Additional Comments:	

Name(s) and Signature(s) of Professional(s) making this assessment

Name:	
Organisation/role:	
Add professional? (yes/no)	
Choose the manager to authorise this form:	

Management oversight:

Please provide your oversight:	

Child Exploitation Team Decision:

Progress to Child Exploitation?	Yes/No
Is the Child/Young Person:	Suffering significant harm through exploitation? * At risk of suffering significant harm through exploitation?** *Start Exploitation process managed by Child Exploitation. **Start Exploitation process and re-assign to Social Work Team Manager.
Please provide comments:	

Appendix 6: PREVENT CHANNEL FLOW CHART

Understanding Prevent and the Channel referral process

Radicalisation is defined in the Prevent Strategy as "the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism".
Preventing Violent Extremism

What is Prevent?

The government's Prevent Strategy forms one element of the Counter-terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) and aims to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by preventing people from becoming influenced through extreme and radical ideology.

The aim of the Prevent Strategy is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism by focusing on the following three objectives;

- respond to the **ideological challenge** of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
- **prevent people from being drawn into terrorism** and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support and
- work with **sectors and institutions** where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

The Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 defines **extremism** as; "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of our armed forces as extremist."

What is Channel?

A key part of Prevent is "Channel". Police work with public bodies, including local councils, social workers, NHS staff, schools and the justice system to identify those at risk of being drawn into terrorism, assess what the risk might be and then develop tailored support for those referred to them. This could range from mentoring to things like anger management or drug and alcohol programmes. The process is about supporting individuals identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism at an early stage.

The Sefton Channel Panel is fundamental to this and is a voluntary safeguarding programme aimed at supporting those individuals identified as being vulnerable. It draws on existing collaboration between local authorities, police, statutory partners and the local community. The individual will be discussed at a multi-agency meeting to review the referral, gain consent for engagement and plan any appropriate bespoke support packages to reduce or mitigate vulnerabilities to radicalisation.

Your responsibility:

If you suspect an individual is being radicalised, you must report it.
Anyone can make a Prevent referral if they have concerns.

GENERAL - EXTERNAL

Local Authority

If officers from the local authority receive concerns directly from an individual they are working with, or from a telephone call from the public, or from information received from a partner agency, they should follow the **Notice Check Share** process.

1. What have you **noticed**?

- Who was involved?
- Can the concern be dealt with in house or does it need wider checking?
- Does the incident relate to recent local, national or international events?
- Does the incident relate to local or national news stories?
- Has the individual been involved in similar incidents?
- Why do you feel the individual is vulnerable to radicalisation?
- Was it a one-off comment or statement and out of context for the individual?
- Are there any other apparent vulnerabilities or concerns that make the individual at risk of radicalisation?

2. Have you **checked** your concern with your Safeguarding Lead?

- From your checks has any other information come to light?
- Has the individual of concern been spoken to for clarity? If not, what are the reasons for this (inappropriate, safeguarding risk?)
- Do they offer a reasonable explanation and/or account?
- If under 18, have their parents been spoken to for clarity? Have they noticed a change in behaviour?
- Are any other agencies currently or historically working with the individual or family? Have they been consulted? Is the concern Prevent related? Or is it more suitable under general safeguarding?
- Have there been any historical concerns? I.e., concerns at previous school?
- Could the concern be addressed in house? Is there a genuine radicalisation risk?
- Do you and or the individual need additional support?

3. Having **noticed** the initial concern and carrying out the appropriate **checks** do you feel **sharing** the information as a referral is necessary?

We encourage all referrers to discuss their concerns with the individual and parents if applicable and make them aware of the referral to Prevent (with reasons) unless sharing this information places the individual or another person at serious risk of harm.

Who have you consulted?

What intervention, if any, have you put in place? Have you made any other referrals or discussed the case with other agencies?

Once you have completed the Notice Check Share process you will then complete and send the referral form to the Prevent email address prevent@merseyside.pnn.police.uk

Immediate Safeguarding issues should be highlighted to and dealt with by the appropriate professional, following the usual Sefton Council Local Authority process.

Partner agencies

Health, Education, further education etc. Use the **Notice Check Share** process outlined above, checking with their own safeguarding team, or by contacting the CHAT team for concerns about young people or Adult Social care.

Immediate Safeguarding issues should be highlighted to and dealt with by the appropriate professional.

Following your check send a completed national referral form to prevent@merseyside.pnn.police.uk

All referrals are assessed by Northwest Counter Terrorism Police officers. They decide if the referral is adopted as a multi-agency led case or signposted out to other services or agencies if it does not meet threshold criteria.

Appendix 7: RISK ASSESSMENT – CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE /SEXUAL VIOLENCE/HARASSMENT

In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, schools and colleges should ensure that robust risk assessments are undertaken where there are concerns relating to child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. Risk assessments should be child-centred, proportionate, and regularly reviewed, taking account of the needs and safety of the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator, and any other children who may be affected.

They should identify protective measures, arrangements for ongoing support, and actions required to reduce the risk of further harm while enabling all children to continue accessing education safely wherever appropriate. Detailed procedures and guidance relating to child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and the management of associated risks can be found when you log in at **SLA Online**

GENERAL - EXTERNAL

Appendix 8: LOW LEVEL CONCERN FORM

Low Level Concerns Form

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a way that:

- ✓ Is inconsistent with the school's staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- ✓ Does not meet the allegation threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident
The record should be signed, timed and dated.

Name of Staff Member: Concern: Signed: Name: Date and Time:
Received by: Date: Time:
Action Taken: Signed: Date:

Appendix 9: ALLEGATION MANAGEMENT INITIAL CONSIDERATION/ENQUIRY FORM

Reference no. (From Database):

Date form was sent to LADO:	**Name of person completing the form:**
Position of person completing the form:	
Contact number:	
Email Address:	
Name & Address of Establishment	

PLEASE KEEP INFORMATION CLEAR & CONCISE AND ENSURE THE FORM IS RETURNED AS A TYPED WORD DOCUMENT

(For data protection purposes at this stage please do not provide details of the child or alleged perpetrator)

DETAIL OF: ALLEGATION/INCIDENT/ENQUIRY (date and time of allegation)
CHILD'S ACCOUNT OBTAINED (Preferably with parent or carer present) (Note: no leading questions should be asked, questions should be kept open and to a minimum, i.e., what was the incident, and how did they feel, did anyone witness this?
PARENTS'/CARERS' VIEW (what was their response and what action would parents like to see taken)

GENERAL - EXTERNAL

ANY WITNESSES? (Note: if so do not discuss what the child has said, ask only if they are aware of any incident that has occurred involving the child and ask that they make a note of their account, sign and date)
IS THERE ANY CCTV FOOTAGE TO PROVE OR DISPROVE THE ALLEGATION? (Please check this first and ensure a copy is kept)
HAVE THERE BEEN ANY HISTORIC ALLEGATIONS MADE BY THE CHILD? (dates and outcomes)
HAVE THERE BEEN ANY HISTORIC ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS IN RELATIONS TO THE MEMBER OF STAFF? (dates, what the allegation was and outcome)

Please send completed form to Sefton LADO Service
SafeguardingUnitAdmin@sefton.gov.uk

Office Use Only:

LADO ADVICE OR RESPONSE
POLICE ADVICE OR RESPONSE

HR ADVICE OR RESPONSE
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ADVICE OR RESPONSE

Office use only:

Completed by: _____

Signed by: _____

Position: _____

Appendix 9A: LADO NOTIFICATION FORM

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST AN ADULT WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT ARE NOT TO BE REPRODUCED, COPIED OR DIVULGED IN ANY WAY. INFORMATION IS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH, OR REVEALED TO, PERSONS WHO ARE NOT REQUIRED IN THE INTERESTS OF A CHILD TO HAVE SUCH INFORMATION. ALL ENQUIRIES FOR THE USE OF ANY SUCH INFORMATION SHOULD BE MADE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER

REFERRAL FORM

To be completed by the Senior Manager (or other designated person to provide the information) of the employing agency for the adult concerned. To be emailed directly to the SafeguardingUnitAdmin@sefton.gov.uk within 24 hrs of the allegation being made. **Form should be completed in detail, all yellow sections are mandatory.**

DATE ALLEGED INCIDENT HAPPENED	
DATE ALLEGATION RECEIVED BY REFERRING AGENCY	
DATE ALLEGED INCIDENT REFERRED TO CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING UNIT	

1. ADULT AGAINST WHOM THE ALLEGATION HAS BEEN MADE

NAME					
DOB		**GENDER**		**ETHNICITY**	
HOME ADDRESS					
CONTACT DETAILS	**TEL:**		**EMAIL:**		
JOB TITLE					
EMPLOYER					
EMPLOYER ADDRESS &CONTACT DETAILS					
	TEL:		**EMAIL:**		

EMPLOYING AGENCY OF THE ADULT CONCERNED (WHERE ALLEGATION/INCIDENT OCCURRED)									
SOCIAL CARE		**HEALTH**		**EDUCATION**		**RESIDENTIAL**		**FOSTER CARERS**	
POLICE		**YOT**		**EARLY YEARS**		**SPORT**		**MILITARY CADETS**	
FAITH GROUP		**NSPCC**		**TRANSPORT**		**VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION**			
OTHER		**IF OTHER OR VOL. ORG. PLEASE STATE WHICH**							

2. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY PREVIOUS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE ADULT?: YES/NO

If YES please provide details including dates and any previous referrals to the Children's Safeguarding Unit:

3. REFERRER

NAME	
JOB TITLE	
ORGANISATION	
CONTACT DETAILS (incl. Address, E-Mail & Telephone number)	

4. SENIOR MANAGER

IS THE SENIOR MANAGER OF EMPLOYING AGENCY OF THE ADULT CONCERNED AWARE OF THE ALLEGATION?
If no, please give reason why not:

5. CHILD'S DETAILS

NAME					
DATE OF BIRTH		**GENDER**		**ETHNICITY**	
CURRENT ADDRESS (inc. post code)					
CONTACT DETAILS	**TEL**		**EMAIL**		
PARENTS/CARERS					
PARENTS/CARERS ADDRESS (inc. post code)					
CONTACT DETAILS	**TEL**		**EMAIL**		

DOES THE CHILD HAVE ANY COMMUNICATION NEEDS? If so please state what:			
IS THE CHILD KNOWN TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE?		**ICS ID NO.**	
IF YES PLEASE INDICATE IN WHAT CAPACITY (Please tick):			
FAMILY SUPPORT		**CHILD PROTECTION PLAN**		**LOOKED AFTER CHILD (see below also)**	

LEGAL STATUS IF LOOKED AFTER CHILD(Please tick):									
S.20 ACCOMMODATION		INTERIM CARE ORDER		CARE ORDER		PLACEMENT ORDER		SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP	
CHILD'S SOCIAL WORKER									
CONTACT DETAILS	TEL				EMAIL				
HAS THE CHILD'S SOCIAL WORKER BEEN INFORMED? YES/NO If not please give reasons why not:									

6. ARE THERE ANY OTHER CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGATION?
(Please provide details below)

NAME & ICS No.	DATE OF BIRTH	ADDRESS & CONTACT DETAILS	PARENTS (Inc. address & contact details if different from child)

7. DOES THE ADULT CONCERNED HAVE CONTACT WITH ANY OTHER CHILDREN? YES/NO (Including their own children, grandchildren or via extended family networks/friends/youth groups/other employment etc)

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP TO ADULT CONCERNED	ADDRESS & CONTACT DETAILS

8. NATURE AND DETAILS OF ALLEGATION

Please indicate the nature of the allegation (Please tick):									
PHYSICAL		SEXUAL		EMOTIONAL		NEGLECT		SUITABILITY	
DOES THE ALLEGATION INVOLVE THE USE OF COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY?									
IF YES PLEASE INDICATE THE FORM OF COMMUNICATION USED: ie. mobile phone imagery, text, social networking site, internet etc.									
PLEASE PROVIDE FACTUAL DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT HAS BEEN SEEN OR HEARD AND BY WHOM:									

9. DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIONS

RECORD OF DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS

10. DECISION

DOES THIS MATTER MEET THE CRITERIA FOR INVESTIGATION UNDER LADO PROCEDURES IN WORKING TOGETHER?	**YES/NO**
ARE ENQUIRIES BEING MADE UNDER S.47 OF THE CHILDREN ACT (1989)?	**YES/NO**
STRATEGY MEETING TO BE CONVENED	**YES/NO**
STRATEGY DISCUSSION ONLY (PLEASE TICK)	

11. ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION PROVIDED / REQUIRED

12. PERSON RECEIVING INFORMATION

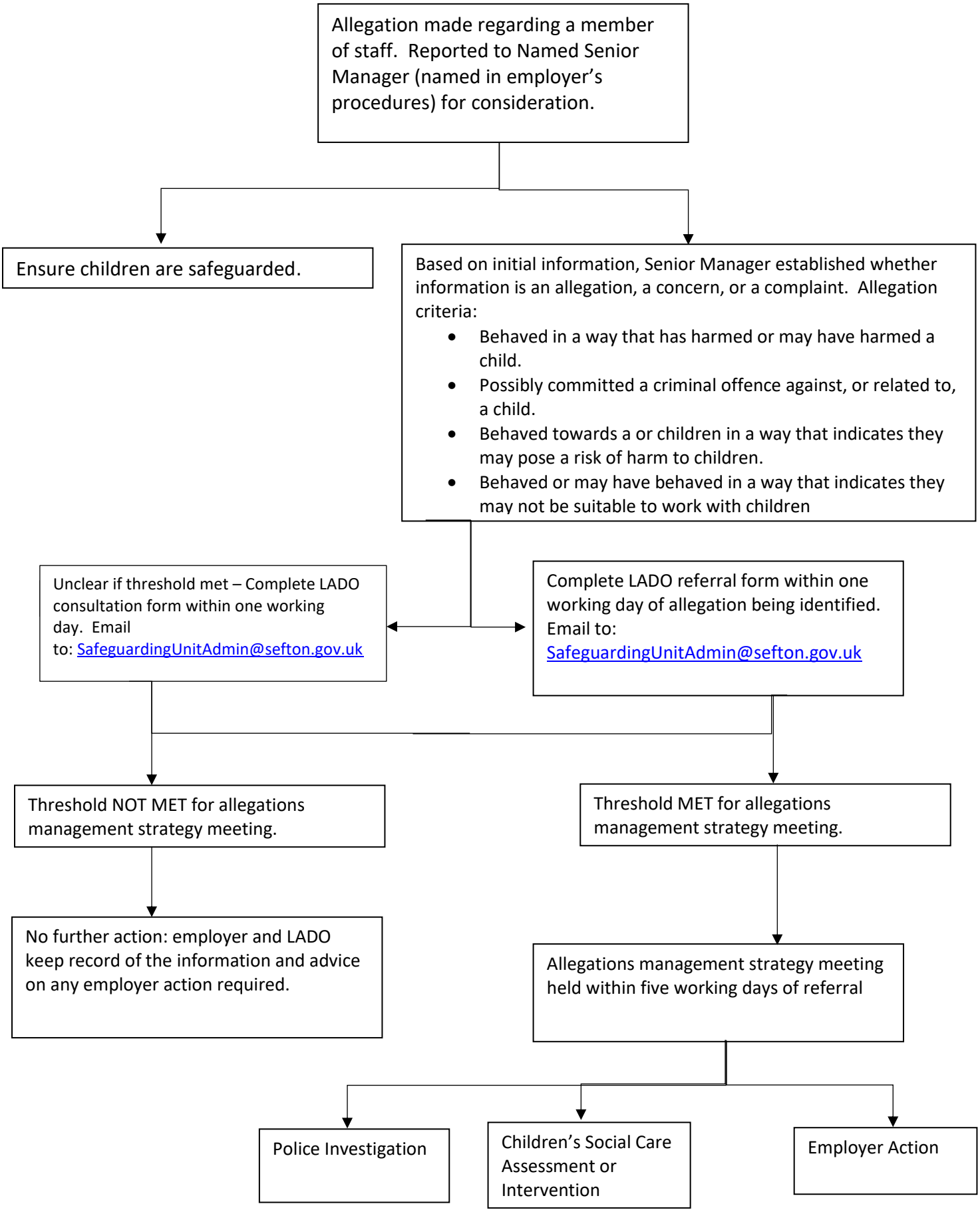
MEMBER OF STAFF RECEIVING INFORMATION		**DATE:**	

MEMBER OF STAFF COMPLETING THIS FORM		**DATE:**	

Please return the form, preferable via email to:

LADO
3rd Floor Magdalen House
Trinity Road
Bootle L20 3NJ
0151 934-3783
07814059604
SafeguardingUnitAdmin@sefton.gov.uk

Appendix 10: FLOWCHART FOR MANAGING ALLEGATIONS, INFORMATION FOR ALL STAFF



GENERAL - EXTERNAL

Appendix 11: BODY MAP GUIDANCE

Medical assistance should be sought where appropriate

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

Always use a black pen (never a pencil) and do not use correction fluid or any other eraser.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

***At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's/ young person, this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures, the body map below should be used in accordance with recording guidance. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. CHAT team or the child's social worker if already an open case to Children's social care.**

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:

- ✓ Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek;
- ✓ Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- ✓ Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- ✓ Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so;
- ✓ Is the skin broken?
- ✓ Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- ✓ Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- ✓ Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc?
- ✓ Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- ✓ Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- ✓ Does the child feel hot?
- ✓ Does the child feel pain?
- ✓ Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record Add any further comments as required.

Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record

A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's child protection file.

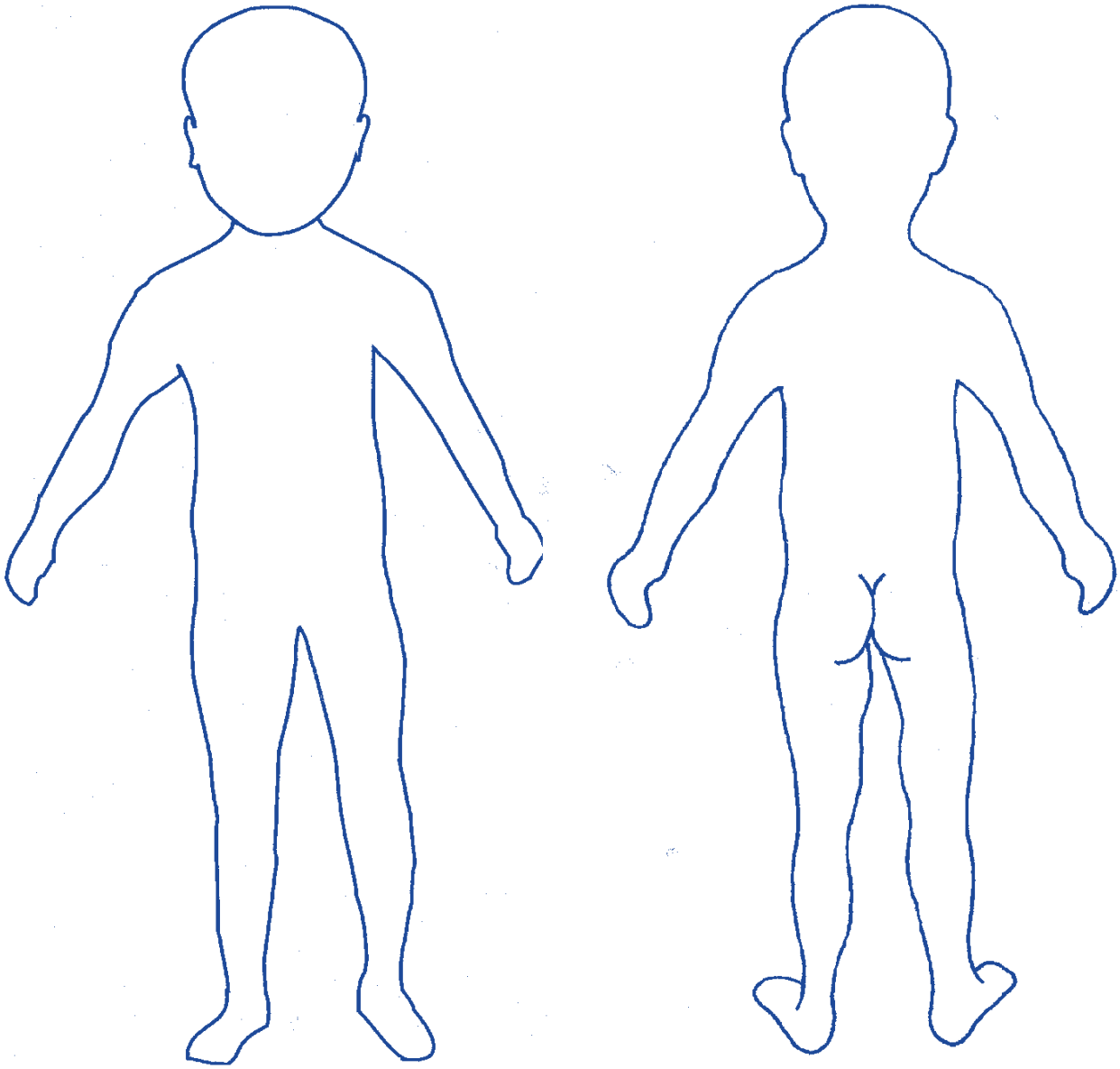
Appendix 12: BODY MAP

This must be completed at time of observation

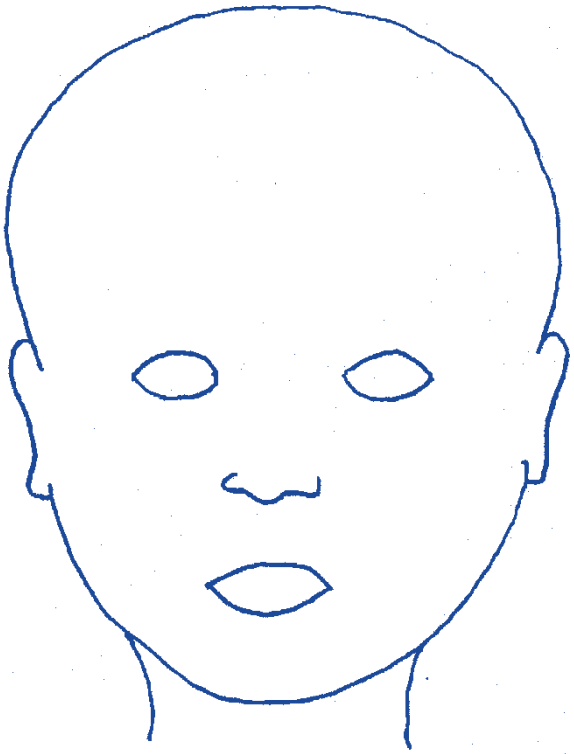
Name of Pupil: ..... Date of Birth: .....

Name of Staff: ..... Job title: .....

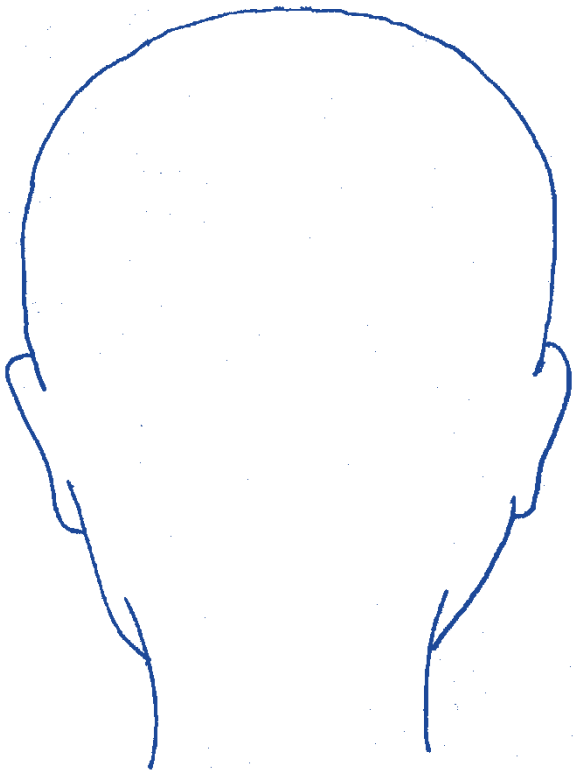
Date and time of observation: .....



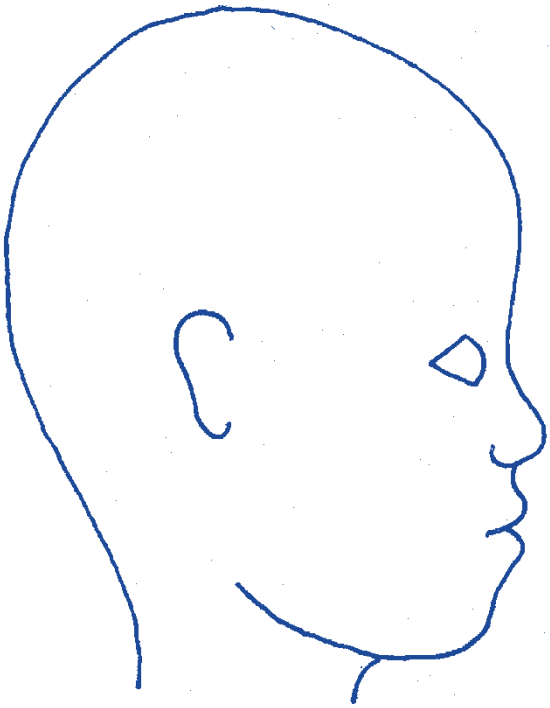
Name of pupil: ..... Date and time of observation: .....



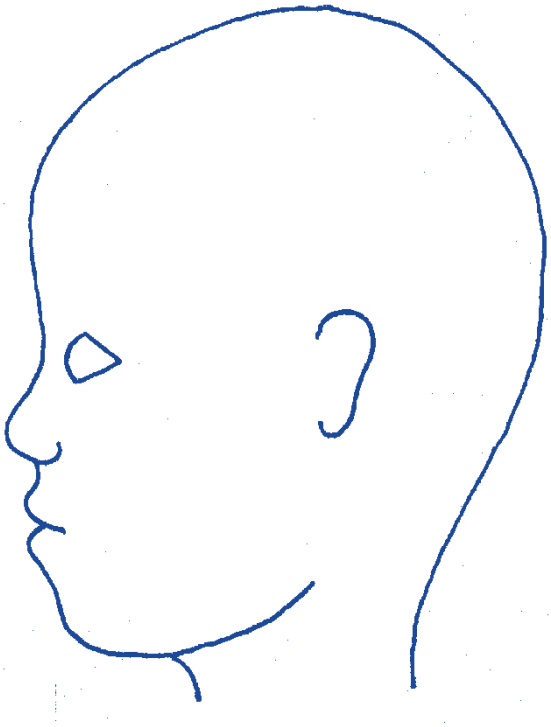
FRONT



BACK



RIGHT



LEFT

Name of pupil: .....

Date and time of observation: .....

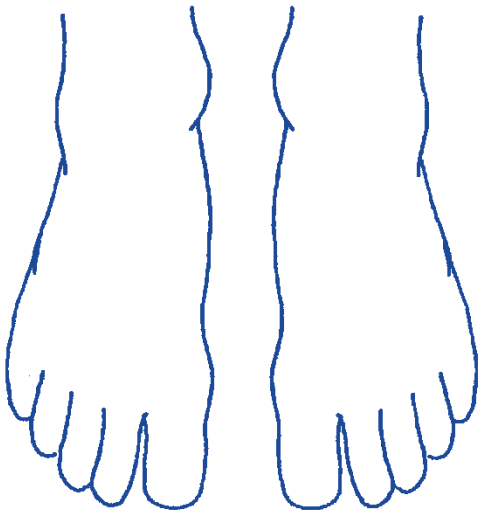
R

L

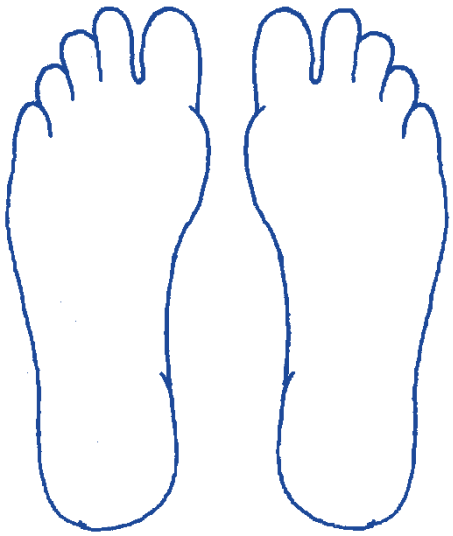
BACK

Name of Pupil: .....

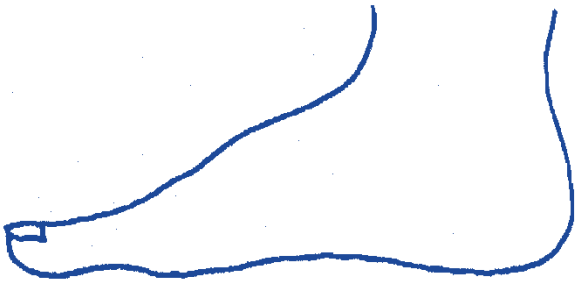
Date and time of observation: .....



R TOP L



R BOTTOM L



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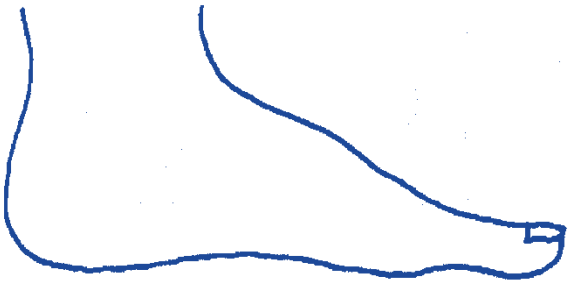
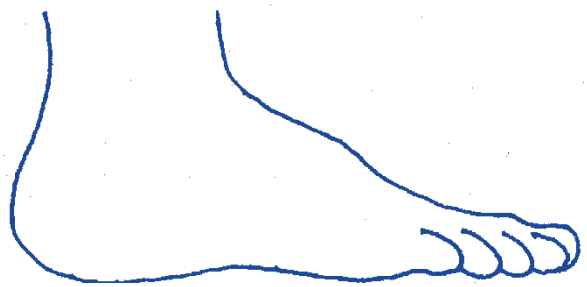
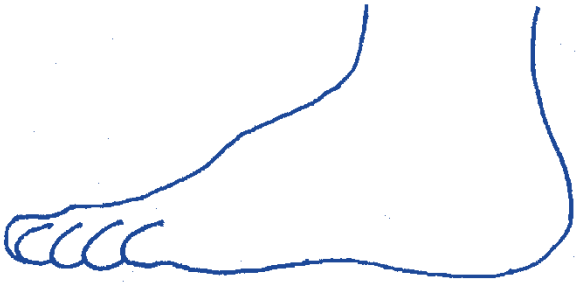


L

INNER



R



L

OUTER

Printed Name, Signature
and Job title of staff:

.....

.....

Appendix 13: RECORD OF CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S SAFETY AND WELFARE

Part 1 (for use by any staff – must be handwritten and legible)

Pupil's name:	Date of birth:	Class/Form:
Date & time of incident:	Date & time (of writing):	
Name (print): ..... Job title: Signature:		
Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc *(please include as much detail in this section as possible Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated Attach additional sheets if necessary*		
What is the pupil's perspective?		
Professional opinion, where relevant *(how and why might this have happened?)*		
Any other relevant information Previous concerns etc *(distinguish between fact and opinion)*		
Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when		

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it

Please pass this form to your DSL without delay

Part 2 (for use by DSL)

Information received by DSL:	Date:	Time completed:	From whom:		
Any advice **sought**, if applicable	Date:	Time completed:	From: name/organisation:		
	Advice received:				
Action taken with reasons recorded *(e.g. MARF completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff,*	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
Outcome	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
Parent/carer informed?	**Y**	Who has been spoken to?	Date:	Time:	By whom:
	N	Detail reason:			
Is any additional detail held, if so where?					
Prior safeguarding history	No of previous records of concern:				
	Has the child been subject of Early Help assessment?				
	Currently on CP Plan (CPP) / in Need Plan (CiN)				
	Previously on CP Plan (CPP) / in Need Plan (CiN)				
	Is known to other agencies?	Y / N			
Name of DSL:		Signature:			

Safeguarding Training undertaken

MELLING PRIMARY SAFEGUARDING TRAINING REGISTER			
SCHOOL YEAR 26 - 27			
6th JULY	JO HARGREAVES	ALLERGY LEAD TRAINING	Benedict's Law
SUMMER TERM 26 & INSET DAY JULY 20th	ALL STAFF	ALLERGY & ANAPHYLAXIS TRAINING	Benedict's Law
8th AUGUST	ANDREW KYLE	ALLERGY GOVERNOR TRAINING	Benedict's Law
1st SEPT	ALL STAFF	SAFEGUARDING UPDATE KCSIE 26 – chance to read Section 1 TEACH+ RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS	KCSIE26 Followed up with online check of knowledge
25th SEPT	VIV AINSWORTH JO HARGREAVES	DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD TRAINING	On waiting list
15th DEC	VIV AINSWORTH	WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN	Safeguarding (Jo H on waiting list)

MELLING PRIMARY SAFEGUARDING TRAINING REGISTER			
SCHOOL YEAR 25 - 26			
1st SEPT	ALL STAFF	SAFEGUARDING UPDATE	KCSIE25/Prevent Followed up with online check of knowledge
1st SEPT	ALL STAFF	TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE	1st session of four throughout the year
26th SEPT	LJ ASSISTANT HEAD	DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	All SLT now DSLs
19th NOV	LJ ASSISTANT HEAD	MANAGING ALLEGATIONS	Cover headteacher Mondays
25th NOV	LJ ASSISTANT HEAD	WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN	All SLT now trained to DSL level
12 09 25	SEAN CLEAVER	FIRST AID – EMERGENCY 1 DAY	H&S
25 & 26 09 25	VIV AINSWORTH	2 DAY PAEDIATRIC FIRST AID	H&S
07 10 25	LOUISE JONES	EMERGENCY PAEDIATRIC FIRST AID	H&S
Four 2 hour sessions 2025 – 2026	ALL STAFF	TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH	Relational Practice
13 11 25	LAUREN WOOD	FIRST AID TRAINING	H&S
15 01 26	DANIELLE MADDEN	BEREAVEMENT TRAINING	ELSA
15 01 26	CHARLOTTE LYNCH, JANE SCOTT, BECKY TAYLOR	CATHETER TRAINING	Medical conditions
26th FEB	TOM J	EMERGENCY FIRST AID	H&S
11th MARCH	VIV A	POVERTY PROOFING	
26th MARCH	RICHARD M	FIRE MARSHALL TRAINING	H&S
16th APRIL	VIV A	ALLERGY AWARENESS TRAINING	Benedict's Law preparation

29th APRIL	VIV A	SAFER RECRUITMENT	Safeguarding

MELLING PRIMARY SAFEGUARDING TRAINING REGISTER			
SCHOOL YEAR 24 - 25			
2nd Sept	ALL STAFF	Inset day – Safeguarding update – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 – all staff completed follow up online module.	Stat: Safeguarding SIP – Writing
20th Sept	JH, VA, DM	My Happy Mind – training for launch	PSHE / Mental health & well-being
25th Sept	VA DSL	Working Together to Safeguard children	Stat: Safeguarding
7th Nov	VA DSL	DSL training day	Stat: Safeguarding
21st & 22nd Nov	JH	Forest School First Aid certificate	H&S compliance and RA
16th Dec	VA	Sefton SP Neglect Screening Tool	Safeguarding
7th March	VA	Senior Mental Health Lead DfE training	DfE requirement
27th March	Jo H	DSL & Working together training	Safeguarding
11th June	ALL STAFF	Mental Health and Behaviour	Senior Mental Health Lead
25th June	VA	ACEs training	Senior Mental Health Lead