



MERCHANT TAYLORS'

Prep

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Custodian: Head of MTP

Approval: Pending Full Governing Body Approval

Updated: September 2026

Next Review: November 2027, or earlier if statutory guidance changes

Introduction and Key Principles

At Merchant Taylors' Prep School, safeguarding is integral to everything we do. It underpins our teaching, our pastoral care and our daily routines, and is central to our commitment to providing an environment in which all children feel safe, respected and valued.

We recognise that children flourish best when they feel secure, listened to and understood. Our safeguarding approach reflects this belief. It is built on strong relationships, professional curiosity, and a deep understanding of children's developmental needs. All staff, whatever their role, share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and are expected to act in the best interests of each child at all times.

We take a whole-school, child-centred approach to safeguarding and child protection. This means:

- Safeguarding is not limited to reacting to harm but includes the proactive promotion of wellbeing and early identification of need
- All children at MTP are entitled to feel safe and supported, whether they are in EYFS, Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2
- Staff are trained to recognise that children may not always disclose abuse or neglect directly, and that non-verbal signs, changes in behaviour or quieter voices may still speak volumes
- Safeguarding includes the prevention of harm online, in peer relationships, and from within or outside the home environment

Safeguarding also runs through our excellent teaching and learning. Through strong adult-child relationships, developmentally appropriate feedback, and purposeful classroom interaction, staff are well placed to notice early changes and respond with care. Learning environments are designed to promote confidence, independence and trust, creating spaces where pupils feel secure enough to take risks, ask for help and talk to adults.

Our safeguarding culture is supported by visible leadership and clear structures. All members of staff are trained to report concerns, no matter how small, and know how to access the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Safeguarding Team. Visitors, volunteers and parents are also made aware of how to raise concerns or seek support.

All staff are required to:

- Read and understand Part One of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, September 2026\)](#) School leaders and staff who work directly with children must also read Annex A: Further Information.
- Read and follow this Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct
- Know the identity and role of the DSL and Deputy DSLs
- Report any concerns via CPOMS, or speak to the DSL or Safeguarding Team directly if unable to access the system. Staff are also able to complete a Record of Concern Form (Appendix 2) which should be handed in to the DSL, if for any reason they are not able to make a report using CPOMS or in person. Staff should challenge any perceived inaction and follow this up with the DSL.
- Uphold an open, respectful and alert safeguarding culture where questions, concerns and professional conversations are welcomed and followed through
- Visitors to the school can report safeguarding concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team, either in person or by calling the school office on **01923 825 648** or by email to safeguarding@mtpn.org.uk

This policy applies to all children in the Prep School (ages 3–11), all of whom are considered to be children under child protection legislation.

The three safeguarding partners are Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary and NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board. We follow the procedures and protocols of the [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(HSCP\)](#). Our work is underpinned by the principles and responsibilities laid out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE, 2026\)](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(March 2026\)](#), and the current version of the [Continuum of Needs for Children and Young People in Hertfordshire](#).

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the procedures laid down by the [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(HSCP\) Procedures](#), and with due regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) (DfE September 2026) including the additional statutory guidance [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#) (DfE, August 2018) and the non-statutory advice for practitioners, [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (DfE, March 2015)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (WT) (DfE, March 2026)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023](#) (Prevent) (Home Office, March 2024)
- For ease of reference, the above publications will be referred to throughout this policy as KCSIE, WT and Prevent respectively.
- [Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges](#) (DfE, March 2022)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#) and [The Equality Act 2010: guidance](#) (Government Equalities Office, February 2023)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(July 2026\)](#) (DfE, July 2026)

This policy also aligns with the procedures and thresholds outlined in the [Continuum of Need for Children and Young People in Hertfordshire \(2025–26\)](#).

This policy forms part of a set of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. As well as all school pastoral policies and health and safety policies, there are links with the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Physical Contact Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct (School Employment Manual)
- Pastoral Curriculum Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- School Visitors Policy and Visiting Speaker Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Early Years Policy

This policy is reviewed regularly, at least annually, and updated in line with changes to legislation, statutory guidance and best practice. It is reviewed for compliance and clarity and is approved annually by the Full Governing Body at its autumn meeting. The policy may also be reviewed and reapproved at other points in the year should any updates be required.

Oversight and Governance

Merchant Taylors' Prep School is fully committed to meeting its statutory and moral responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The Governing Body plays a vital role in providing strategic leadership and ensuring accountability in this area. The School's Designated Safeguarding Governor is **Mrs Jane Redman**. She meets regularly with the DSL to monitor the school's safeguarding practices and ensure that statutory duties are being fulfilled. Her responsibilities include:

- Meets regularly with the DSL to review safeguarding policies, procedures and practice
- Audits the Single Central Register termly
- Checks that staff safeguarding training is up to date and consistently delivered
- Reviews how the school responds to safeguarding concerns, ensuring correct procedures have been followed
- Confirms the school is working in line with local safeguarding protocols, and cooperating effectively with external agencies
- Ensures that the DSL and Deputy DSL have up-to-date job descriptions and sufficient time, capacity and training to carry out their responsibilities

Safeguarding is a standing item at all Governing Body meetings. In addition, an Annual Safeguarding Report is presented at the end of each academic year to summarise key actions, data and developments.

Definitions and Abbreviations

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, including harm that occurs online or outside the home
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

(Adapted from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026)

Child Protection

Child protection refers to the specific processes and structures used to protect children who are identified as suffering, or at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect, exploitation or violence.

(Save the Children, 2007)

Staff

Throughout this policy, *staff* refers to all individuals working for or on behalf of Merchant Taylors' Prep School, whether in a full-time or part-time capacity, and whether employed, contracted, or volunteering. This includes temporary, agency and supply staff.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including volunteers, contractors and external speakers, are expected to adhere to this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy under the guidance of their host member of staff and the DSL. Procedures for managing safeguarding expectations for visitors are outlined in the School Visitors Policy and the Visiting Speaker Policy.

All abbreviations are defined at their first point of use within this policy, and follow standard usage as set out in KCSIE. For ease of reference, the most frequently used abbreviations include:

- **CSE:** Child Sexual Exploitation
- **CPOMS:** Child Protection Online Management System
- **DDSL:** Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **DfE:** Department for Education
- **DSL:** Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **EYFS:** Early Years Foundation Stage
- **FBV:** Fundamental British Values
- **FGM:** Female Genital Mutilation
- **HBV:** Honour-Based Violence
- **HSCP:** Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
- **MASH:** Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- **PSHE:** Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
- **RSE:** Relationships and Sex Education

Key Personnel

Name	Role	Contact
Cdre Andy Cree, CBE	Chairman of Governors	c/o Clerk to the Governors, Mr Edward Valletta (part-time) 07876 577329
Mrs Jane Redman	Designated Safeguarding Governor	See above
Mr Michael Bond	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Governor	See above

Mr Miles Chester	Head, Safeguarding Team	01923 825 648
Mrs Colette Quinlivan	Senior Deputy Head, Designated Safeguarding Lead	See above
Mrs Sara West	Assistant Head (Pastoral, Wellbeing and Inclusion), Deputy DSL	See above
Mr Nick Stuart	Assistant Head (Operations and Development), Safeguarding Team	See above
Mrs Gemma Ladbury	Assistant Head (EYFS), Safeguarding Team	See above
Mr Dominic Todd	Director of Sport, Safeguarding Team	See above

External Link Contact

HSCP Child Protection Schools/Colleges Liaison Officer for MTP:

Louise McCourts

Tel: 07814 077877

Email: louise.mccourts@hertfordshire.gov.uk

At Merchant Taylors' Prep, safeguarding is deliberately embedded across all year groups and areas of school life. Our Safeguarding Team is broad and highly visible, reflecting our commitment to the principle in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* that safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**.

By including leaders from the Early Years, Pre-Prep, Prep, Sport, and Pastoral teams, we ensure that every stage of a child's journey is represented. This ensures that concerns can be raised promptly with a trusted adult who knows the child and family well.

This structure also reflects the reality that parents often share information or concerns with the staff they see most frequently. Our model ensures these conversations are never held in isolation but are immediately connected to the wider safeguarding team.

Oversight remains with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and **Deputy DSLs**, who provide consistency, accountability and decision-making. The wider team strengthens **accessibility, visibility, and professional challenge**.

This approach supports a safeguarding culture that is:

- **Proactive** – noticing and responding early
- **Joined up** – with strong internal communication
- **Responsive** – meeting the needs of every child

DSL availability and cover

During school hours, the DSL or an appropriately trained Deputy DSL will be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. When the DSL is unavailable, safeguarding oversight will be maintained by the Deputy DSL. The School's confidential safeguarding mailbox (safeguarding@mtpn.org.uk) is accessible to authorised members of the Safeguarding Team and is monitored to ensure concerns are received and acted upon without delay.

Parents, visitors, and members of the public may also submit a concern through the safeguarding page of the School website.

Child Protection Procedures

Merchant Taylors' Prep follows the statutory guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)*. All staff have a duty to act if they are concerned about a child, and must follow the procedures outlined below. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and no concern is ever too small to report.

If a Child Discloses Information to a Member of Staff

If a child makes a disclosure — however vague, partial or unclear — the member of staff must:

1. Listen carefully, without interrupting or asking leading questions
2. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in speaking up
3. Explain that you cannot promise confidentiality, and that information may need to be shared to keep them safe
4. Record the disclosure promptly and factually on CPOMS, using the child's own words where possible
5. Alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL as soon as possible — in person, by phone or in writing
6. Do not speak to the child's parents or carers unless instructed to do so by the DSL

If a Staff Member Has a Concern About a Child

Staff must report any concern, however small, if they notice:

- Changes in mood, appearance, hygiene, energy or behaviour
- Signs that a child may feel unsafe, unwell or unsupported
- An accumulation of low-level concerns or a developing pattern
- Worrying home circumstances or safeguarding risks shared by parents

Concerns should be recorded immediately on CPOMS, with enough detail to support the DSL's understanding and response. Staff may also raise concerns directly with the DSL verbally, but must still follow up with a CPOMS entry.

If in doubt — record it and pass it on.

DSL Action Following a Concern

The DSL (or a Deputy DSL) will:

- Review the concern promptly and decide on appropriate next steps
- Check for patterns or previous concerns
- Seek further information from staff, parents or external agencies if appropriate
- Make a referral to Children's Services (via MASH) if required
- Record all actions, decisions and outcomes clearly on CPOMS
- Provide appropriate feedback to the referring member of staff

Early Help and Family Help

Early Help is support provided as soon as emerging needs are identified. It may include support delivered within the School or through universal, voluntary and community services. Staff must report concerns promptly to the DSL or Safeguarding Team and record them on CPOMS.

The DSL will assess the child's needs using the Hertfordshire Continuum of Need and may:

- arrange appropriate support within the School;
- signpost or refer the family to universal or community-based Early Help services;
- with the family's consent, initiate or contribute to a Family Help assessment;
- work with other professionals to coordinate and review support; or
- refer the child to local authority children's social care.

Family Help includes targeted Early Help and support provided to children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Targeted Early Help is voluntary and normally requires the family's consent. However, where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, the School will make a referral to local authority children's social care without delay. Consent is not required to make a safeguarding referral.

All assessments, decisions, actions and outcomes will be recorded and reviewed. If the child's needs increase, the DSL will reconsider the appropriate level of support and make a further referral where necessary.

Children Who May Particularly Benefit from Early Help

While any child may benefit from early help, school staff should be particularly alert to children who:

- Are disabled or have health conditions with additional needs
- Have special educational needs (with or without an EHCP)
- Have a mental health need
- Are young carers
- Are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gangs or county lines
- Are frequently missing from education, home or care
- Have experienced multiple suspensions or are at risk of exclusion
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Are vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influence
- Have a parent or carer in custody, or are affected by parental offending
- Live in households affected by drug or alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues, or domestic abuse
- Are themselves misusing alcohol or other substances
- May be subject to so-called 'honour'-based abuse, including **FGM** or **forced marriage**
- Are living in private fostering arrangements

The presence of one or more of these indicators does not automatically trigger statutory intervention but must prompt **early recording, professional conversation and appropriate response**.

Early help sits within our whole-school commitment to acting promptly, working in partnership with families, and doing all we can to support children's welfare at the earliest stage.

Recognising and reporting signs of abuse

All members of staff have a responsibility to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, to report concerns without delay, to share information appropriately, and to act at all times in the best interests of the child.

Staff must remain aware that abuse can occur within or outside the school environment, within or outside the home, and online or offline. Children may be at risk in a range of contexts, and staff must maintain an attitude of *"it could happen here"* in all matters relating to safeguarding.

Reporting Concerns

Any concern relating to a child's safety or welfare must be reported:

- **Via CPOMS** as the first point of contact
- Or **directly to the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team** if CPOMS is unavailable or if the matter is urgent

Staff must not attempt to investigate concerns or determine whether abuse has occurred. It is not the role of school staff to reach conclusions about abuse — their responsibility is to notice, record and report.

The shared safeguarding mailbox (safeguarding@mtpn.org.uk) and the reporting form on the School's safeguarding webpage provide additional routes for parents, visitors and members of the public to report concerns. These are monitored by authorised members of the Safeguarding Team. Staff should use CPOMS in accordance with the School's established reporting procedures.

If a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, the school will make an urgent referral to the local authority children's services for the area where the child is resident. In some cases, the school may seek advice from the local authority before making a formal referral, particularly where early help may be appropriate.

In most cases, the school will inform parents or carers when a referral is being made to a statutory agency. However, this will not occur if doing so would put the child at further risk of harm, or if parents may be implicated in the concern. Staff must be mindful that parental consent is not required for referrals to statutory services when a safeguarding concern is raised.

Local Authority Contacts (as of September 2025)

For ease of reference, the following are the key local authority safeguarding contacts most relevant to the school community. These details should be verified regularly via the local authority website:

Local Authority	Contact number	Other	
Barnet MASH	020 8359 4066	Out of hours 020 8359 2000	mash@barnet.gov.uk
Brent Family Front Door	020 8937 4300	Out of hours 020 8863 5250	Online form
Buckinghamshire MASH	01296 383962	Out of hours 0800 999 7677	secure-cypfirstresponse@bucksc.gov.uk
Camden MASH	020 7974 3317	Out of hours 0207 278 4444	LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk
Ealing MASH	020 8825 8000 (24h)	ecirs@ealing.gov.uk	
Harrow MASH	0208 8901 2690	Out of hours 0208 424 0999	
Hertfordshire MASH	0300 123 4043 (24h)		
Hillingdon MASH	01895 556644	Out of hours 01895 250111	

All staff are trained to understand that anybody can make a referral to external agencies. They can do this by telephoning the relevant numbers above. However, the Safeguarding Team have significant training in such matters and are considered the best people to liaise with outside agencies. This will be carried out using the procedure as set out in the relevant Safeguarding Partnership's procedures and policies.

Confidentiality and sharing data

The Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Information shared must be relevant, necessary, proportionate, accurate and appropriately secure. Staff should record decisions to share or withhold information and the reasons for them. If in doubt, staff should consult the DSL; however, this must not delay action needed to protect a child.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The School recognises that matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are sensitive and confidential and staff are expected to balance the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant colleagues and external agencies, in the best interests of the child. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anybody about an allegation, as this may not be in the best interests of the child.

Recognising Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child (KCSIE, 2026). 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 parents, caregivers or other family members. This is sometimes referred to as child-to-parent or caregiver abuse and may include physical, emotional or controlling behaviour. Any concern must be recorded and reported to the DSL, with appropriate support considered for everyone affected.

Contextual safeguarding

At Merchant Taylors' Prep, we understand that safeguarding children extends beyond the home. As children grow and begin to explore the wider world, they are influenced by a range of environments and relationships — including school, the local community, online platforms, and peer groups.

This approach is known as contextual safeguarding. It recognises that harm may occur not just within families, but in multiple settings, and that these contexts may be interlinked. A child at risk in one area of their life may also be vulnerable in others.

Staff at MTP are trained to be alert to signs of harm or abuse that children may experience outside the home, including in peer relationships, online activity, local spaces, or during transitions between settings. We work closely with other schools, local agencies, and community partners to understand emerging risks and to keep children safe beyond the school gates.

All staff are expected to notice early indicators of harm and to report them promptly to the DSL using the school's established procedures. We maintain a culture of vigilance, with a strong belief that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The four main categories of abuse, as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*, are listed below. Each may present in different ways, especially in younger children. Staff are trained to recognise both obvious and subtle signs, and to raise concerns even when only a single indicator is observed, recognising that, over time, these may build a fuller picture.

Physical Abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or	Possible Signs of Physical Abuse: - unexplained injuries or burns
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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.	- improbable excuses given to explain injuries - refusal to discuss injuries - untreated injuries - admission of excessive punishment - bald patches - withdrawal from physical contact - arms and legs kept covered in hot weather - fear of returning home or medical help - self-destructive tendencies - aggressive behaviour or running away
Emotional Abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe adverse effects on their emotional development. This may include: • Telling a child they are worthless or unloved • Limiting opportunities to express views or engage socially • Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations • Witnessing or being involved in serious bullying (including cyberbullying) • Exploitation or corruption of children	Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse: - delays in physical, mental and emotional development - admission of excessive punishment - over-reaction to mistakes or fear of new situations - sudden speech disorders - inappropriate emotional responses - neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb-sucking) - self-harm or self-mutilation - fear of parents being contacted - extremes of passivity or aggression - drug/solvent abuse - running away - child criminal exploitation
Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may include: • Failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter • Failing to protect from physical/emotional harm • Lack of supervision or failure to access appropriate medical care • Neglect during pregnancy due to substance misuse	Possible Signs of Neglect: - constant hunger or tiredness - poor hygiene or clothing - emaciation - frequent lateness or absence - untreated medical problems - destructive tendencies or low self esteem - neurotic behaviour - social withdrawal or no friendships - running away - compulsive stealing or scavenging
Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. This includes: • Contact abuse (e.g. assault by penetration or touching) • Non-contact abuse (e.g. grooming, exposing children to sexual images, watching sexual activities)	Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse: - unexplained or inconsistently explained physical injuries - repeat bruising; bruising of different colours; burn injuries - reluctance to talk about injuries - dramatic behaviour changes (introversion, aggression)

• Sexual abuse facilitated or conducted online • Peer-on-peer sexual abuse (see Child-on-Child Abuse section) Also includes: • Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): where children are manipulated or coerced into sexual activity in exchange for something (e.g. money, gifts, affection) • Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): a form of sexual and physical abuse. Any concern about FGM must be reported immediately to the DSL and managed in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures. The specific mandatory reporting duty for teachers is explained in the Honour-Based Abuse section below.	- social withdrawal or peer difficulties - regression to wetting or soiling - frequent urinary tract infection or medical complaints - emotional overdependence on adults other than parents - avoidance of PE or swimming lessons (possibly hiding injuries or fear of vulnerability when changing) - self-harming - attention seeking beyond norm for age - age-inappropriate sexualised play language - unexplained access to money or valuables - fear of, or excessive attachment to parents or carers
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Staff must be alert to safeguarding risks that can affect children both within and beyond the school environment. While some behaviours may appear more common in older pupils, children aged 3–11 can still be vulnerable — particularly through family circumstances, sibling influence, peer dynamics, or online exposure.

The following may be indicators of risk and must be reported to the DSL via CPOMS:

- Drug or alcohol misuse (by the child or within the home)
- Persistent or unexplained absences from school
- Exposure to serious violence or county lines activity
- Signs of radicalisation or extremist influence
- Sharing or exposure to nude/semi-nude images, whether consensual or coerced
- Sudden changes in mood, behaviour, or engagement

In exceptional circumstances, the DSL alone may decide that viewing the imagery is necessary to safeguard a child. This decision must be based on the DSL's professional judgement and handled in accordance with current guidance.

Staff should not dismiss concerns based on age. Apparent minor signs may point to broader risk, and early recording and escalation are essential to keeping children safe. All staff must maintain awareness of a wide range of safeguarding issues that may place children at risk of harm. Even in a prep school setting, younger children can be affected directly or indirectly by complex factors including domestic abuse, mental health difficulties, criminal exploitation, or radicalisation. Staff are trained to identify these risks early, to record concerns via CPOMS, and to escalate immediately to the Safeguarding Team. **Domestic Abuse** can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional. It may involve a single incident or a pattern of behaviour (*Domestic Abuse Act 2021*). Children can be victims through **seeing**, hearing, or experiencing the effects of abuse in their home.

Children may also be affected by abusive or controlling behaviour in peer relationships, even in primary settings. While not legally classified as domestic abuse in younger children, these behaviours may mirror similar patterns and require safeguarding intervention.

The school recognises that witnessing or being exposed to abuse can significantly impact a child's emotional wellbeing, development, and ability to learn. All concerns must be logged and escalated via CPOMS.

Operation Encompass

The School participates in Operation Encompass. The DSL and trained Key Adults receive secure police notifications when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil may be a victim of domestic abuse. Notifications are recorded securely, shared only on a need-to-know basis and used to provide timely and appropriate support.

An Operation Encompass notification does not replace the School's usual safeguarding procedures. The DSL will consider whether further support or referral to local authority children's social care is required.

The Prevent Duty (Anti-Radicalisation and Anti-Extremism)

Staff are trained to recognise the signs that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation. This may include exposure to extremist views or grooming through online platforms. Any concerns must be referred to the PREVENT team using the HSCP referral process.

- Contact: prevent@hertfordshire.gov.uk
- Online referrals: [HCSP Prevent Referral Form](#)
- DfE Helpline: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk | 0207 340 7264

See Appendix 3 for the school's full Prevent strategy.

Honour-Based Violence, including Female Genital Mutilation

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA) includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage. These are serious safeguarding concerns and illegal under UK law.

- FGM is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia.

Any concern that a child may be at risk of FGM must be reported immediately to the DSL and addressed through the School's safeguarding procedures. Where a teacher is informed by a child that FGM has been carried out on her, or observes physical signs which appear to show that it has been carried out on a girl under 18, the teacher must personally report this to the police. The mandatory police-reporting duty does not replace the requirement to inform the DSL and consider a referral to children's social care. Contact Hertfordshire Police: 101 (local) or 01707 354000

FGM concerns may also arise through disclosures from family members and must always be taken seriously.

Mental Health

Children's mental health and emotional wellbeing are central to safeguarding. Mental health problems may be a symptom or an indicator of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Staff are trained to recognise behaviours suggesting that a child may be struggling emotionally, including:

- Withdrawal or sudden changes in mood
- Disengagement from learning or play

- Self-harming behaviours or expressions of distress

Staff do not diagnose but can access support and refer children to appropriate services. If a mental health concern has a safeguarding dimension, it must be recorded on CPOMS and discussed with the DSL immediately.

Children Who Are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Questioning Their Gender

Being lesbian, gay or bisexual is not, in itself, a safeguarding concern. However, children who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bisexual may be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying, which the School will address promptly.

Young children may explore interests, clothing or behaviours not traditionally associated with their biological sex. This does not, in itself, mean that a child is questioning their gender or requesting social transition. Staff will listen respectfully and follow normal safeguarding procedures if concerns about the child's welfare arise.

Any request from a child or parent or carer for the School to support social transition must be referred to the DSL. The School will not initiate social transition, and individual members of staff must not agree to or implement changes independently. Requests will be considered carefully and individually, with particular caution for primary-aged children. In accordance with KCSIE 2026, full social transition will be agreed only very rarely.

Parents and carers will be involved as a priority and their views given significant weight, unless doing so may place the child at greater risk of harm. Decisions and their rationale will be recorded and reviewed.

The School will record biological sex accurately. Pupils will not use toilets, changing facilities or overnight accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex. Suitable alternatives will be considered where appropriate, while protecting the safety, privacy and dignity of all children.

Serious violence, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and county lines

While more prevalent in secondary settings, younger children may still be at risk through older peers, siblings, or community exposure.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) involves coercing or manipulating a child into criminal activity, often in exchange for status, money, or under threat.

County Lines refers to the movement of drugs and money across areas, using children as couriers. Common methods include online grooming, violence, and coercion. Risks can include:

- Frequent absence from school
- Unexplained gifts, money, or new possessions
- Sudden changes in friendships or behaviour
- Signs of assault, fear, or withdrawal
- Children found in unknown locations or staying in unsuitable accommodation ('trap houses')
- Bank accounts used by others
- Signs of trafficking or drug concealment (e.g. 'plugging')

Staff must escalate any concerns about CCE or county lines involvement immediately to the Safeguarding Team.

Child-on-Child abuse

All staff should recognise that children can abuse other children, and that this may occur inside or outside school, and online. The absence of reports does not mean it is not happening; some children may be reluctant to disclose. Any concern about child-on-child abuse must be reported to the DSL via CPOMS without delay.

Staff have a responsibility to challenge and report behaviours between pupils that are abusive in nature. Dismissing harmful behaviour as “just banter,” “part of growing up,” or “boys being boys” risks creating a culture in which abuse becomes normalized, and children do not feel safe to speak out.

Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in peer relationships (sometimes called “relationship abuse”)
- Physical abuse: hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling, physical assault or harm, including threats or harm involving a weapon.
- Sexual violence: rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault (including online-facilitated threats or encouragement)
- Sexual harassment: sexual comments, remarks, jokes or online sexual harassment, including behaviour involving misogyny or misandry.
- Causing another to engage in sexual activity without consent (e.g. forcing a child to strip or touch themselves)
- Consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, including images generated or manipulated using artificial intelligence
- Upskirting: taking an image under a person’s clothing without permission for sexual gratification, humiliation, or distress
- Initiation / hazing rituals: harassment, abuse, or humiliation used to initiate a child into a group (may include online activity)

When a child reports child-on-child abuse, staff should:

- Reassure them they are being taken seriously
- Explain what will happen next in clear, age-appropriate language
- Ensure the child feels safe and supported
- Record the disclosure factually on CPOMS and refer to the DSL
- Treat all children involved as “at risk” and support them sensitively, without judgment
- Put in place actions to reduce further risk to all parties

We recognise that child-on-child abuse can be gendered (with girls often more at risk of sexual harassment or violence), but all forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be treated seriously, regardless of the identities of those involved.

Reporting channels for pupils include (but are not limited to):

class teachers, teaching assistants, tutors, Heads of, medical staff, sports staff or via parents. More detail is provided in the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

Investigating the sharing of nude and semi-nude images/videos

“Sharing nudes and semi-nudes” refers to the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by children under 18. This can occur via social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, forums, or device-to-device methods (e.g. AirDrop). Such content may involve one or more children. Incidents may vary significantly in severity, from grooming or coercion (sextortion) to consensual peer-led exchanges. Staff must respond swiftly, guided by proportionality, with the welfare and protection of the child as the primary concern.

If an incident is disclosed or detected:

- Do not view or download the content — this is illegal
- Do not upload it to CPOMS
- Do not ask the child to delete it or handle it themselves

- Explain to the child that you must report it
- Safely confiscate the device (without looking at content) and hand it to the DSL
- Report it immediately to the DSL

The DSL will convene a small team to categorise the incident, assess risks, and decide on next steps. Parents should be informed early, unless this risks further harm. If there is any concern that a child is at risk of harm, a referral must be made immediately to Children's Social Care and/or the police.

Further guidance:

[Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools \(DfE, July 2022\)](#)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings \(DfE, March 2024\)](#)

Children Missing from Education

A pupil missing from education can be a serious indicator of abuse or neglect. The school must take all reasonable steps to ensure every pupil is accounted for and must act with vigilance when attendance becomes irregular.

When a pupil is removed from roll:

- Carry out checks to understand the reason (e.g. contact parents, previous settings)
- Review safeguarding records and confirm the pupil's next educational placement
- Notify the local authority in the pupil's home area, where required by law (e.g. elective home education, no forwarding school, medical unfitness, permanent exclusion)

When attendance is concerning:

- Repeated, prolonged or unexplained absence must be reviewed promptly in accordance with the School's Attendance Policy and children-missing-education procedures. Any associated safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the DSL and must not be held back while a numerical absence threshold is reached.
- Persistent or sudden absence may signal larger safeguarding issues such as exploitation

On transfer to another school:

- Child protection records will be transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file as soon as possible, within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of a new term. Confirmation of receipt will be obtained.
- At least two emergency contact numbers must be held for each pupil

If a pupil goes missing during the school day:

- Follow the school's Lost Child Procedure
- Once located, reflect on the cause of the incident
- If any safeguarding concern arises, report it immediately to the DSL
- If a child fails to arrive at school and no reason is given, office staff or registration staff must call parents that morning to verify the pupil's whereabouts

Responding to safeguarding and child protection concerns (see Appendix 6)

All staff at Merchant Taylors' Prep are trained in how to respond if a child discloses abuse or raises a concern. It is essential to:

- Reassure the child that they are being listened to and taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken for them to disclose.
- Avoid minimising any abuse, whether it occurs online or outside school.
- Never give the impression the child is creating a problem by speaking up, or make them feel ashamed.

How to Listen and Respond

When a child is making a report, staff must:

- Listen attentively and patiently, without interruption.
- Use the child's own language when reflecting back what they say.
- Be non-judgmental, setting clear boundaries and explaining how the report will be handled.
- Avoid leading questions; only use open prompts such as "*when?*", "*where?*", "*what happened?*"
- It is acceptable to ask if the child has been harmed and to describe the nature of the harm.

(See Appendix 5 for more detailed guidance on handling disclosures.)

Recording Concerns

- The school uses CPOMS to record all safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Staff should log any matter that raises concern about a child's welfare, including:
 - Poor attendance
 - Changes in appearance or dress
 - Unusual or withdrawn behaviour
 - Emotional or mental health issues
 - Academic deterioration
 - Conversations with parents about concerns
 - Home conditions or responses from parents
- All entries must be factual, non-judgmental, accurate, relevant, and timely.
- If CPOMS is unavailable, staff should complete a **Record of Concern Form** (see Appendix 2) and hand it to a member of the Safeguarding Team. It must then be uploaded to CPOMS as soon as possible.

Supportive Safeguarding Culture

- The DSL and Safeguarding Team promote an open culture where staff are encouraged to raise concerns and maintain professional curiosity.
- The school supports all individuals involved in safeguarding issues, including victims, alleged perpetrators, and other children who may be affected.
- Staff are trained to understand referral thresholds:
 - **Section 47:** when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, immediate referral to Children's Services and, if necessary, the police.
 - **Section 17:** when a child is in need of additional support, the school coordinates with Early Help or external services.

Internal and External Support

- In-school support includes access to the School Counsellor.
- Referrals to external professionals may be made, if appropriate, following consultation with the Safeguarding Team.
- The school provides opportunities for pupil reporting via the **Student Voice app**, which enables anonymous or named disclosures.
- Posters throughout the school remind pupils how to access the app, and it is also used to conduct regular pupil safety surveys. Findings are used to inform pastoral planning and address any emerging concerns.

Education and Prevention

- The Pastoral Curriculum includes age-appropriate teaching about:
 - Personal safety
 - Respectful relationships
 - Online safety (also covered in Computing)
 - Knowing who to talk to and when
- **Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)** is delivered in accordance with the school's RSE Policy and government guidance.

Logging Incidents Involving Younger Children

- For our youngest pupils (from age 3), not every minor incident of unkind behaviour is formally logged, recognising that early social learning includes boundary-testing.
- However, persistent or repeated concerns, or behaviours which indicate distress, harm or unmet needs, are recorded on CPOMS and monitored accordingly.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who are looked after, may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities. Staff at Merchant Taylors' Prep are trained to be alert to the unique challenges these pupils may face and to respond with appropriate sensitivity and curiosity.

This policy recognises that additional barriers can exist when identifying potential abuse or neglect in children with SEND. These may include:

- **Misattributing behaviours or injuries** to a child's disability, rather than exploring the possibility of abuse or neglect.
- **Underestimating the impact of bullying** or peer-on-peer abuse, particularly when children may not show clear outward signs.
- **Communication difficulties** which may reduce a child's ability to disclose abuse or seek help.

The School is committed to ensuring that all children, including those with SEND, have access to trusted adults, appropriate communication tools, and a culture of safeguarding that is responsive to their individual needs. Staff receive regular training to help them understand the additional risks and to challenge assumptions where necessary.

Staff Recruitment, Induction and Training

Safer Recruitment

The School follows the safer recruitment requirements in Part Three of KCSIE 2026, the Independent School Standards Regulations and the School's Safer Recruitment Policy.

Appropriate pre-appointment checks are undertaken and recorded on the Single Central Record. These include identity, right-to-work, references, qualifications, prohibition checks, enhanced DBS checks and children's barred-list information where the role constitutes regulated activity.

Additional checks are undertaken where an individual has lived or worked outside the UK. Section 128 checks are completed for those appointed to roles involving the management of the School.

At least one member of every appointment panel will have completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

For agency and third-party supply staff, the School obtains written confirmation that the required checks have been completed and verifies each individual's identity on arrival. Appropriate checks or written assurances are also obtained for contractors and trainee teachers in accordance with their employment arrangements and KCSIE.

Volunteers

A volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs or supervises children frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight, is undertaking regulated activity. The School will obtain an enhanced DBS check, including children's barred-list information, before permitting such activity.

For volunteers who are not undertaking regulated activity, the School will complete and record a risk assessment to determine the checks and supervision required. A volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained will never be left unsupervised or permitted to undertake regulated activity.

Staff Induction

All new staff receive safeguarding and child protection induction appropriate to their role. Volunteers, temporary, agency and third-party staff receive appropriate safeguarding information before commencing work.

Induction includes:

- The School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The Behaviour Policy
- The Staff Code of Conduct, including low-level concerns, allegations and whistleblowing
- The School's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- The identity and responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSLs
- Procedures for reporting concerns and responding to disclosures
- Online safety, including filtering and monitoring responsibilities
- Part One of KCSIE 2026

School leaders and staff who work directly with children are also required to read Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

Staff confirm that they have received and understood the required policies, guidance and training. Records of induction and training are retained securely.

Ongoing Training

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction. Training is regularly updated and staff receive safeguarding updates as required and at least annually. The School provides an annual safeguarding refresher and ensures that staff who miss scheduled training complete appropriate catch-up training.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs undertake specialist training at least every two years, including Prevent awareness training, and refresh their knowledge and skills regularly. Members of the wider Safeguarding Team receive training appropriate to their responsibilities.

Governor Training

All governors receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, as part of their induction. This training is updated regularly and enables governors to provide effective strategic challenge and assurance regarding the School's safeguarding arrangements.

The Safeguarding Governor undertakes additional training appropriate to the role. Records of governor safeguarding training are maintained by the School.

Internet Safety and Online Teaching

Online safeguarding is vital even for younger children, because risks can emerge in many forms. We classify these into four broad categories:

- **Content:** exposure to harmful material (e.g. inappropriate images, misinformation, extremist views)
- **Contact:** harmful interaction with others online (e.g. grooming, peer pressure)
- **Conduct:** risky behaviour by pupils themselves (e.g. sharing inappropriate images, cyberbullying)
- **Commerce:** online fraud, phishing, or inappropriate advertising aimed at children

Safeguarding Measures in School

- The School's filtering and monitoring systems are overseen by Nick Stuart (Assistant Head - Operations & Development), the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the DSL and IT staff. Their effectiveness is reviewed at least annually. This includes recorded checks that filtering is operating appropriately on all Internet-connected devices in all relevant School locations.
- All staff receive regular training on their responsibilities for filtering, monitoring, and responding to online risks.
- The school maintains clear expectations concerning mobile phones and other personal devices. Pupils are **not permitted** to use their own networked mobile devices during school time without staff permission and supervision. Any safeguarding concern arising from their use will be reported to the DSL.
- School devices (e.g. tablets, laptops) are monitored during school hours. Any suspicious or harmful usage triggers safeguarding procedures.
- Pupils learn to recognise unsafe or inappropriate online behaviour and how to report it and who to speak to

Education & Prevention

- Internet safety is taught in PSHE, ICT and other relevant parts of the curriculum, tailored for different age groups.
- Pupils are taught how to adjust behaviour online (for example, privacy settings, safe search, respectful communication) and how to build resilience against harmful content or contact.
- Staff and pupils follow the IT Acceptable Use Policy and E-Safety Policy, which detail safe practice, filtering, monitoring, and device use.
- The School recognises that generative artificial intelligence may create or increase safeguarding risks, including exposure to harmful or inaccurate content, impersonation, bullying, grooming, manipulated images and the inappropriate use of personal data. Only School-approved, age-appropriate technology may be used with pupils, under appropriate staff supervision. Any safeguarding concern involving generative AI will be reported in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.

Online/Remote Teaching Safeguards

If remote teaching or pupil support is necessary:

- Use school-approved platforms that include security, monitoring, and safeguarding features
- Ensure a safe environment (e.g. background checks for remote tutors, parental awareness)
- Set clear expectations about behaviour, privacy, and usage rules
- Record sessions where appropriate (with consent) and maintain logs
- Be especially vigilant to signs of distress, unusual behaviour, or hidden risk during remote interaction

On occasion it may prove necessary to continue support some pupils remotely. In these instances the following online safeguarding measures apply:

Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. We understand that children aged 3–11 are increasingly engaging with the online world, through home learning, games, and digital communication - often with limited supervision. It is essential that all staff remain alert to potential safeguarding concerns arising during remote interactions, and that they respond with the same level of vigilance as they would within school. All concerns must be reported to the DSL via CPOMS, and where necessary, referrals will be made to Children's Services or the police, in line with safeguarding procedures. Online lessons and communications must uphold the same high standards of professionalism, safeguarding and care that are expected in all face-to-face teaching.

The School will ensure that any digital learning platforms and tools used are compliant with privacy, data protection and GDPR standards. Online learning is delivered in accordance with our wider Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, and the Acceptable Use Policy.

Code of Conduct for delivering virtual lessons

When staff deliver online lessons or pastoral sessions remotely, the following guidance applies:

- Only school-approved platforms should be used (e.g. Microsoft Teams) and personal accounts must never be used.
- Staff must ensure that any online interaction is scheduled and visible to colleagues, with Heads of Department or SLT able to join sessions if required.
- Staff and pupils must conduct sessions in appropriate environments, bedrooms must not be visible, and care should be taken to remove personal or inappropriate items from view.
- Staff must follow the School's Acceptable Use Policy at all times, including guidance on appropriate communication, data protection, and the recording or sharing of images.
- Staff must take care not to initiate or continue livestreams unintentionally.
- For pupils in the younger age ranges, sessions should involve a parent or carer nearby wherever possible, to support engagement and safeguarding.
- Sessions should be timetabled and appropriate to the age and attention span of the pupils involved.

Whistle Blowing

All staff and volunteers should feel confident in raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice, including potential failures in the School's safeguarding processes. The School is committed to ensuring that such concerns are treated seriously and handled appropriately by the Senior Leadership Team. To support this, staff should be aware of the School's Whistleblowing Policy.

Given the age of our pupils, many safeguarding disclosures will rely on adult vigilance. Staff and volunteers are therefore actively encouraged to report concerns, however small they may seem.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue within the School or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- The Government's general guidance can be found on whistleblowing at <http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>;
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by the School. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS & ALLEGATIONS REGARDING STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF, TRAINEE TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS

The following procedure applies when a member of staff has:

- (a) behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- (b) possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- (c) behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- (d) behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Concerns about staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, contractors or volunteers that do not meet the harm threshold are referred to in KCSIE as low-level concerns. The procedures for managing these concerns are set out at the end of this section.

As part of their safeguarding induction, all staff read and confirm their understanding of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and the IT Acceptable Use Policy. Expectations concerning professional conduct, appropriate boundaries and the reporting of concerns are therefore made clear from the outset. All concerns and allegations will be managed in accordance with Part Four of KCSIE 2026.

Any member of staff who receives or witnesses a safeguarding concern or allegation about another member of staff, supply staff, trainee teacher, contractor or volunteer must report it immediately to the Head. This includes concerns about the DSL and about individuals or organisations using the School's premises.

A concern or allegation about the Head must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors or, in the Chair's absence, the Designated Safeguarding Governor, without informing the Head. Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head, it must be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Allegations concerning former staff and non-recent allegations will be managed in accordance with Part Four of KCSIE and Hertfordshire's local procedures, including referral to the police and/or LADO as appropriate.

All concerns and allegations will be handled promptly, fairly and consistently. The welfare of the child will remain paramount, while appropriate support will also be provided to the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Where a concern or allegation may meet the harm threshold, the case manager will consult the LADO without delay and before undertaking any investigation, using Hertfordshire's current LADO referral procedure. The LADO will advise on the appropriate course of action and whether local authority children's social care or the police should be involved. Where a child has been harmed, may be at immediate risk of harm or the situation is an emergency, children's social care and, where appropriate, the police will be contacted immediately.

The School will not investigate an allegation before consulting the LADO where such consultation is required, as this could compromise a statutory investigation. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK

GDPR do not prevent necessary information from being shared for safeguarding purposes. Parental consent is not required before reporting an allegation to the LADO or other statutory agencies.

Where a concern or allegation relates to a supply teacher, trainee teacher or contracted member of staff who is not directly employed by the School, the School will remain responsible for establishing the facts and managing the safeguarding process. It will work closely with the relevant agency, training provider or employer, which will normally lead any employment or disciplinary action. The School will not simply cease using the individual's services without addressing the concern and consulting the LADO where appropriate.

Discussions with the LADO, including decisions and their rationale, will be recorded in writing. The case manager will agree with the LADO what information may be shared with the individual concerned and the child's parents or carers. Where children's social care or the police are involved, they will also be consulted.

Suspension will not be an automatic response. The case manager will consider whether the circumstances warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements could safely manage the risk. Appropriate weight will be given to the advice of the LADO, children's social care and the police, alongside KCSIE and the School's relevant policies. The LADO will provide advice and oversight but will not personally investigate or preside over the investigation.

Where the School removes an individual from regulated activity, or would have removed them had they not left, and believes that the statutory referral criteria are met, it will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as soon as possible. This duty applies to paid staff and volunteers who have been engaged in regulated activity.

Where the School dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have done so had the teacher not left, it will consider whether the case must be referred to the Secretary of State via the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

The School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and comply with applicable reporting restrictions while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Details of allegations found to be malicious or false will be removed from personnel records unless the individual concerned consents to their retention. For all other allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, how it was followed up and resolved, the outcome, and any action taken or decisions reached will be retained securely on the individual's confidential personnel file. A copy will be provided to the person concerned where this has been agreed by children's social care or the police.

Records will be retained at least until the person concerned reaches normal pension age or for ten years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer.

Low Level Concerns

The culture at Merchant Taylors' Prep encourages openness, transparency and professional curiosity. This includes a proactive approach to identifying and addressing **low-level concerns**, those which do not meet the threshold for harm but may still indicate a need for reflection, support or intervention.

According to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE), a **low-level concern** is any concern — no matter how small, and even if based on a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' — that an adult working in or on behalf of the School may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct (including inappropriate conduct outside of work); and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO.

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

- being overly friendly with children;
- showing favouritism;
- taking photographs of children on a personal mobile device;
- spending excessive time with a child one-on-one, particularly in private or secluded spaces; or
- using sexualised, intimidating or inappropriate language.

Such behaviours may arise from thoughtlessness, misjudgment, or a lack of awareness, but could also be a signal of something more concerning. Addressing low-level concerns helps to uphold the professional boundaries that protect both children and staff.

Any member of staff who has a low-level concern about an adult working in or on behalf of the School, including supply staff, trainee teachers, contractors and volunteers, should report it to the DSL, Deputy DSL or Head. Where a concern is initially reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL, the Head will be informed in a timely manner. The Head remains the ultimate decision-maker for all low-level concerns. Concerns relating to supply staff or contractors will also be shared with their employer.

The Head (or DSL/Deputy DSL, if delegated) will:

- Speak to the person raising the concern
- Speak to the individual the concern relates to
- Make a determination on appropriate next steps, based on context and risk

All low-level concerns will be recorded in a secure and confidential section of the staff member's HR file. These records will be reviewed periodically to identify any patterns of behaviour or emerging risk. Staff will not be penalised for raising a low-level concern in good faith.

Raising concerns early helps prevent potential harm and promotes a safe, respectful environment where safeguarding is truly everyone's responsibility.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Job Descriptions

Roles & Responsibilities: Designated Safeguarding Lead

The areas of responsibility for the DSL are as follows (and are taken from Annex B of KCSIE 2026):

The responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSLs are set out in their current job descriptions and Annex B of KCSIE 2026. These include managing referrals, working with other agencies, maintaining and transferring child-protection records, raising awareness, supporting staff, promoting children's educational outcomes and maintaining appropriate training, knowledge and skills.

Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL. Although activities may be delegated to an appropriately trained Deputy DSL, ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Referral Form

In the event that concerns cannot be recorded on CPOMS or by speaking to the DSL or DDSL in person, please complete and hand in to the DSL or DDSL.

Pupil's Name:	
Tutor:	Tutor Group:
Date and time of concern:	
Account of the Concern (what was said, observed, reported and by whom)	
Your response (what did you do/say following the concern)	
Name of person reporting the concern:	
Signature of person reporting the concern:	
Position in School:	
Date and time of this recording:	
Response of DSL	
DSL Signature	

Appendix 3: Prevent Duty

Policy on preventing extremism and radicalisation

Principles

Merchant Taylors' School is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils where they are kept safe and feel safe. All staff and volunteers working at the School recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children or not. The School recognizes its duty to counter terrorism in all its forms; under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 the School has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The School also undertakes a regular risk assessment concerning those pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation. This policy is one element within our overall school arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of all Children in line with our statutory duties and should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

This Policy draws upon the guidance contained in the following publications:

KCSIE: Keeping Children Safe In Education, September 2026 (including the additional statutory guidance Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, June 2016, and the non-statutory advice for practitioners, What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, March 2015)

Prevent: Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales, March 2024

School ethos and practice

The School uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism, which is:

'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind at Merchant Taylors' School. Our aim is that pupils see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely. As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our pupils.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

The School provides a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils are enriched, they understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised. Furthermore, we are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which emanate from a variety of sources and media, including via the internet, and at times pupils may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy for pupils and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct for staff.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities school staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools or settings
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, sexual orientation or identity, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

The School will employ suitable levels of filtering in its IT systems to protect pupils as far as is possible from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet via the School network.

Teaching Approaches

Merchant Taylors' School promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. Pupils are expected to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. The School promotes these values through assemblies, PSHE and across the whole curriculum with a focus on SMSC. We will ensure that our teaching approaches help our pupils build resilience to extremism and radicalisation, and give pupils a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. The School will also regularly audit SMSC across the curriculum and report to the Education Committee.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

Merchant Taylors' School encourages the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils; however, we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our pupils to ensure their suitability. External speakers and anyone contributing to workshops and training in general will be treated as escorted visitors and will be badged appropriately and be supervised during their time in the School. Staff and pupils (via the sponsoring member of staff) arranging such visits should consult the School policy 'Visiting Speakers – Policy and Protocol' and follow the instructions provided.

Referring Concerns

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalization (see Annex A for possible indicators) parents, pupils and staff should use our internal systems to raise any issue in confidence with senior management. Our lead personnel for Prevent is the DSL, who would normally be the first point of contact should there be concerns. The DSL, after appropriate consultation, will pass the matter to Children's Services or to the local Channel Police Practitioner for advice and/or referral, keeping a record of that conversation and the action taken.

Child Protection

Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for the full procedural framework on our Child Protection duties. Staff will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or children may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example, this could be due to a child displaying risky behaviours in terms of the activities they are

involved in or the groups they are associated with or staff may be aware of information about a child's family that may equally place a child at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive)

Therefore all adults working at Merchant Taylors' School (including visiting staff, volunteers', contractors, and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to one of their deputies who will make a referral to children's social care or to the local Channel Police Practitioner when appropriate.

Training

As detailed in the main Safeguarding Policy, all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will receive an induction to our Safeguarding policy and procedures. This will include information and guidance about our duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Whole school in-service training in regard to safeguarding and child protection will be organised for staff and volunteers at least every year and will comply with the prevailing arrangements approved by Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and will, in part, include awareness raising on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend appropriate and relevant training courses in regard to safeguarding children, including the appropriate inter-agency training organised by the Safeguarding Children Board at least every two years. This will include accessing training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all adults working in the School receive appropriate levels of training, guidance and support in regard to safeguarding children from extremism and radicalisation.

Recruitment and staff conduct

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our school will follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks. We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement.

We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our school so as to unduly influence our school's character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our pupils thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence. Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our school and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

DSL
September 2025

End Note A

Possible Indicators of radicalisation

Vulnerability

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them

- Personal Crisis – Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspirations – Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Criminality – Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/ reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups

Access to extremism / extremist influences

- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person associates with those known to be involved in extremism - because either they associate directly with known individuals or because they frequent key locations, where these individuals are known to operate? (e.g. the child/young person is the partner, spouse, friend or family member of someone believed to be linked with extremist activity)
- Does the child/young person frequent, or is there evidence to suggest that they are accessing the internet for the purpose of extremist activity? (e.g. Use of closed network groups, access to or distribution of extremist material, contact associates covertly via Skype/email etc)
- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person has been or is likely to be involved with extremist/ military training camps/ locations?
- Is the child/young person known to have possessed or is actively seeking to possess and/ or distribute extremist literature/ other media material likely to incite racial/ religious hatred or acts of violence?
- Does the child/young person sympathise with, or support illegal/illicit groups e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?
- Does the child/young person support groups with links to extremist activity but not illegal/illicit e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?

Experiences, Behaviours and Influences

- Has the child/ young person encountered peer, social, family or faith group rejection?
- Is there evidence of extremist ideological, political or religious influence on the child/ young person from within or outside UK?
- Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a personal impact on the child/ young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour? It is important to recognise that many people may be emotionally affected by the plight of what is happening in areas of conflict (i.e. images of children dying) it is important to differentiate them from those that sympathise with or support extremist activity
- Has there been a significant shift in the child/ young person's behaviour or outward appearance that suggests a new social/political or religious influence?
- Has the child/ young person come into conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices?
- Does the child/ young person vocally support terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work?
- Has the child/ young person witnessed or been the perpetrator/ victim of racial or religious hate crime or sectarianism?

Travel

- Is there a pattern of regular or extended travel within the UK, with other evidence to suggest this is for purposes of extremist training or activity?

- Has the child/ young person travelled for extended periods of time to international locations known to be associated with extremism?
- Has the child/ young person employed any methods to disguise their true identity? Has the child/ young person used documents or cover to support this?
- Social Factors
- Does the child/ young person have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the child/ young person display a lack of affinity or understanding for others, or social isolation from peer groups?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate identity conflict and confusion normally associated with youth development?
- Does the child/ young person have any learning difficulties/ mental health support needs?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate a simplistic or flawed understanding of religion or politics?
- Does the child/ young person have a history of crime, including episodes in prison?
- Is the child/young person a foreign national, refugee or awaiting a decision on their immigration/ national status?
- Does the child/ young person have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?
- Has the child/ young person experienced any trauma in their lives, particularly any trauma associated with war or sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence that a significant adult or other in the child/young person's life has extremist views or sympathies?

More critical risk factors could include:-

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders
- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- If you have any concerns discuss them with your Safeguarding Lead and local Prevent Officer

If you have any concerns discuss them with the DSL/Deputy DSL

Appendix 4: Safeguarding Code of Conduct

(See also the Merchant Taylors' School Employment Manual: Code of Conduct for Staff and the School's Whistleblowing policy)

The safeguarding culture of a school is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. Relationships between staff and pupils should be friendly and mutually respectful.

If a member of staff feels threatened or compromised by the actions of a pupil or other member of the School community, a member of Senior Leadership Team should be approached for support. It is recognised that these guidelines do not cover every situation. Members of staff must always use their professional judgement and discretion.

Physical contact with pupils

- Be wary about providing physical comfort or any demonstration of affection in the light of complaints that might be made. Not all children feel comfortable about certain types of physical contact; this should be recognised and wherever possible, adults should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact and be sensitive to any signs that they may be uncomfortable or embarrassed.
- Sporting activities - where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if this involves physical contact with the pupils. Whenever possible, such contact should be avoided.
- Individual music tuition – physical contact may be necessary to show correct technique e.g. bowing when playing the violin, but such contact should be appropriate and kept to a minimum.
- Force used to avert an immediate danger - if action needs to be taken to protect a child (e.g. in the case of fighting) and physical intervention proves necessary, it should be the minimum force required to prevent injury (see Restraint Policy). Unless the situation is so urgent as to require immediate intervention, non-physical de-escalation techniques should be used initially. If physical force is used to restrain a child who is at danger to himself or is endangering others, it should be reported to senior staff as soon as possible after the incident) and a written report of what occurred should be sent to the Head within 24 hours. Any form of physical aggression towards pupils must be avoided.
- Staff giving intimate care must follow the School's intimate care guidelines

Staff-Pupil/Former Pupil Relationships

- Staff should not normally socialise with pupils other than at events arranged by the School and should be particularly careful in locations where alcohol is available. Where staff are parents of pupils, or friends with parents of pupils outside of school, they should use their professional judgement to act within the spirit of this guidance.
- Staff must not have a sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil - it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over, such as a teacher, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.
- Staff should not communicate with pupils on social networking sites and should not communicate/connect online with young people who have been pupils at the School within

the last two years. Care must be taken with all forms of communication with pupils including electronic communication, which should be sent only from a school email address. Staff should report any concerns about inappropriate contact from pupils to the Safeguarding Team immediately.

- Staff supporting former pupils, for instance those reapplying to university, should communicate using school email systems and meet on the School site, within office hours in a professional manner.
- Details of home address, personal email address, and telephone numbers should not be given to pupils or their parents. Do not divulge personal contact details of a colleague without consent.

Professional Behaviour

- Staff Dress Code – be aware of what is and is not appropriate and maintain professional standards and boundaries.
- Accepting and giving gifts – consider the appropriateness of accepting or giving a gift to a pupil and discuss any such decisions with a senior member of staff.
- Confidential information – be aware of the School procedures for the sharing of information regarding a pupil. Staff are expected to balance the requirement for confidentiality with the need to share information with colleagues and external agencies to safeguard children (see the Safeguarding Policy for further guidance).
- Endeavour to prevent gossip spreading about pupils, parents, colleagues or other members of the School community.
- Take care to protect your own reputation and that of the School.
- Always be respectful in dealings with pupils, taking care to avoid the use of bad language or humiliation of a pupil.
- It is advisable to use a room with a window in the door or leave the door ajar when meeting with a child.
- Staff should only enter pupil toilets or changing rooms as part of their professional duties or if they have reason to suspect a child is at risk of harm.
- Staff should avoid giving lifts to pupils other than in school vehicles. If special circumstances make it necessary to use a privately owned car, permission must be sought from a member of SLT and the pupil's parent/carer beforehand, unless in the case of a medical emergency.

Taking photograph of pupils

- Staff may take photographs and make videos of pupils in the course of their daily work, providing they have previously informed senior management of their intention and their proposals have been accepted. Photographs and videos should only be made using school cameras/devices and then must be downloaded to school computers. Images of children should not be taken when they are in a state of undress. Having made and used these records, in accordance with the professional discharge of their duties and responsibilities, they must delete them from any personal records, retaining them for the minimum time necessary. Should it be appropriate to make a permanent record, for example, of a dramatic performance, these should be retained centrally on the School's own database.
- Information and guidance on the use of mobile phones and cameras is contained in the Merchant Taylors' School Employment Manual and the MTS Acceptable Use Policy.
- Parents and visitors are prohibited from using mobile phones or smartwatches in EYFS settings. Any necessary phone calls must be taken outside of the EYFS area.

Appendix 5: Practical Advice When Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse

If a child discloses possible abuse, neglect or exploitation, the member of staff must respond calmly, sensitively and in a way that prioritises the child's safety and welfare.

Listening and Responding

The member of staff should:

- Listen carefully and allow the child to speak at their own pace.
- Remain calm and give the child their full attention.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking to someone.
- Explain that they are being taken seriously and will be supported.
- Make clear that the abuse is not their fault.
- Be comfortable with pauses and silences, recognising how difficult it may be for the child to speak.
- Use the child's own language when reflecting back what has been said.
- Explain, in an age-appropriate way, that the information must be shared with people who can help to keep them safe.

Staff must not:

- Promise confidentiality or agree to keep the information secret.
- Ask leading, investigative or repeated questions.
- Press the child for further details or attempt to establish whether the allegation is true.
- Express shock, disbelief, anger or judgement.
- Criticise the child for not speaking about the matter sooner.
- Make promises about what will happen next.
- Ask the child to repeat the disclosure unnecessarily to other members of staff.
- Automatically offer physical contact, as this may not be comforting or appropriate.

Where clarification is essential, staff should use minimal, open prompts such as “Tell me what happened”, “When did this happen?” or “Where did this happen?”. Staff must not suggest answers or ask questions beginning with “why”.

Recording the Disclosure

As soon as possible after the conversation, the member of staff must make an accurate and factual record on CPOMS. The record should include:

- The date, time and location of the disclosure.
- The names of those present.
- The child’s exact words wherever possible.
- Any questions asked and the child’s responses.
- Any visible injuries or signs of neglect, without examining the child or asking them to remove clothing.
- Any action taken following the disclosure.

Staff must distinguish clearly between fact, observation and opinion. They must not photograph injuries. The report must not be delayed while waiting for complete information.

Reporting the Disclosure

The disclosure must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, if the DSL is unavailable, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). Where the concern is urgent, the DSL or DDSL must be contacted directly in addition to the concern being recorded on CPOMS.

If CPOMS is unavailable, the member of staff must complete a Record of Concern Form and give it directly to the DSL or DDSL. The information must be added to CPOMS as soon as possible.

If neither the DSL nor a DDSL is available and a child is in immediate danger or at risk of serious harm, staff must contact local authority children’s social care and/or the police directly. The DSL and Head must be informed as soon as possible afterwards.

Parents and Carers

Staff must not contact the child’s parents or carers about the disclosure unless instructed to do so by the DSL. The DSL will decide when and how parents or carers should be informed, taking account of the child’s welfare and any risk that doing so could place the child at further risk or compromise an investigation.

Allegations About Adults

If the disclosure concerns a member of staff, supply staff, trainee teacher, contractor or volunteer, staff must follow the procedures set out in the section titled Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Regarding Staff, Supply Staff, Trainee Teachers, Volunteers and Contractors.

Concerns Raised by Others

Information or suspicions shared by another child, parent, carer, member of staff or other adult must also be reported immediately to the DSL or DDSL and recorded in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.

Support for Staff

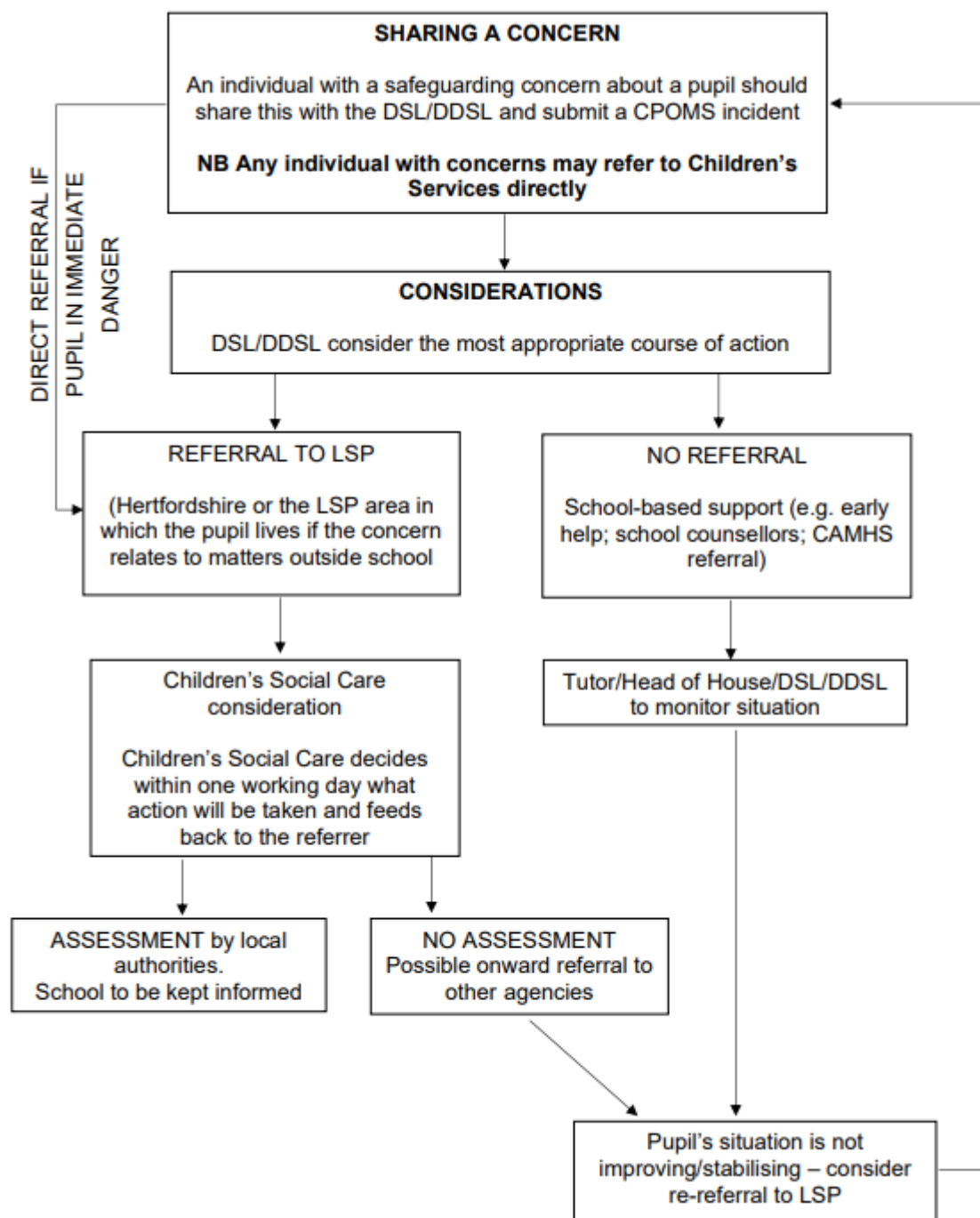
A member of staff who is distressed by a disclosure should seek appropriate support from the DSL or DDSL, while maintaining the child's confidentiality.

Appendix Custodian: DSL

Updated: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Appendix 6: Safeguarding Concern Flowchart



Appendix 7: Early Years Safeguarding from 1 September 2026

This appendix supplements the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and applies to Nursery and Reception pupils. It reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework effective from 1 September 2026.

1. Suitability and safer recruitment

The School will complete all required identity, qualification, reference, enhanced DBS and barred-list checks before permitting an individual to work or volunteer in EYFS. Staff and prospective staff must disclose information that may affect their suitability. The School's requirement to obtain two references before confirming an appointment exceeds the statutory minimum and will continue to apply.

2. Attendance and emergency contacts

Unexplained absences will be followed up promptly with parents or carers and, where necessary, alternative emergency contacts. Patterns, prolonged absences and the child's family circumstances will be considered. Safeguarding concerns will be referred to children's social care and/or the police as appropriate. The School will hold at least two emergency contacts for each child wherever possible.

3. Safeguarding training and whistleblowing

EYFS staff, students and volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding induction, regular updates and annual refresher training. Training will be practical and relevant to their responsibilities. Staff will be informed about the School's internal and external whistleblowing arrangements.

4. Safer eating

Children will remain within sight and hearing of staff while eating. A member of staff holding a valid full paediatric first-aid certificate will be in the room whenever children are eating.

Before admission, the School will obtain information about each child's dietary requirements, preferences, allergies, intolerances and relevant health needs. At every meal and snack time, responsibility will be allocated for checking that each child's food and drink meet their recorded requirements.

Allergy action plans will be developed and reviewed with parents, carers and health professionals where appropriate. Food will be prepared and served in a way that considers each child's developmental needs and reduces choking risk. Any choking incident requiring intervention will be recorded, parents or carers informed and records periodically reviewed to identify patterns or further action.

5. Paediatric first aid and staffing

At least one person holding a current full paediatric first-aid certificate will be available whenever EYFS children are present and will accompany children on outings. Staff included in ratios will meet

the PFA requirements applicable to their qualifications or training route. Staffing and ratios will be considered across the whole EYFS provision and organised to meet children's needs safely.

6. Sleeping arrangements

Any EYFS child who falls asleep while in the School's care will be supported to rest in a safe and appropriate space. Sleeping children will remain within both sight and hearing of staff and will be checked frequently. Staff will consider the child's individual needs, sleeping position, bedding and room temperature, and parents or carers will be informed of any unexpected sleep.

As the School's provision begins at age three, the specific cot and bedding requirements for children under two do not ordinarily apply. Should the age range change, the School will implement the full safer-sleep requirements of the EYFS statutory framework.

7. Premises, outdoor access, outings and screen use

EYFS children will have daily access to outdoor play unless circumstances make this inappropriate. Banned dog breeds, including XL Bully types, will not be present on the premises. Outings will be appropriately risk assessed, including staffing and paediatric first-aid arrangements. The School will have regard to current DfE guidance when determining appropriate screen use for EYFS children.

8. Intimate care

Children's privacy and dignity will be balanced with their safeguarding and support needs. Intimate care will be provided in designated areas by suitable staff working in accordance with the School's procedures.

9. Review

This appendix will be reviewed annually alongside the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, or sooner following changes to statutory requirements.

This appendix must be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- EYFS Statutory Framework