

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Date Reviewed	07.2023 (approved 08.2023)
Reviewed By	MS,DR,JE
Date Of Next Review	07.2024
Version	8.1



WYCHWOOD

SCHOOL • OXFORD

KEY PRINCIPLES

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- The prime concern at all stages must be the best interest and safety of the child.
- The intention of this policy is to ensure that appropriate action is taken immediately where it is suspected that a child is being abused.
- Early recognition of abuse may prevent serious harm to children and the break-up of families if professional help can be made available.
- Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in safeguarding them. School staff are in a position to identify concerns early and to provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating.
- All children should know that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- All staff should be aware that 'it could happen here' applies to Wychwood School and must act accordingly in the best interests of the child.
- All staff should be assured that **any** concerns raised about the School's safeguarding regime will be taken seriously by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSL.
- All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not

ISSRs
Part 3
NMS 8
12.1 a,
15.1, 17.3

prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. However, should staff feel that their safeguarding concerns are not likely to be taken seriously or 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 their school or college then they should contact the NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 or <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/our-services/nspcc-helpline/>

KEY DOCUMENTS WITH WHICH THIS POLICY IS IN ACCORD

Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations January 2015 give proprietors of Independent Schools, and in particular boarding schools, a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in their care and in doing so, to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Under the Children Act 2004, sections 10 and 12A, independent schools are statutory partners on Children's Trust Boards and have a duty to co-operate; the Revised *Prevent Duty Guidance*: for England and Wales gives proprietors of independent schools a statutory duty under Section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. The Board of Directors will also be aware of their obligations under The Human Rights Act 1998; the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty 23), and their local multi-agency safeguarding (MASH) arrangements as detailed in paragraphs 82-93 of KCSIE 2023_revised. The School follows the recommended procedures contained in the Children Act 2004, guidance for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (August 2011), the Children and Social Work Act (2017); the Government statutory guidance on Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018), the Government statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2023_revised), the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards (2015) and local inter-agency procedures published by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB, which is the LSCB for Oxfordshire). The school requires that all staff should have regard to KCSIE 2023_revised when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that this means they should comply with KCSIE 2023_revised unless exceptional circumstances arrive. The board of directors of Wychwood School should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities as set out in KCSIE 2023_revised. Staff should also read and understand What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused – Advice for Practitioners, available to them in the Safeguarding Documents for All Staff folder in the Staff Shared area of the School ICT network. This policy is also in accordance with

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance, 2020.

The school office has hard copies of these documents available to read on request and electronic copies are in the staff documents section of the school network.

This policy is available to all parents, staff and volunteers on the school website and a hard copy may be requested from the school office. The safeguarding induction process for new staff includes reading this safeguarding policy and the relevant sections of KCSIE 2023_revised. All teaching and boarding staff must declare that they have read and understood Part 1 of KCSIE 2023_revised and Annex B by e-mail to the receptionist at Wychwood School by the end of September 2023. The SLT and Directors must declare that they have read and understood all of KCSIE 2023_revised by e-mail to the receptionist at Wychwood School by 1st September 2023. Support staff must declare that they have read and understood Annex A of KCSIE 2023_revised by e-mail to the receptionist at Wychwood School by the end of September 2023. Pupils are made aware of this policy through their programme of

ISSRs
Part 3

ISSRs
Part 1
2(B)(ii)

ISSRs
Part 6

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and form meetings.

Abbreviations

CAF	Common Assessment Frameworks
CEOP	Child Exploitation and On-Line Protection Centre
CP	Current Policies
CDE	Child Drug Exploitation
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DfE	Department for Education
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
EEA	European Economic Area
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HBA	Honour-Based Violence
HSCTs	Health and Social Care Trusts
ICT	Information and communications technology
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LCSS	Local Community Support Service
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
OSCB	Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
RSE	Relationships and Sex Education
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
TRA	TEACHING REGULATION AGENCY OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION (REPLACES THE NCTL)
TAC	Team Around the Child
TAF	Team Around the Family
UKCCIS	UK Council for Child Internet Safety

COVID-19

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2023_revised) remains in force throughout the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). See Appendix 4 –COVID-19 Addendum.

INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of the guidance in KCSIE 2023_revised as

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The safeguarding principles and actions described herein apply equally to all children, including those with SEND, additional needs or vulnerable children.

This policy applies to **all staff**, including volunteers, and the Board of Directors of Wychwood School: all have responsibility for safeguarding children in this school. It includes systems

- To create a culture of safeguarding within the school
- To prevent unsuitable people working with pupils
- To identify pupils at risk of harm and to ensure their safety
- To ensure that staff do not put pupils at risk or themselves at risk of an allegation of abuse
- To ensure early help is offered to **any** child who may benefit. Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
 - is a young carer
 - Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement and /or association with organised crime groups
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse and/or
 - has returned home to their family from care
 - is a privately fostered child

The policy also gives details of the guidance and support that will be offered to staff during suspension or investigation of allegations against them. It also details the action to be taken in the event of the Head being the subject of an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

CREATING A CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING

Wychwood School is committed to providing the best possible pastoral care for our pupils. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to prevent abuse. Mutual respect and understanding between staff and pupils should form the basis for developing good relationships. Pupils and staff should feel that they belong to a caring, purposeful community in which personal worth is recognised and affirmed and child on child abuse is unacceptable in all its forms. We are proud that we regularly receive comment in the annual student survey such as 'There is no bullying at Wychwood.'. All alleged safeguarding issues will be thoroughly investigated and may lead to the opening of or addition to a safeguarding file on the pupil concerned. If, in the course of the investigation, it becomes clear that the appropriate external authorities (such as the LCSS, MASH, LADO or police) should be consulted, the investigation will be paused until this is done and the advice given will be followed.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Wychwood School will also take measures to:

1. establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
2. ensure that pupils know that there are adults in the school and outside whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
3. identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate. This will include fully engaging with the requirements of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAF assessments) or Team Around the Child or Family (TAC or TAF assessments) where these are in place.
4. include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip our pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help, if necessary. These activities and opportunities will develop children's understanding, awareness and resilience.
5. Provide Safeguarding and Child protection training to staff during induction and subsequently every three years coupled with annual updates to all staff on new developments in Safeguarding and Child Protection.

For the benefit of staff, this policy deals, in particular, with awareness and identification of child protection concerns and how to respond to them. Staff may contribute to this policy and the Wychwood systems of Safeguarding and Child Protection at **any** time by contacting the DSL or deputy DSL and there is a weekly opportunity for staff to raise concerns or to make contributions at staff meetings where Safeguarding and Child Protection is a standing item.

TEACHING OF SAFEGUARDING

Wychwood School will take every opportunity to teach pupils about safeguarding as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This may take place in form time, in PSHE forums or in Relationships and Sex Education. When questions arise in the course of a lesson to a teacher who is not a PSHE or RSE specialist they may consult the DfE one-stop shop in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>

INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING

Wychwood expects to be inspected on its safeguarding during all ISI (Independent School Inspectorate) inspections. The DSL will produce an annual Safeguarding Report for the OSCB.

SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

Key Individuals

Key individuals in dealing with an allegation of abuse are the DSL who is responsible for co-ordinating the response to allegations within a school and liaising with other agencies.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mary Stephenson – SEND/EAL

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are:

- **Jane Evans – Head**
- **Bridget Sherlock – Deputy Head Pastoral**
- **Duncan Radnor – Director of Operations**

Board Responsibilities

The **Director** appointed to scrutinise the School's safeguarding arrangements is **Mr Simon Tyrrell, supported by fellow Director, Mr Andrew Nott** in case of a conflict of interest for Simon. The Board undertakes an annual review of the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. The Head submits an annual safeguarding report to the directors.

The Board of Directors should ensure that all directors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training will be regularly updated.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the Board of Directors will be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to any risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, the Board of Directors will ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and will regularly review their effectiveness. They will ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. The Board of Directors should consider the age range of their children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

Key Contacts

Key contacts are listed on the posters that are located in the staff room, each house staff's accommodation and in the school offices. The posters are attached as Appendix 2

Contact Details

DSL: Mrs Stephenson	School: 01865 517 121 (internal 221) E: m.stephenson@wychwoodschoo.org
DDSL: Mrs Evans	School: 01865 517 101(Internal 201) E: j.evans@wychwoodschoo.org
Ms Sherlock	School: 01865 557976 (internal 202) E: b.sherlock@wychwoodschoo.org
Mr Radnor	School: 01865 517134 (internal 208) E: d.radnor@wychwoodschoo.org

All members of the school's safeguarding team can be contacted via the shared safeguarding email address: safeguarding@wychwoodschoo.org

Safeguarding Director:
Mr Simon Tyrrell
Home: Mobile: 07311 220 888
E: s.tyrell@wychwoodschoo.org

Wychwood School recognises that we have a collective and individual duty of care towards children in need and towards children at risk. Local authorities are under a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children in need in its area. To do this it must work with the family to provide support services that will enable children to be brought up within their own families. In Northern Ireland, the Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area.

Early Help – Locality & Community Support Service

The Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS) has been created as part of Oxfordshire County Council's, Children's Services Integration Programme to support partner agencies across Oxfordshire. It is a professional facing service (including community/voluntary sector).

<https://www.oscb.org.uk/practitioners-volunteers/locality-and-community-support-service-early-help/>

Contact details:

LCSS North	Tel: 0345 2412703
LCSS Central	Tel: 0345 2412705
LCSS South	Tel: 0345 2412608

Concerns that a child may be in need of Early Help are referred to and managed by the DSL, although staff may choose to go directly to the Locality & Community Support Service (LCSS). If a member of staff goes directly to the LCSS then the DSL, must also be informed as soon as possible.

Local Safeguarding Partners

Wychwood will work with the 3 local safeguarding partners as required. They are

- Dr Martin Reeves, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council;
- Accountable Officer, Clinical Commissioning Group;
- John Campbell, Chief Constable, delegated to Jason Hogg, Assistant Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police.

In particular, Wychwood School, Oxford will be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, and DSL and DDSL will need to familiarise themselves with this document.

In deciding when to call the police, the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) guide will be used: <https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

Children in Need

Children in need are defined in law as children who are aged under 18 and:-

- need local authority services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development
- need local authority services to prevent significant or further harm to health or development
- are disabled.

The local authority must keep a register of children with disabilities in its area but does not have to keep a register of all children in need.

Concerns that a child may be in need are referred to and managed by the DSL, although staff may choose to go directly to children's social care at the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Children in need should be referred to the MASH. If a member of staff goes directly to the MASH then the DSL, must also be informed as soon as possible.

Children at Risk

A child at risk in Oxfordshire is regarded as being at risk of abuse or neglect. Wychwood, like all schools, is aware that pupils may suffer physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect or domestic abuse either at home or away from school, or within school itself. The School has clearly laid down and recognised procedures for dealing with abuse.

Concerns that a child may be at risk are referred to and managed by the DSL, although staff may choose to go directly to children's social care at the MASH. Children at risk of abuse or neglect or at risk of danger or serious immediate harm should be referred to the MASH immediately (Tel: 0845 0507666;

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/business/information-providers/adult-social-care-providers/referring-child>).

Allegations against anyone working in Wychwood School or who works at Wychwood and other schools should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Jo Lloyd – Designated Officer (LADO):

Email: lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Tel: Safeguarding Team: 01865 810603 within one working day.

Further useful links can be found within KCSIE 2023_revised

If a crime has been committed then the matter should be reported to the police within one working day.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Children with SEND or additional needs can face additional safeguarding challenges and staff should be alert to this and prevent adverse incidents from happening.

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support is in place.

Further information can be found in the department's:

- [SEND code of Practice 0 – 25 years](#)
- [Supporting Pupils at School with Medical conditions](#)

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services

(SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: [SENDIASS Oxfordshire](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk) (councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

- [Mencap](#) - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people (*KCSIE 2023 para 202*)

Pupils' Emergency Contacts

Wychwood School will undertake to hold more than one emergency contact number for their pupils in case of incident or accident.

Further Documentation

We also have the following policies or documents:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Confidentiality Guidelines
- Management of Allegations against Staff Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Missing Persons Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy
- Pupil ICT, Network, Internet and Mobile Phone Use Policy and agreement
- Searching Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy.
- Wychwood School Staff Code of Conduct

SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION FILES

All records of child protection/safeguarding incidents will be kept on file in a securely locked filing cabinet inside a locked office. Each file will refer to a single pupil. Previous schools will be asked for safeguarding files as part of the admissions process. Safeguarding files will be updated at Wychwood where necessary and this is recorded using with a front page chronology. Safeguarding files are audited annually in July by the DSL and the DDSL audits the audit. Safeguarding files are forwarded automatically to the next school when a pupil moves schools. For pupils over 18, their consent is sought to forward safeguarding files to institutions of tertiary education. If this is not given, the files are archived.

DATA PROTECTION

Confidentiality will be upheld in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 2002 and the Freedom of Information Act.

Wychwood School recognises that we must treat sensitive and personal information stored and shared for safeguarding purposes as 'special category personal data'. Special category data is personal data that needs more protection because it is sensitive. In order to lawfully process special category data, a lawful basis under Article 6 of the GDPR and a separate condition for processing under Article 9 must be identified. These do not have to be linked. The lawful basis under Article 6 is likely to be that processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject. The legal obligation is to safeguard children. The lawful basis under Article 9 is likely to be that processing is necessary for the purposes of carrying out the obligations and exercising specific rights of the controller or of the data subject in the field of social protection law.

All staff should understand that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff should also understand that they may withhold pupils' personal data if, by revealing it, they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm.

Where staff are unsure of their duties under GDPR they may refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-toolkit-for-schools>

TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT (from KCSIIE 2023) revised

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. 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.

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

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

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

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy e.g. as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care - givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

OTHER TYPES OF ABUSE

Bullying (including cyberbullying)

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- physical (for example, hitting, kicking, theft)

- verbal (for example, racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)
- emotional (for example, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

The damage inflicted by bullying (including cyberbullying) can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm). At Wychwood where children are living away from home the School will have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

Wychwood School will adjust the Anti Bullying policy and strategies according to the latest guidance (2014) which is to be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Child Abduction

There are three broad categories of child abduction:

- Abduction where a child is taken overseas without the other parents consent—this is the only category which currently may be a criminal offence under UK law.
- Wrongful retention where a child has been kept in a foreign country following an overseas trip without the appropriate consent.
- Threat of abduction where there is a risk that a child will be taken overseas without the appropriate consent.

It is a criminal offence under the Child Abduction Act 1984 for a person connected with a child under the age of 16 to take or send that child out of the UK without the appropriate consent. Appropriate consent is needed from the:

- mother of the child;
- father of the child if he has Parental Responsibility;
- guardian of the child;
- special guardian of the child;
- holder of a Residence Order (in place before 22.04.14) for the child;
- holder of residence under a Child Arrangements Order for the child;
- Local Authority if the child is in care;
- Court if the child is detained or a ward of court.

Wychwood School, Oxford will endeavour to prevent child abduction by communicating with all parties and then by contacting the police if it becomes apparent that abduction is a real risk or has happened.

Child Drug Exploitation

Wychwood staff must be aware that children can be exploited in many forms which includes selling drugs. Across the country, young people and vulnerable adults are being exploited by gangs to move and sell drugs on their behalf in suburban areas, market towns and coastal regions. This criminal activity is known as ‘county lines’, as young people travel to different regions where they are unknown to the police and can therefore operate undetected. These young people can be as young as 10 and are often subjected to threats, violence, and sexual abuse by the gangs. Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
 - can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
 - can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
 - can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
 - can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults
 - is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.
- Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

To safeguard vulnerable young people from being exploited by 'county line' gangs, the Home Office is working with Crime Stoppers, the DfE and local authorities to increase awareness among professionals, including teachers, who may encounter victims of the signs to spot and encourage staff to report their concerns to their safeguarding lead.

The signs to spot are:

- persistently going missing from school or home, or being found out-of-area
- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- relationships with controlling, older individuals or gang association
- leaving home or care without explanation
- suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries
- parental concerns
- significant decline in school performance
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional wellbeing

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit>

Children Missing Education

Wychwood School will act in accordance with KCSIE 2023_revised and with the guidance Children Missing Education, September 2016.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Pupils' attendance is monitored through the daily register and is addressed if poor. Contact is made with parents of pupils who are regularly absent from school without good reason or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. Wychwood School will notify the local authority if a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in order to be home schooled or if we do not know where the next school is to be if the child is under 18.

Under the safeguarding duties of section 175 of the Education Act 2002 Wychwood School will investigate any unexplained absences.

The School works with pupils and families to identify and prevent absent pupils becoming future pupils missing in education. However, the School also recognises that a pupil being absent as well as missing from education can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including but not limited to sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation. (*KCSIE 2023 para 175*)

Children Missing from Home or Care

Wychwood School will act in accordance with the statutory guidance Children who Run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care (January 2014) available to all staff in the Safeguarding Documents for all Staff folder in the staff shared area. The Missing Persons Policy applies.

[ht](#)

[tps://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance - Missing from care 3 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf)

CCE – Child Criminal Exploitation

CCE is a form of abuse and, like CSE, occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. It is important to note that the experience of pupils who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that pupils are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and pupils being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) The February 2017 definition of CSE from the DfE document *Child sexual exploitation Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation* is

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

Wychwood School will report suspected CSE to OSCB:
<https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/child-exploitation-modern-slavery/>

Community Safety Incidents

“Community safety is the use of skills, knowledge and techniques, to prevent and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime and develop safer communities in which to live, work and visit.”

It is rare that any Wychwood pupil become involved in a community safety incident but on the occasions when it does happen the school will work with the parents, the police, the court system and other involved agencies to obtain the best outcome for the child.

Cybercrime

From a child protection perspective a key issue facing law enforcement is not simply the volume of child sexual abuse material that is being circulated, but the ease by which this medium offers child sexual predators the opportunity to network with each other to create and distribute content, as well as the opportunity to access new victims, either offline or through online spaces, such as instant messaging or social networking sites. Online paedophile networks can easily run into tens of thousands of suspects worldwide.

In terms of child sexual abuse and exploitation the picture of offenders is a complex one, which is related to the criminal interests of the individuals or networks that use the internet to seek out victims and acquire new material. There is no single type nor are the groupings below mutually exclusive, but they can be roughly translated into three main areas:

- those that target children and young people in the online environment that they inhabit e.g. instant messaging, chat, and social networking sites;
- those that engage in offline abuse, create images and share them online with networks of like-minded individuals or are recipients and collectors of such material; or
- those that use the internet to link up and identify the best places in the world to travel to abuse children or young people or who use the internet to lure this vulnerable group into some form of exploitation. Offenders can be interested in boys, girls or both.

Wychwood School, Oxford will educate, support and protect any pupil who becomes involved in cybercrime as a victim or a perpetrator and will report any instances to the relevant authorities. Families will always be informed.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety>

Children and young people are increasingly subject to harmful online challenges and hoaxes and Wychwood School, Oxford will act in accordance with the guidance issued by at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes>

Wychwood School, Oxford also informs parents and guardians each and every time a warning about such an online challenge or event is sent to schools by OSCB.

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. . In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation

Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones.

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

Drugs

Wychwood School recognises that behaviours linked to drug taking put children in danger. The Substance Use and Misuse Policy applies.

Fabricated or Induced Illness

Staff should be aware that illness can be fabricated or induced in children by parents or carers and Wychwood School will act according to *Safeguarding Children in whom illness is fabricated or induced* (March 2008) which is available to staff in the Safeguarding Documents for all Staff folder in the staff shared area.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277314/Safeguarding_Children_in_whom_illness_is_fabricated_or_induced.pdf

Faith Abuse

Staff should be aware that abuse can be linked to religious faith and should share their concerns with the DSL or deputy DSL. They should also consult the National action plan to tackle child abuse linked to faith or belief (*August 2012*) which is available to staff in the Safeguarding Documents for all Staff folder in the staff shared area, if they believe this to be taking place.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

All staff at Wychwood School must be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM, with specific regard to our international children from countries known to practise FGM such as Kenya and Nigeria. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present, this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs and indicators that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, have been highlighted in the OSCB generalist safeguarding training given to all staff. **From October 2015 all teachers have a statutory duty to report to the police within one working day when an act of FGM appears to have been carried out upon an individual aged under 18.** The relevant age is the girl's age at the time of the disclosure/identification of FGM (i.e. it does not apply where a woman aged 18 or over discloses she had FGM when she was under 18). Complying with the duty

does not breach any confidentiality requirement or other restriction on disclosure which might otherwise apply. At Wychwood, should this arise the teacher **must report directly and immediately to the police using the non-emergency line (101) and also to the DSL or deputy DSL. The duty is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred.** The only exception to this is if you know that another individual from your profession has already made a report; there is no requirement to make a second.

From the NSPCC Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Advice: Signs, symptoms and effects

A girl or woman who has had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

The NSPCC FGM helpline is free, anonymous and open 24.7: 0800 028 3550

E: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel as if they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.

Forced marriage is NOT the same as arranged marriages where both parties give their consent. Staff should contact the DSL or Deputy DSL if a child is suspected at being of risk of forced marriage. Particular points in time are just prior to school holidays when a child may be taken abroad to be forced into marriage.

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

School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Gangs and Youth Violence

Advice for staff can be found in *Preventing youth violence and gang involvement v3 March 2015* in the Safeguarding Documents for all Staff folder in the staff shared area. Suspicions should be reported to the DSL or deputy DSL.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing_youth_violence_and_gang_involvement_v3_March2015.pdf

Hate Crimes

Crimes committed against someone because of their disability, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes and should be reported to the police within one working day.

Hate crimes can include:

- threatening behaviour

- assault
- robbery
- damage to property
- inciting others to commit hate crimes
- harassment

Staff can report hate crime online at

http://report-it.org.uk/your_police_force

or staff should call 999 if reporting a crime that's in progress or if someone is in immediate danger. The DSL or deputy DSL should also be informed.

Staff interested in further information on the prevention of hate crimes as well as the prevention of radicalisation and extremism can visit the government website Educate against Hate.

<http://educateagainsthate.com/>

Homelessness

The 2019 Shelter definition of Homelessness is

“The definition of homelessness means not having a home. You are homeless if you have nowhere to stay and are living on the streets, but you can be homeless even if you have a roof over your head.

You count as homeless if you are:

staying with friends or family;
 staying in a hostel, night shelter or B&B;
 squatting (because you have no legal right to stay);
 at risk of violence or abuse in your home;
 living in poor conditions that affect your health;
 living apart from your family because you don't have a place to live together.”

The Children's Commissioner's research (2019) suggests that of the 600,000 children and young people referred to above, 210,000 are either living in temporary accommodation or 'sofa surfing' (i.e. staying with friends or family without any formal arrangement being in place and often sleeping in spaces not designed as bedrooms).

Wychwood School, Oxford will aim to create an open and approachable culture in school to help pupils think about the issues and attitudes behind homelessness, particularly in relation to equality. Where a child is at risk we wish to create aspiration and opportunity through high quality teaching, while being aware of the limits and pressures on families, children and young people.

Staff will be aware of the effects of child poverty, provide support to pupils and families, and will sign-post to supportive services, ensuring that this is through as many different routes as possible (e.g. leaflets, posters, conversations, etc.). Staff will raise **any** concerns with the DSL.

Honour Based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children’s social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

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

LGBTQ+ Children

Wychwood School, Oxford is a place where all LGBTQ+ children and adults are respected and valued. We aim to offer a place and space where children and adults are free to identify as they choose, while recognising that this identification may change over time.

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

Mental health

Adults and children with mental health issues and illnesses can be abused. The Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy applies. All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of

suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following this safeguarding policy, by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Best practice and advice can be accessed on the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools.pdf

Wychwood School has a Wellbeing Group made up of boarding, medical, SEND/SEMH and Pastoral staff, (with contact from the school counsellor) led by the Deputy Head Pastoral. The Well-being group meets weekly to discuss pupil's mental health (individual and more general issues) and offer advice and guidance to other staff.

Missing Children and Adults Strategy

See *Missing Pupil Policy*

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern slavery is when children are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes.

Traffickers use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community.

They may threaten families, but this isn't always the case – in fact, the use of violence and threats to recruit victims has decreased (Europol, 2011).

Traffickers may promise children education or persuade parents their child can have a better future in another place.

Sometimes families will be asked for payment towards the 'service' a trafficker is providing – for example sorting out the child's documentation prior to travel or organising transportation. Traffickers make a profit from the money a child earns through exploitation, forced labour or crime. Often this is explained as a way for a child to pay off a debt they or their family 'owe' to the traffickers.

Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats do not need to be proven in cases of child trafficking - a child cannot legally consent so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation. (With thanks NSPCC 2017)

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

Cases of suspected modern slavery will be dealt with according to the National Referral Mechanism Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms/guidance-on-the-national-referral-mechanism-for-potential-adult-victims-of-modern-slavery-england-and-wales>

Child on Child Abuse

Wychwood School is committed to minimising child on child abuse while recognising that relationships between young people can often be difficult as young people are not yet emotionally mature. All members of staff are aware that child on child abuse will be tackled **whenever or wherever** (inside or outside school) it occurs by challenging the behaviour, investigation of the circumstances and discussion with the pupils concerned and their parents if appropriate or necessary. Pupils will be supported as appropriate to the situation: a peer mentor may be appointed, a staff mentor may be appointed, pupils (abuser and /or victim) may be sent to the school counsellor, or external support may be sought. All allegations of child on child abuse, the investigations and the outcomes will be recorded as conversation notes and in the Bullying record. All pupils and parents should be aware that there is a zero-tolerance approach to child on child abuse at Wychwood in all its forms including low-level concerns.

All staff should be aware (i) that even if child on child abuse is not overt or reported, such abuse may still be taking place under the radar and is simply not being brought to staff; (ii) how to manage a report of child on child abuse, especially one involving sexual violence or sexual harassment

Effective safeguarding practice includes:

- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to and that the law is there to protect children and young people not to criminalise them
- recognising a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be **anyone** on the school or college staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child. The child should be taken seriously, kept safe and never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment
- listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc.
- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the verbal report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made. Records should include:
 - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
 - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
 - a note of **any** action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools and colleges should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation

- where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674416/Searching_screening_and_confiscation.pdf
and UKCCIS sexting advice (for schools and colleges)

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

The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible; and
- informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

The different forms child on child abuse can take, but are not limited to, are

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos¹³ (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting,¹⁴ which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Children, particularly but not exclusively those living away from home, are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. This is most likely to include, but is not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence, sexual harassment, sexual assaults and sexting. Such abuse should always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. Whenever a child may have harmed another, all staff must be aware of their responsibilities to **both** children and multi-agency management of both cases must reflect this. In all aspects of life at Wychwood staff should never tolerate unpleasant comments or tones of voice when pupils are speaking to one another: **any** form of behaviour that might make another pupil feel uncomfortable should be gently but firmly explained as unacceptable, in public if necessary as this spreads the requirement for

courteous and considerate behaviour. If incidents are reported to staff rather than being witnessed, then they should be investigated and dealt with promptly, if necessary, under the Anti-Bullying policy.

Staff should also be alert to the possibility that a child or young person who has harmed another may well also be a victim. However, the best interests of the identified victim must always be the paramount consideration and professionals should also be alert to the fact that there is likely to be a risk to children other than the current victim.

Child on Child Abuse - Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

A significant proportion of sex offences are committed by teenagers and, on occasion, such offences are committed by younger children. Staff working with children, including carers of children living away from home, need clear guidance and training to identify the difference between consenting and abusive, and between appropriate and exploitative peer relationships. Staff should always respond and never dismiss some sexual behaviours as 'normal' between young people, and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. However, KCSIE 2023_revised also sets out that sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. There is a continuum of children and young people's sexual behaviours which is helpful when considering any individual case (Hackett, 2010)



Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never

acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Wychwood School should be aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys.

Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:

- early intervention with inappropriate behaviour even if it appears relatively innocuous as a means of possible prevention of problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, vaginas and penises.

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children

An allegation of sexual violence or harassment will be dealt with according to KCSIE 2023_revised.

Where there is suspicion or evidence of child on child abuse immediate action must be taken to separate the pupils involved and if they are boarders who share a room alternative accommodation must be made available on suspicion until the matter is resolved. The situation will be investigated with sensitivity and appropriate action taken dependent on the results of the investigation. This may involve invocation of the anti-bullying policy.

Inappropriate peer relationships also constitute child on child abuse and pupils at Wychwood should not exhibit public displays of heterosexual or homosexual affection. Pupils over 16 may legally engage in sexual relationships but a school is a place of work and, as such, at Wychwood, professional standards apply to pupils’ behaviour at all time. Pupils are not expected to engage in any form of sexual activity at school, or during any activity organised by school, either heterosexual or homosexual.

Much child on child abuse is gendered in its nature in that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators. However, actions like sexual touching, sexual assault, initiation rites or hazing are unacceptable forms of child on child abuse.

Information on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges can be found on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

Whenever an allegation or report of sexual violence is made the DSL or DDSL must an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support
- whether there may have been other victims
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and

- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

Risk assessments should be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, Wychwood should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. The school risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments should be used to inform the school's approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.

Staff should always inform the DSL of **any** allegation of sexual violence or harassment and supply their report as soon as practically possible – they may need time to write it up after speaking to the DSL but that should happen immediately. The DSL will decide on the school's response which should include consideration of

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children
- any health needs (mental or physical) that may arise from the incident(s)
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) has been displayed
- the ages of the children involved
- the developmental stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature)
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child.

Where HSB is deemed to have taken place the School will seek guidance in accordance with paragraph 463 of KCSIE 2023_revised.

Child on Child Abuse – Physical Abuse

All child on child incidents of physical abuse should be immediately reported to the DSL. This behaviour is never acceptable and will be dealt with at a level appropriate to the level of

abuse. This may involve use of the Anti-Bullying Policy in mild cases or reporting to the police or the MASH in more serious cases.

Child on Child Abuse – Emotional Abuse

The line between teasing, banter and abuse is a fine one and staff should be aware that the former two are acceptable only if the recipient does not find them hurtful. Emotional abuse is much more common than is often perceived and **any** form of continuous or consistent or repetitive teasing or banter is likely to constitute abuse. Staff should also be aware that a single comment can be extremely hurtful and do lasting damage

Child on child Emotional abuse is most likely to take place out of sight of staff and so a culture of trust is essential so that pupils who feel uncomfortable with peer action can speak to a member of staff. However, at Wychwood abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Child on Child Abuse – Sexting, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos and Cyber Bullying

Sexting, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos or cyber bullying are not permitted at Wychwood.

We endeavour to educate pupils regularly of the dangers and abusive potential of sexting and will take action to support any child found to be involved. Pupils and staff should be aware that sexting is an illegal activity. Where a case of sexting arises, the DSL and deputy DSL will take the most up to date advice from the Child Exploitation and On-Line Protection Centre (CEOP) by searching for the most recent advice on their website and act accordingly. The DSL or deputy DSL will also consult the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) website for the latest advice and act accordingly.

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

We would hope not to criminalise any child; whether perpetrator or victim but recognise that this may be unavoidable.

There are a number of forms of cyber bullying: cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to placing screen shots online or circulating screen shots, videoing pupils or staff without consent and placing these online, exclusionary bullying via social media by making groups to which not all pupils to whom the group might apply are invited, placing tracking devices on other pupil's mobile phones with or without their consent, recording or taking pictures of a person or their home without the subject's consent and then circulating those, identifying the school or home area where a pupil lives online and making repeated unwanted contact by message, social media or phone.

Child on Child Abuse – Hazing

Hazing is described as **any** action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a pupil. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any situation which:

- Creates a risk of injury to **any** individual or group
- Causes discomfort to **any** individual or group
- Causes embarrassment to **any** individual or group
- Involves harassment of **any** individual or group
- Involves degradation of **any** individual or group
- Involves humiliation of an individual or group
- Involves ridicule of an individual or group
- Involves or includes the wilful destruction or removal of public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in an organization

Hazing includes physical injury, assault or battery, kidnapping or imprisonment, intentionally placing at risk of mental or emotional harm (putting “over the edge”), degradation, humiliation, the compromising of moral or religious values, forced consumption of any liquid or solid, placing an individual in physical danger (at risk) which includes abandonment, and impairment of physical liberties which include curfews or other interference with academic endeavours.

Child on Child Abuse – Support for the Perpetrator

As well as supporting and protecting the victim, staff need to consider whether the perpetrator could be a victim of abuse too and too have experienced abuse. Perpetrators may also be in danger of being subjected to abuse post an allegation. Measures to support them should be put into place here too which may involve counselling or multi-agency support., dependent on the seriousness of the abuse.

Peer pressure can be huge for children and young people and there will be times when the abuse, in whatever form it takes, looks consensual. This is another reason why a multi-agency approach is needed, potentially involving both social care and the police, in order to ensure investigations are properly carried out.

In situations where the children or young people are in the same class or even school, risk assessments should be put into place, to safeguard both parties, which should consider how best to keep the two parties apart whilst at school and also whilst traveling to and from school.

If the allegation involves rape and/ or assault by penetration, then the statutory guidance states that the perpetrator must be removed from any shared classes. Guidance is clear that any separation arrangements must continue for as long as is necessary to make sure children are safe.

Consideration to where the alleged abuse took place must also be given and should include ways that this can be made safe/ mitigated. We will consider this not only for Wychwood School, Oxford’s grounds and buildings but also if the abuse took place in a public space. Whilst the school cannot act on this alone, again the multi-agency approach will be taken.

Child on Child Abuse - Upskirting

Upskirting is a criminal offence. Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

Serious Violent Crime

If children become involved with criminal networks or gangs they may be at risk from serious violent crime. Indicators include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries, or unexplained gifts or new possessions.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice can be accessed on the links below: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing_youth_violence_and_gang_involvement_v3_March2015.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Children with Family Members in Prison

Wychwood will work with children who have family members in prison to support a positive sense of self and to help them to manage their emotions and needs. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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

Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for any crimes they have witnessed and Wychwood School will support them through this as it can be traumatic.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/708093/ywp-12-17-eng.pdf

Private Fostering

Private fostering' is the name for an informal arrangement made by parents and carers for a child to live with another family. A child is automatically being 'privately fostered' if they are:

Under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child is disabled)

And

They are being cared for and provided with accommodation by someone who is not a close relative. (Close relatives are parents, grandparents, aunt, uncle or step parent (by marriage) but NOT a cousin, grand aunt or a family friend).

And

The arrangement has lasted or is intended to last for 28 days or more.

Private fostering covers a wide range of situations. Some of the most common within Oxfordshire:

- Teenagers living with friends or extended family following problems at home
- Children who stay with another family while their own parents are unable to care for them (due to hospital admission, prison sentence, or family crisis)
- Children sent to the UK for education or health care by birth parents living overseas. This can be the case with exchange students who stay with a Wychwood family and attend school here.

It is **not** private fostering if:

- The carer is the child's legal parent (by birth or adoption)
- The carer has a legal order which gives them parental responsibility
- The carer is an approved foster carer and/or the arrangement was made by social services

Private fostering is legal, but not notifying the local authority where an arrangement exists is against the law.

Oxfordshire Children's Services have a duty make sure that private fostering arrangements are satisfactory. They are required to visit the child in the private foster home and assess of the suitability and safety of the home placement. Wychwood staff should report any private fostering arrangement to the DSL who will contact children's services.

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and is defined in the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy as vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of armed forces as extremism. Extremists often target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow divisions between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justifying discrimination towards women and girls; seeking to persuade others that minorities are inferior; or arguing against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

The Wychwood staff code of conduct specifically requires staff to 'Respect the dignity, rights and opinions of others by:

- respecting cultural, ethnic and religious differences
- discouraging **any** form of discrimination and harassment
- valuing and acknowledging the contributions made by others in meeting school and departmental goals
- promoting equality and diversity in the workplace'

This will ensure that the duty placed upon education and other children's services by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism will be fulfilled at Wychwood. The following guidance is written with regard to the DfE Guidance: The Prevent Duty

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf and "**Channel: Vulnerability Assessment Framework**" (October 2012)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118187/vul-assessment.pdf

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school. Our pupils see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this. As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist views can lead to poor outcomes for children and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our pupils.

Engagement:

Examples of needs, susceptibilities, motivations and contextual influences that make individuals **vulnerable** to engagement with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:

- feelings of grievance and injustice
- feeling under threat
- a need for identity, meaning and belonging
- a desire for status
- a desire for excitement and adventure
- a need to dominate and control others
- susceptibility to indoctrination
- a desire for political or moral change
- opportunistic involvement
- family or friends' involvement in extremism
- being at a transitional time of life
- being influenced or controlled by a group
- relevant mental health issues

Example indicators that an individual *is* engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:

- spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups)
- attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology
- communication with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology

Intent to cause harm:

Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm, so this dimension is considered separately. Intent factors describe the mind-set that is associated with a **readiness to use violence** and address what the individual would do and to what end. They can include:

- over-identification with a group or ideology
- **'Them and Us' thinking**
- dehumanisation of the enemy
- attitudes that justify offending
- harmful means to an end
- harmful objectives

Example indicators that an individual has an **intention to use violence** or other illegal means include:

- clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills
- using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group
- speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now
- expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology
- condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others
- plotting or conspiring with others

Capability to cause harm:

Not all those who have a wish to cause harm on behalf of a group, cause or ideology are capable of doing so, and plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What the individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration when assessing risk of harm to the public. Example indicators that an individual is capable of directly or indirectly causing harm include:

- having a history of violence
- being criminally versatile and using criminal networks to support extremist goals
- having occupational skills that can enable acts of terrorism (such as civil engineering, pharmacology or construction)
- having technical expertise that can be deployed (e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training or survival skills).

Pupils are supported in building resilience to extremism and radicalisation by use of assemblies, discussion in PSHE and other relevant lessons and individual intervention should this be deemed necessary.

Being aware of the Prevent Duty means that Wychwood staff will raise **any** child who is a cause for concern with the DSL or deputy DSL. It is NOT necessary to consult with parents or pupils first if there is reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is at risk of significant harm. The DSL or deputy DSL will consult with Children's Social Care and then decide whether to refer to the local Channel Panel. However this does not sit full time as Oxfordshire has a Counter Terrorism Local Profile that is assessed as low risk. The Prevent Duty Information from Oxfordshire County Council is available to staff in the Safeguarding Documents for All Staff as is the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales

There is no Prevent Lead in Oxfordshire as Oxfordshire is not a Prevent priority area. If you suspect someone of extremism or in cases of potential vulnerability to radicalisation,

1. Call 0845 050 7666 during office hours and ask to be put through to the Oxfordshire MASH (for a child) OR
2. Contact the local police on the 101 (non-emergency) number OR
3. Use the Department for Education (DfE) dedicated telephone helpline 020 7340 7264 (see Safeguarding information for staff) OR
4. Use the DfE dedicated mailbox counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk (see Safeguarding information for staff)

Relationship Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, Relationship Abuse is covered under Domestic Abuse above.

Trafficking

Wychwood School will act in accordance with the guidance *Safeguarding Children who may have been trafficked* available to all staff in the Safeguarding Documents for all Staff folder in the staff shared area. Suspicions should be reported to the DSL or deputy DSL.

Looked After Children

If Wychwood accepts a looked after child or children as part of the school, then a designated teacher will also be appointed to promote the educational achievement of those children. Wychwood School would then ensure that this designated teacher had appropriate and sufficient training.

Local authorities are the corporate parent to looked after children who leave care – so-called care leavers. The local authority under a duty to help further the education and career aspirations and ambitions of care leavers in their area, including through participation in further education. The Wychwood DSL and designated teacher should therefore have details of the local authority Personal Advisor that has been appointed to guide and support the care leaver, and should liaise with them as necessary regarding **any** issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Online/E-SAFETY

Wychwood School will act in accordance with the guidance from the DfE *Teaching online safety in schools and KCSIE 2023_revised*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

The four main areas of risk to pupils online are:

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

E-safety is taught to children in Information and communications technology (ICT) lessons, in PSHE lessons, by the use of assemblies and of specialist forums. All pupils sign an Acceptable Use document annually. All staff sign an Acceptable Use document on arrival at Wychwood. Additional help is also available in Annex D of KCSIE 2023_revised.

Child-net is invited in for pupils, parents and staff every two years and in the alternate years there is age-appropriate internal training on the sending of nudes.

Wychwood School, Oxford will always contact parents if they become aware of inappropriate internet usage by individual pupils.

Filtering and Monitoring

Under the new KCSE 2023 (paras 14, 103,124, 138, 144) guidance the School recognises the need for an effective filtering and monitoring and cyber security system to ensure the safety of pupils when online that meets the guidance set out in the Department for Education’s [Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools](#). The school utilizes a filtering and monitoring system, currently Netsweeper. Age-appropriate filtering is employed.

<https://www.netsweeper.co.uk/>

Responsibilities:

All staff receive training on the responsibilities and roles with regards to filtering and

monitoring within school. Filtering and Monitoring should be regarded by all staff as equivalent to any safeguarding concern, in that it is everyone's business and concerns must be raised to the DSL or other appropriate staff as would be the case with any safeguarding concern.

The DSL is responsible for monitoring the suitability and effectiveness of the filtering and monitoring system

The DSL meets weekly with the IT/Network Manager to review the reports, check the system and add new filtering terms or restricted websites as these become known.

IT/Network Manager is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the system. The DSL receives daily automated reports from the filtering and monitoring system which are reviewed and action taken as appropriate.

The IT/Network Manager performs random checks on school devices (including mobile devices) to ensure that the filtering system is working on all devices across the school network. The IT/Network Manager keeps a log of these checks.

The Safeguarding Director receives reports from the DSL on Filtering and Monitoring as part of the Compliance and Safeguarding Meeting and is responsible for the scrutiny of the reports and actions.

The filtering and monitoring system forms part of the School's overarching *Cyber Security Policy* which should be read in conjunction to this policy. A review of Filtering and monitoring system takes place as part of the School's annual IT and Cyber Security audit.

GUIDANCE ON SIGNS OF ABUSE

1. Physical Abuse

There are multiple possible signs and indicators, each of which may or may not indicate abuse:

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Fingertip bruising
- Unexplained bruises
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds,
- Multiple or unusual injuries
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts

However concerns should also be signalled by the following:

- Injuries that need to be accounted for
- Inadequate or inconsistent explanations
- Delay in seeking treatment

2. Emotional Abuse

Some indicators:

- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention and affection

3. Sexual Abuse

This list of indicators is not exhaustive and may not in isolation be an indication of abuse:

- Sudden changes in behaviour and school performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harming, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour
- Distrust of familiar adults, anxiety about being left with relatives, child minders, lodgers etc.
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression or withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for gym activities
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

4. Child sexual exploitation

Some indicators:

- Going missing from school/home/care placement or non-attendance
- Associating with older people/adults
- Isolation from family/friends/peer group
- Physical symptoms including bruising/ Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Substance misuse
- Mental health problems (e.g. self-harming)

- Unexplained possessions, goods and or money

The indicators can be spotted when speaking to the young person themselves or family/friends. Children may be too ashamed to exhibit signs or share concerns.

5. Neglect

Some indicators:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight (the same applies to weight gain, or being excessively overweight)
- Low self-esteem
- Poor dental hygiene

6. Indications that a Child is missing School

This is noted from the attendance registers taken twice daily.

Other abusive situations

- Bullying (Our Anti-bullying Policy **must** make a difference)
- Substance misusing parents
- Domestic violence
- Children and young people who sexually abuse (of the 110,000 convicted sex offenders in the UK approximately 25% are under 18 and may even be in schools)
- Child prostitution
- Female genital mutilation (FGM Act 2003).
- Forced marriages (not arranged marriages)
- Fabricated or induced illness

Allegations of abuse

Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse must be conducted with an “open and enquiring mind”, in a manner and at a pace that reflects the seriousness of the underlying charges. At the same time, care must be taken to avoid ill-considered judgements and actions, including decisions to suspend. Please also see Allegations against Staff Policy

The following points taken from the OSCB Generalist Safeguarding Training materials, July 2018, give essential guidance for staff on what to do and what not to do:

RECOGNISE

1. Always stop and listen
2. Never make a promise
3. Keep calm, don't panic, and don't appear shocked or angry
4. Avoid making judgements
5. Avoid commenting on the alleged perpetrator

RECORD

6. Do not ask leading questions

7. Make brief notes
8. Tell the child they are not to blame and have done the right thing by telling you

REPORT

9. Never attempt to carry out an investigation
10. Report the incident to the Designated Person
11. Referral to Assessment Teams / Police CAIU
12. Protect the child
13. Keep the young person informed
14. Personal support

At Wychwood senior pupils – Study I and Study II, to include all pupil councillors, Study boarders and heads of bedrooms and houses – are briefed annually on appropriate action to take should they receive allegations of abuse. This takes the form of OSCB Generalist Safeguarding Training and is delivered by the DSL.

Suspensions of abuse

If you suspect that a pupil is being abused:

- make a written record of your concerns, discussions, decisions made and reasons for those decisions
- share your concerns with the DSL

All members of staff within the School should be aware of the indicators of child abuse and the procedures to be followed in suspected cases. They will be made aware of this by reading the relevant sections of KCSIE 2023_revised and they are then required to follow those procedures. Any staff having a concern or making an allegation about school practices, or the behaviour of pupils or colleagues, including supply or temporary cover staff, which are likely to put other pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm **is advised to** report this to the DSL who is the Head or to the Deputy Head. Any member of staff may also refer their concerns directly to the MASH via the LADO at the OSCB or to the police. If there is a risk of immediate serious harm this referral should be made immediately. In other cases the DSL should consider whether referral to the MASH is indicated or whether school action and monitoring is appropriate. If in doubt, the case should be discussed with the MASH. Where there is a valid concern, the school may not carry out internal investigation in case they thus compromise subsequent police or social services investigations. Staff who “whistleblow” in good faith will be immune from retribution or disciplinary action.

Contact Details:

**OSCB Tel. 01865 815843, website address www.oscb.org.uk
(LADO**

Email: LADO.SafeguardingChildren@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

SchoolsTel: Safeguarding Team: 01865 810603

Where injuries have been sustained, keep a careful note of when and how the marks were observed (e.g. when the children were changing for PE). If the child or parents themselves make reference to the marks, write down these comments – endeavouring to record the exact words used. Such references may be a thinly veiled request for help and should not be ignored.

If the child is absent from school, the absence may itself be suspicious and should also be reported: it is possible that the child has been kept away in order to hide new bruising or cuts.

Referrals

Professionals who phone local authority children’s social 40cc coo MASH should confirm their referrals in writing within 48 hours. School staff are advised to inform the DSL before they

make a referral to ensure that they are in full possession of all the facts. Parents do not have to be contacted for consent prior to a referral.

The advice from the Oxfordshire MASH on reporting child abuse is as follows:

Report child abuse: What to do if you think a child is at risk of abuse or neglect.

A special helpline is available if you are concerned that a child you know is being [sexually exploited](#): **01865 335276**.

Immediate danger

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

Reporting abuse

If you are a child or young person and you are being abused or neglected or:

- you are concerned that a child may be suffering physical, sexual or emotional abuse or is being neglected
- or you are a parent or carer and you feel you are harming your child or are close to doing so,

please contact us on one of the following numbers:

- Office hours (8.30am-5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am-4pm, Friday): Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: **0845 050 7666**
- Outside office hours: Emergency Duty Team: **0800 833 408**

See ***Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)***

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/722305/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_-_Guide.pdf

Staff should note that reporting to the MASH does NOT pass the responsibility over to the MASH until you have been assured in writing that this has occurred. Should there be no response within 48 hours, then it remains the responsibility of the DSL or reporting staff member to escalate the report. This means they should contact the MASH again and repeat the report. The time interval will depend on the seriousness of the incident being reported. Staff have a duty to escalate a concern if they feel it is not being dealt with appropriately.

When considering a referral, the child's reactions, their perceptions, and wishes and feelings should be ascertained and the local authority should give them due consideration, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child's welfare and having regard to the child's age and understanding.

Children have said that they need

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views

When deciding whether to make a referral, following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Head as DSL should not make the decision over what appear to be borderline cases, but rather the doubts and concerns should be discussed with the LADO. This may be done tentatively and on a no-names basis in the first instance. What appears trivial at first can later be revealed to be much more serious, and an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. Thus, the School should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse.

In Oxfordshire, children who have been referred are assessed according to a Threshold of Needs matrix as

Positive Universal Level 1 Strengths

Vulnerable Level 2 Needs

Children in Need/Significant Level 3 Needs

Critical Level 4 Needs

The decision as to which level of need a child is at is one taken by the MASH. The DSL will refer to the MASH and take their advice. For further information on the Threshold of Needs Matrix please see:

<https://www.oscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Oxfordshire-Threshold-of-Needs-2021.pdf>

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Wychwood School, Oxford recognises that some children, young people and families with additional needs require extra help to improve education, parenting, behaviours, or to meet specific health needs.

Some indicators that a child might need additional support are

- I occasionally truant or have absences from school
 - I have had some fixed term exclusions
 - I have started to go missing, or been absent from school or home
 - I have not developed good attachments / relationships
 - I am a young carer with some responsibilities at home
 - I am teenage parent and I require some low-level support
 - I am not reaching my development milestones
 - I have language / communication difficulties
 - I need some low-level support due to a diagnosed disability or sensory impairment
 - I am showing early signs of associating with peers who are involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
 - I am showing early signs of instigating or experiencing problematic sexual behaviour and language
 - I have low-level mental health or emotional issues, or self-harm
 - I am saying I want to 'runaway'
 - I have disruptive / challenging behaviours
 - I am struggling due to bereavement issues
 - I am at risk due to low level / emerging neglect
 - I am struggling with understanding or learning in school and need extra support as I may have additional educational needs
 - I am negatively affected by difficult adult / family relationships
 - My use of online technology is becoming risky or concerning

Staff concerned about the need for Additional Support will consult the DSL and s/he will work with the SENDCo as appropriate to decide on the best form of Additional Support either internally at Wychwood School, Oxford or from the use of external agencies.

INFORMATION TO STAFF

The DSL and deputy DSL at Wychwood will be guided by *Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers* (July 2018) which is available to them and all staff in the Safeguarding Documents for All Staff folder in the Staff Shared area of the School ICT network.

Volunteers and temporary staff will only be informed if they have a need to be informed and other permanent staff who have roughly equivalent standing as the temporary staff or volunteer have also been informed.

INFORMATION SHARING

Staff should abide by the seven golden rules for information sharing

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be, shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3. Seek advice if you are in **any** doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
5. Consider safety and wellbeing: base your information-sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272064/5860.pdf

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

Please see the Low Level Concerns policy.

Individuals or Groups using School Premises (Lettings)

See Letting policy

Safeguarding information is sent to all groups letting the school premises

The Director of Operations requests and receives the letting group's own safeguarding policy ahead of letting including details of the group's DSL.

Groups are made aware that any allegations or safeguarding incidents will follow the School's procedures including informing the LADO. (KCSIE 2023, part 4)

CHILD PROTECTION FILES

Where child protection or safeguarding issues exist, a child will be given a separate child protection or safeguarding file (CPS file) which will be kept in the head's office in a locked filing cabinet. Where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. A copy will be retained at Wychwood School if a Child Protection or Safeguarding incident occurred while the pupil was at Wychwood.

LISTENING TO CHILDREN

At Wychwood relationships between the staff and pupils are such that all pupils are encouraged to speak to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable over any issue and it is our experience that they do so. Each child has a form teacher and a progress tutor (who may be the same person) to talk to as the most immediate points of contacts. The Senior Pastoral Team has an overview of the progress team and of pastoral issues and often act as a second line of staff for pupils. Pupils often initially raise issues with subject teachers, house staff or Gap assistants with whom they feel comfortable.

Relationships between pupils of different ages are also strong and pupils will often speak to a former house parent, a current Citizen or Councillor or any member of the Study to raise

an issue.

All pupils have access to the school Counsellor whose contact details are advertised throughout the School and highlighted to all pupils annually as part of their anti-bullying induction. **The School Counsellor is Sophie Phipps: s.phipps@wychwoodschool.org**

Boarders have access to a number of boarding-related help lines that are advertised in the boarding houses.

RECRUITMENT

In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, and in compliance with Independent School Standards regulations and the National Minimum Standards, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

The following checks will be completed before a person takes up a position in the School:

- During interview the applicant's suitability to work with children will be discussed.
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.
- An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be obtained with barred list information for all applicants who will engage in regulated activity. Regulated activity for the purposes of Wychwood School will include all teachers, house staff, Gap assistants, office support staff, domestic staff, facilities staff and most volunteers. (This will also include identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be, e.g. through birth certificate, passport, new style driving licence, etc.) The certificate will be obtained before or, as soon as practicable, after appointment. Until the check is satisfactorily completed, the individual will be appropriately supervised and a risk assessment completed. Regulated activity is as discussed in KCSIE 2023_revised, para 236 and Annex E.
- Foreign nationals' right to work in the UK will be checked using the gov.uk website.
- Where the appointee has lived outside the United Kingdom, further checks as are considered appropriate will be made where obtaining a DBS Disclosure is not sufficient to establish suitability to work with children (such as a certificate of good conduct from the country or countries they have been living in). The School will also take note of the latest guidance from the Home Office on *Criminal Record Checks for Overseas Applicants* and *Recruit Teachers from Overseas*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/recruit-teachers-from-overseas>

- If it is deemed appropriate, the School will obtain a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked. Advice about which regulatory or professional body applicants should contact is available from UK ENIC which is the UK National Information Centre for global qualifications and skills.

<https://www.ecctis.com/>

- Teachers are checked to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching with the TRA Teacher Services System.

Historic General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) sanctions and restrictions are also checked via the TRA as there remain a number of individuals who are still subject to disciplinary sanctions, which were imposed by the GTCE (prior to its abolition in 2012).

- For management positions a Section 128 check will be carried out.

- Academic qualifications will be checked, where relevant, to ensure that qualifications are genuine. (Required by Safer Recruitment).
- Two satisfactory references will be requested prior to confirming employment. These references will be verified with a telephone call to the referee.
- The candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out the role and its associated responsibilities will be checked by means of the medical questionnaire. (Safer Recruitment).
- School directors should have an enhanced DBS check and a TRA Section 128 (Prohibition from Management) check as part of the appointment process as a director. Directors will not be allowed unsupervised access to the pupils except in the case of former teachers who occasionally teach classes in school. Directors must also provide proof of identity before taking up their posts.
- Written notification will be obtained from any agency or third-party organisation that provide staff to the school that the agency or third-party organisation has carried out all the relevant checks on each and every candidate. Identity checks will also be carried out to ensure the person presenting themselves from an agency or third-party organisation is the same person for whom the checks have been made.
- As is good practice, The School will inform short listed candidates that online searches will be carried out. (*KCSIE 2023, footnote 221*)

Where parents request that external professionals such as therapists or tutors teach or see pupils within Wychwood this may only happen if the professional has an enhanced DBS check that can be checked against the Updates service or which falls within the 3 month rule. The three month rule is that there is **no requirement** to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate or carry out checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, during a period which ended not more than three months before the person's appointment, the applicant has worked:

- In a school in England in a post:
 - which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons
 - to which the person was appointed on or after 12th May 2006 and which did not bring the person regularly into contact with children or young persons; or
 - in an institution within the further education sector in England in a post which involved the provision of education which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons.
- External contractors who work regularly within school must have an enhanced DBS check and must read *KCSIE 2023_revised* and the safeguarding induction documentation.

Recruitment of all staff is additionally subject to safe recruitment practices as detailed in *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023_revised*.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

For all adults who begin to live in the same premises as children/pupils (for example adult members of staff households) but are not employed by the School, there is a verifiable DBS check completed at the standard level.

The School has a satisfactory system for carrying out DBS checks on agency staff with regular contact with boarders. These staff are not given unsupervised access to boarders unless the School has written evidence that the agency has carried out the necessary checks within the last 3 months or the School has obtained a DBS check itself.

The School has taken reasonably practicable steps to carry out DBS checks on taxi drivers booked by the School to drive boarders unaccompanied by staff. In order to drive a taxi in Oxford, the City Council requires all drivers to have a DBS check. We take a copy of the DBS check for drivers of any private hire vehicles that transport Wychwood pupils.

Staff coming from overseas: the School will request a criminal record check from the country of origin/previous residence in addition to a DBS check on arrival in the UK. Where the School has short-term interns who have not been resident in the UK prior to coming to Wychwood (e.g. Swiss teaching students or ICT interns) the intern cannot take up work unless their Criminal Record check from their country of origin has been seen. A barred list check will be done but an enhanced DBS check will not be carried out. The intern will be supervised at all times.

Contractors will have their identity checked on arrival at the School. This is recorded in the Visitors Book.

VOLUNTEERS

Any volunteers in the School, in whatever capacity, will be given the same consideration as paid staff.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one-to-one contact with children other than their own children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be DBS checked to ensure their suitability to work with children. A DBS check will not be made if the volunteer is not engaged in regulated activity as defined in KCSIE 2023_revised.

The School will obtain assurance that staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site (e.g. local swimming pool, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions etc.) will have undergone appropriate child protection checks and procedures.

Should there be an allegation against a volunteer this will be referred to the Head in the first instance rather than the DSL, should the DSL not be the Head.

INDUCTION & TRAINING

As part of their safeguarding induction training all new staff at the School will read through this policy, the Wychwood Staff Code of Conduct, the Whistleblowing Policy on the Staff Shared area (T:drive, aaaPolicies, aaaCurrent Policies). They will be asked to sign to say that they have done so. The DSL will be identified. All staff are required to read the relevant sections of KCSIE 2023_revised during induction and to undergo Safeguarding training. There is always Safeguarding and CP training with the DSL for new staff on one of the two staff training and meeting days before term starts. All staff (teaching, volunteers, temporary and support) will be expected to attend this training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. Whole School (level 1) training will be provided for an individual usually every three years. At Wychwood the DSL, and deputy DSLs, will attend training in child protection,

safeguarding and interagency working, to be updated every two years. The DSL will also attend regular OSCB meetings for independent schools.

Staff will be issued with a dated certificate to indicate that they have undergone safeguarding training for use in other schools if appropriate. A copy will be kept on each member of staff's file from December 2015.

All staff (teaching, volunteers, and support) do the on-line Channel Awareness training to enable them to identify young people at risk of radicalisation and extremism. This will be repeated on a two-yearly basis.

Prevent General Awareness module <https://www.support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/portal#awareness-course>

CONDUCT OF STAFF

The School has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries. This is set out in the Staff Code of Conduct, available to parents on request from the school office.

At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- cultural and/or gender stereotyping
- dealing with sensitive information
- giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
- contacting children through private telephones, private emails, messaging services or social media
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties

All members of staff must understand that any allegation that they have assaulted a child or placed a child at risk of harm will be dealt with through a multi-agency forum, involving the Police and Children's Services.

All staff should understand that the School will interpret 'boys' and 'girls' to include children who identify as boys or girls.

Corporal punishment is prohibited at Wychwood. It is neither used nor threatened.

PHYSICAL CONTACT & RESTRAINT

Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff should only do this where:

- It is necessary to protect the child, or another person, from immediate danger, or
- Where the member of staff has received suitable training

(See separate policy on Physical Intervention and Restraint.)

STAFF FACING AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE (see also Allegations Against Staff Policy)

By virtue of their day-to-day contact with children, those working in education play an important role in the prevention of abuse and neglect. Moreover, such close contact also leaves education staff vulnerable to unfounded charges, whether maliciously motivated or otherwise. Consequently, procedures for dealing fairly and thoroughly with allegations must exist. These should be applied with common sense and judgement.

Managing allegations of abuse against staff

Once an allegation against a member of staff has been made, the member of staff who has received the allegation should report immediately to the Head as DSL, who should obtain a written report of the allegation from that member of staff. The written report should be signed and dated by both the member of staff and the Head. If the Head is absent, the allegation should be passed to the Chair of Directors who will consult with the DSL or the deputy DSL as soon as possible. If the allegation is against the Head, then the chair of directors should consult the nominated director Mr Simon Tyrrell (s.tyrrell@wychwoodschoo.org) **(WITHOUT INFORMING THE HEAD) and refer to the LADO**. The person dealing with the allegation is termed the case manager. Allegations against volunteers should be made to the Head. Allegations against the Head (i.e. the DSL) should be made to the chair of directors or the nominated director. Where the member of staff is a supply teacher and Wychwood School is therefore not the employer, allegations must still be dealt with properly in accordance with KCSIE 2023_revised and with the best interest of the child in mind. The supply agency concerned must be fully involved by the DSL as soon as the allegation is made in all steps taken thereafter.

If the allegation meets the harm threshold i.e. the member of staff concerned

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

A case manager must be appointed (in cases not involving the DSL this will be the DSL). After receiving the allegation, the case manager should initially and immediately deal with the allegation. As per KCSIE 2023_revised, the case manager must discuss the allegation with the current LADO.

Email: LADO.SafeguardingChildren@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
Schools Tel: Safeguarding Team: 01865 810603

At this point an initial decision must be taken whether to make a referral under local child protection procedures established by the OSCB. A referral must be made within one working day if a potential criminal act has been alleged, or if the child indicates they have suffered, is suffering, or is likely to suffer, immediate and or significant harm. If there is evidence of a possible criminal offence or serious harm, Children's Social Care and the police should be informed from the outset within one working day. In other cases the LADO can advise whether police involvement is necessary.

Every effort must be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered as per the Education Act 2011. The case manager should take advice from the LADO, police and MASH services to agree the following:

- who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and how to manage press interest if and when it should arise.

The Education Act 2002 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of **a teacher in a school** who has been accused

by, or on behalf of, a pupil from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). These reporting restrictions ONLY apply to teachers. The reporting restrictions apply until the point that the accused person is charged with an offence, or until the Secretary of State or the General Teaching Council for Wales publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation. The reporting restrictions are disapplied if the individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their written consent for another to do so or if a judge lifts restrictions in response to a request to do so. The provisions commenced on 1 October 2012.

The LADO's function is to deal with concerns over professionals working with children. Staff may go directly to the LADO but are advised to go to the DSL first. Where staff have concerns about a professional or volunteer who works with children, or they need to report them, the LADO will be involved. A LADO covers all settings where people work with children (e.g. football clubs, church groups, child minders).

They should be made aware of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

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

Where an allegation does not meet the harms threshold above they are referred to as 'low level concerns'. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that the concern is insignificant, it simply means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms threshold. A low-level concern is **any** concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

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

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

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. It is crucial that **any** such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold are shared responsibly with the Head and are recorded and dealt with appropriately. The Head may decide that these are not in fact low-level concerns at which point s/he deal with them as the DSL rather than the Head. Ensuring low-level concerns are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

In order to deal with low-level concerns, the Head should designate a member of the pastoral staff to investigate or should investigate themselves. Silent concurrent written statements should be taken from all pupils involved (victim(s), perpetrator(s) and witnesses(es)) and

collated and cross referenced. Staff statements should be taken. The person reporting the concern should always be interviewed. Records of the evidence collection should be maintained in the pastoral file and kept confidentially in the Head's office maintaining anonymity as far as is possible. Action taken should be evidence based and recorded in the appropriate record file.

There should be an annual review of all low-level concerns to look for patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which can then be identified and responded to. Where a pattern of behaviour is identified, the school should decide on a course of action. This might be internal disciplinary procedures, or referral to the LADO if the harms threshold is met. The school must consider if any wider cultural issues in school that enabled the behaviour to occur and if appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of recurrence.

Who to contact

For allegations against staff and volunteers, including schools

LADO

Email: LADO.SafeguardingChildren@Oxfordshire.gov.uk Schools

Tel: Safeguarding Team: 01865 810603 Jo Lloyd, LADO Tel: 01865 816382

Team number 01865 810603

LADO.SafeguardingChildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Social Care Safeguarding Team Contacts - Children and Families Assessment Duty Teams

- South Assessment Team - 01865 323041
- Oxford City Assessment Team - 01865 323563
- North Assessment Team - 01865 323039
- Emergency Out of Hours - 0845 050 7666

Safeguarding Service Manager

- Hannah Farncombe
Tel: 01865 815273

Referrals

In cases where a decision to make a referral to MASH services or the police service has been taken, subsequent action will be governed by local child protection procedures established by the OSCB and in accordance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)*

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/722305/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_-_Guide.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

The guidance stresses that preliminary examinations to establish whether to make a referral should be undertaken in such a way as not to prejudice future investigations. Acceptable preliminary enquiries can include finding out whether

- the individual was in the school at the time of the allegations?
- the individual could have come into contact with the child?
- there are any witnesses?
- there is any CCTV footage?

The school will ensure that contact is made with the LADO within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicions of abuse. Neither education staff nor directors should interfere with evidence, for

example by attempting to interview the child making the allegation, other children or the member of staff against whom the allegation is made.

Under the following circumstances, a decision not to make a referral can be taken:

1. Where the allegation involves use of reasonable force to restrain a pupil.
2. Where the allegation concerns poor practice on the part of staff.
3. Where it is absolutely clear that it is impossible for the allegation to be true.

Allegations involving the use of reasonable force to restrain are to be dealt with by the Head at school level.

A determination not to make a referral is not, however, equivalent to a determination that no further action is warranted. Only when the allegation is wholly unfounded or of a trivial nature should there be no further action.

In other instances, further assessment of the situation should be undertaken. Where a decision has been reached not to make a referral, but where further action is called for, this will be dealt with under the School's own disciplinary procedures.

If no further action is the outcome of the acceptable enquiries and the advice from the LADO then the case manager and the LADO should:

- record the decision and justification for it;
- agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

Where further enquiries are deemed necessary the LADO and the case manager will discuss how to proceed and will proceed according to the guidance outlined in KCSIE 2023_revised Part 4.

False Accusations (see Allegation against staff policy)

In the event that an initial determination is made that the allegation is "demonstrably false" the Head, after consultation with the alternate designated teacher, should inform the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made, both orally and in writing, of the facts of the allegation, indicating that no further action is going to be taken.

With regard to the child making the accusation, the guidance stresses that demonstrably false accusations of abuse against members of staff may be indicative of abuse being perpetrated by others. In light of this, inter-agency referral may be the best course of action. In any event, consideration should be given to recommending counselling for the child, and to the possibility of other subsequent action, particularly if the false allegation is deemed to have been malicious. The Head should then inform the parents or carers of the child of the facts of the allegation and its disposition.

Even where the allegation was not made by the alleged victim, consideration should still be given to informing the parents and carers of the facts of the allegation and its disposition.

When parents and carers are informed they should also be made aware of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

Finally, the Head should prepare a written report detailing the communications that have been made, and providing reasons for the conclusion that the allegation was "demonstrably false".

Allegations against the Head

In the event that the allegation of abuse has been made against the Head to the Chair of Directors and the nominated safeguarding director, the role taken by the Head in receiving the report of the allegation and making the initial decision as to referral is assumed by the nominated director Simon Tyrrell (s.tyrell@wychwoodschoo.org). The report should be made without informing the Head. This will then be referred to the LADO. Staff may contact the LADO directly but should also inform the safeguarding director.

Situations where further school action is deemed appropriate fall into two classes:

1. Those where a referral has been made.
2. Those to be conducted solely under school disciplinary procedures.

Conflicts of interest in Reporting Allegations to the Head

Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head (for example of the allegation was against a relation of the Head's) then the allegation must be made direction to the LADO.

Allegations against Contractors or Supply Teachers

Reports of inappropriate behaviour or allegations against contractors or supply teachers should be reported to their employer or agency respectively, so that patterns of inappropriate behaviours may be identified.

Internal and external investigations

Disciplinary procedures should be clearly distinct from any investigation conducted under referral, whether that referral has caused a police investigation or OSCB child protection investigation. Either type of external investigation should also take precedence over any internal disciplinary proceedings, and be conducted first. The nominated director should not conduct an internal investigation concurrent with an external investigation in case the external investigation is prejudiced.

Suspension

It is possible that the LADO, child protection agency or police may request suspension of a member of staff as a protective action. Such decisions remain with the Head and / or the Board of Directors.

Decisions to suspend a member of staff should not be made automatically on the basis of an allegation alone. Suspension is not to be considered a disciplinary penalty, and consequently will be on full pay. Voluntary alternatives to suspension, including paid leave of absence and alternative duties may be considered.

Suspension would be appropriate where a child is at risk. Consequently, where a decision has been taken to make a referral, suspension is a likely outcome. Suspension is also deemed to be appropriate when the conduct alleged is so egregious that dismissal for gross negligence is possible, or when it is deemed necessary during the conduct of an external investigation.

Where consideration is being given to suspension, an interview should be conducted with the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made. The member of staff should seek advice from his or her trade union, and is entitled to bring a trade union representative to the interview. If the member of staff is not a member of a trade union, he or she may be accompanied by a friend. The member of staff should be informed of the allegation and of the possibility of suspension. He or she should be provided with all possible information not prejudicial to the conduct of the investigation. During the interview, the reasons for the possible suspension should be set out, and the member of staff should be given the opportunity to respond. If a decision to suspend is taken, the member of staff

should be so advised, and be sent written notification, setting forth the reasons, within one day of the initial oral notification.

Should the member of staff suspended be a member of the boarding team, then alternative accommodation must be found for that member of staff until the issue is brought to a close. The member of staff would then be allowed back into the boarding house alone only if cleared. If not cleared, then they would be required to pack under close supervision and then required to vacate the boarding house, returning all keys and other means of access. The keypad codes would then be changed.

The School has a duty to support the individual employee named in the allegation. The suspended member of staff should be provided with the name and contact details of someone who will act as an information channel. Another member of staff may also be named (the named contact) to provide the suspended member of staff with relevant information regarding conditions at the School. In any event, the suspended member of staff should be regularly updated on the progress of the case. The contact details for the named contact should be supplied to the suspended employee at the point of suspension.

Following a suspension, formal notification should be made in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors. A report should also be given to the entire board of directors, setting out only the minimum necessary information so as not to prejudice any future appeal. Pupils and their parents should also be informed of the suspension where appropriate. If a member of the boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, arrangements will be made for alternative accommodation away from the pupils.

Following a suspension, if the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the teacher's family, those concerns should be reported to the designated officer(s), children's social care or the police.

If a decision to suspend the member of staff is not taken, a follow-up meeting should take place wherein the member of staff is informed of the factors leading to the consideration of suspension. During this meeting, the member of staff should be informed of any subsequent actions to be taken, which may include further investigation of the incident as part of possible disciplinary proceedings. Inquiries should also be made regarding the member of staff's need and desire for support, including counselling. Again, the member of staff is entitled to be accompanied by a union representative or friend.

Prior to the procedures regarding suspension, but after a decision to make a referral has been taken, a "strategy discussion" will be held to share information and plan the course of action under OSCB safeguarding procedure. This discussion should include consideration of whether other children may be at risk in light of the allegation and review of any earlier allegations. The guidance advises those involved in the process to balance the needs of the investigation against those of the accused member of staff, being mindful of the possibility of a false accusation. Again, where the allegation is against the Head, the Head is replaced by the designated director.

Information Sharing

In a strategy discussion or the initial evaluation of the case, the agencies involved should share all relevant information they have about the person who is the subject of the allegation, and about the alleged victim.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the Head should ask the police to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the employer disciplinary process. This should be done as their investigation proceeds and will

enable the police to share relevant information without delay at the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.

MASH personnel should adopt a similar procedure when making enquiries to determine whether the child or children named in the allegation are in need of protection or services, so that any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case can be passed to the employer without delay.

Criminal conduct

In cases involving possible criminal conduct, the police may wish to interview those involved in the matter prior to their notification by the School. Full co-operation with police enquiries should be given.

Where police wish to conduct interviews, such interviews would not take place at the School in the ordinary course.

Disciplinary proceedings

Where a decision not to make a referral has been taken, or when the police or child protection agency has decided further action on their parts is not warranted, school-based disciplinary proceedings may still be appropriate. In such instances, an investigation should be conducted. This should be a fact-finding exercise, not designed either to prove or disprove the allegations made. All information collected during such an internal investigation should be made available to the parties to the matter. No undertakings of confidentiality should be given.

If, during the course of an internal disciplinary investigation, further evidence comes to light indicating that the matter should be referred, the internal disciplinary investigation should be halted, with further investigation conducted by the police or under child protection procedures. The internal investigation should only resume after confirmation from the relevant agency that such an investigation would not interfere with police or child protection investigations.

Interviews should be held as soon as is practicable, at locations and times designed to facilitate the process. Those to be interviewed should be given the option to be accompanied, and should have the purpose of the interview explained to them. The interview should lead to the preparation of a written statement, to be signed and dated by the person interviewed.

The member of staff against whom the allegation is made should also be interviewed. Prior to the interview the member of staff should be informed of his or her rights under the school disciplinary policy, including the right to representation. He or she should be informed of the allegation made against them, and be provided with the opportunity to respond. He or she should also have the opportunity to add any witnesses to the list of people to be interviewed. A full written record of the interview should be prepared, which the member of staff should sign and acknowledge as a true record.

The interview with the child making the allegation should be conducted within the same structures that guide receiving the initial allegation. The child should be listened to and their report of the events should be taken down, but care should be taken not to insert leading questions, interpretations or assumptions into the interview.

Again, confidentiality should not be promised, and children and their parents should be informed that statements may be made available to the police. If statements are made pursuant to a police investigation, such statements may only be made available for disciplinary proceedings with the consent of the police and the authors of the statements.

Following completion of the interview process and a full examination of the relevant evidence, a written report should be prepared, on which a decision will be taken as to subsequent action.

Once a decision has been reached, a meeting should be scheduled to inform the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made of the outcome of the investigation and what subsequent disciplinary action, if any, is contemplated. If the member of staff has been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation and no further action is to be taken, an immediate lifting of the suspension is warranted. In all cases except that of dismissal, the option to obtain counselling should be afforded to the member of staff.

The following definitions from KCSIE 2023_revised should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Records

Allegations found to be malicious will be removed from personnel records. Records will be kept of all other allegations, but any that are not substantiated, are false or malicious will not be referred to in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should also not be included in any reference.

Where disciplinary action has been taken against a member of staff, this record becomes part of the member of staff's personal and confidential file. If the disciplinary proceedings result in termination of the member of staff's employment, or if he/she resigns prior to the completion of the proceedings, he/she must be informed that, as is statutorily required, details of the case will be reported to the DBS. This may result in further referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency of the Department for Education (TRA) which in turn may result in a Prohibition Order. A prohibition order may be appropriate in cases of 'unacceptable professional conduct', conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a 'conviction at any time for a relevant offence.' A written record of the outcome of the investigation should be retained in the file of the pupil making the allegation, in the section not open to disclosure, along with a written copy of the pupil's statement.

Following completion of the process, the Head or the nominated director should consider whether any general issues have been raised which might inform a review of policies or further training of staff.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in Child Protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

REPORTING TO THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE

The School will report to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a pupil) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to

work with children. The Disclosure and Barring referral form (Updated February 2016) should be used:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance>

Schools and colleges have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals should be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual.

REPORTING TO THE TEACHING REGULATION AGENCY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (TRA)

Where a teacher has been dismissed or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned then consideration will be given to making a referral to the TRA. In cases where there has been 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction at any time for a relevant offence' then a prohibition order may be appropriate.

ADDENDUM

Abuse of trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 extended the criminal offence of abuse of trust.

An abuse of trust can only occur within a relationship of trust. A relationship of trust exists where, as a consequence of the nature of the activity taking place, a teacher, other member of staff or gap student is "in a position of power or influence over a pupil or student". The guidance is informed by the principle of equality, under which no sexual relationship is acceptable within a relationship of trust due to the unequal positions of the parties. Sexual relationships conducted within relationships of trust also distort the appropriate teacher-pupil relationship, which should exist free from "fear or favour".

All sexual relationships within a relation of trust, regardless of the sexual orientation of the parties to the relationship, are unacceptable. Both women and men can abuse a relationship of trust. It is therefore vital to create a "culture of openness" within educational institutions, such that staff feel free to share their concerns.

With this in mind, care must be taken to avoid misunderstandings as to the nature of a relationship. The goal of raising a concern should always be to prevent a situation from arising which could detrimentally affect a pupil and destroy a member of staff's career.

If a member of staff has a concern, good practice suggests that a contemporaneous record of the circumstances surrounding the area of concern be kept, and that concerns should be reported to a person in a supervisory position. If a member of staff is concerned that he or she is involved in a relationship that is developing toward a situation which might constitute an abuse of trust, the guidance advises not to allow the relationship to develop further. The member of staff should then seek confidential advice from a trade union, head of department, or the Head. If the member of staff is concerned that a pupil is providing the impetus to move the relationship into an unacceptable area, they should keep a contemporaneous record and report the situation.

Along similar lines, if a member of staff feels that any of their actions may have been misconstrued, he or she should make a contemporaneous record, report the circumstances and seek professional advice.

A similar course of action is recommended for members of staff who have concerns regarding the behaviour of other members of staff.

Relevant Legislation

Education

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) (Regulations) 2006
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactment) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended by SI 2010/1919, SI 2012/ 1201, SI 2012/1825, SI 2012/3158
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 as amended by SI 2012/1740 and SI 2013/1940
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 as amended by SI 2012/2962
- The Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011

Police

- Police Act 1997
- The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002, as amended
- The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (No 2) Regulations 2009, as amended

Other

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- The Common Law Duty of Care
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, as amended
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018
- Keeping Children Safe In Education September 2023_revised

Appendix 1 - Key Contacts

OSCB: 01865 815843

Email: oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Jo Lloyd – Designated Officer (LADO)

Email: LADO.SafeguardingChildren@Oxfordshire.gov.uk Schools

LADO Tel.: Safeguarding Team: 01865 810603

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0845 0507666

Oxford City Social Care team: 01865 328563

Oxford City Locality Social Workers

North 01865 323039

City 01865 328563

South 01865 323041

Emergency Duty Team 0800 833 408

Early Help – Locality & Community Support Service (LCSS)

LCSS North

Tel: 0345 2412703

LCSS Central

Tel: 0345 2412705

LCSS South

Tel: 0345 2412608

Appendix 2 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT DUTY INFORMATION FOR STAFF



SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT DUTY INFORMATION FOR STAFF



Tel: 01865 815843 E: oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

If you have a concern about a child, please call **MASH** on **0345 050 7666** during office hours (8.30am – 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am – 4pm, Friday)

Outside office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on **0800 833 408**

Concern about a child: LCSS.North@oxfordshire.gov.uk **Tel: 0345 241 2703**

Children's Social Care Teams:

Oxford City – **01865 323048**

North Oxfordshire (including Banbury, Witney, Bicester, Carterton and Woodstock) – **01865 816670**

South Oxfordshire (including Faringdon, Wantage, Thame, Didcot and Henley) – **01865897983**

Emergency Duty Team – 0800 833408

LADO - To report concerns about a professional or person in a position of trust, contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to report an allegation.

01865 810603 or email LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

In cases of potential vulnerability to radicalisation, call **0845 050 7666** during office hours and ask to be put through to the Oxfordshire MASH (for a child) or the Social and Health Care Team (for an adult).

Non-emergency Police contact: telephone 101 Forced Marriage Unit Contact details:
Email: fmufco@fco.gov.uk; **Tel: 020 7008 0151**

DfE telephone counter-extremism helpline for staff and governors

020 7340 7264 (09.00-18.00): or Email: counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: **0808 800 5000** or Email: help@nspcc.org.uk for staff who feel unable to raise concerns regarding child protection internally.

Appendix 3 – Role of the DSL (Based on Annex C of KCSIE 2023 revised)

Role of the designated safeguarding lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mary Stephenson. She should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

The Deputy DSLs are:

Jane Evans – Head

Bridget Sherlock – Deputy Head Pastoral

Duncan Radnor – Director of Operations

All the DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead.

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this **lead responsibility** should not be delegated.

Management of referrals

The DSL is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children’s social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care;
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police. :

Work with others

The DSL is expected to

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff; act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
 - liaise with the DDSL to inform them of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
 - act as the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
 - liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENDCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a 145 referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically;
 - liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health;
 - promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;

take lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes: to ensure that the school knows who in its cohort of children have or have had a social worker are; understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and to support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Undertake training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.

The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so

The DSL should

- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and,

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

- The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the school or college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately
 - Ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
 - Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
 - Link with OSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
 - help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Manage Information Sharing and the Child protection files

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Part one and Part two of KCSIE 2023_revised.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term.

This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting

children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Be Available

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, at Wychwood the DSL and DDSL are always available by phone or e-mail during school hours, out of school hours and at weekends.

The trip leader and the in-school contact for overseas trips will always have the contact details for the DSL or deputy DSL.

Provide Support to Staff

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understand the Views of Children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them; and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Both Hold and Share Information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of KCSIE 2023_revised, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR); and,
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping

Appendix 4 - COVID-19 addendum

The guidance Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers was withdrawn from July 31st 2020 and replaced by guidance for full opening of schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

This has now been withdrawn but is temporarily retained together with this in Wychwood School, Oxford's Safeguarding Policy in case of a further lockdown, perhaps due to a local spike in infection.

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during any period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the OSCB

Unless covered here, our normal safeguarding policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- have a social worker
- have a child protection plan
- are assessed as being in need
- are Looked After by the local authority
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance KCSIE 2023_revised.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on **any** concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed on page 5 of this policy

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

The DSL (and/or deputy) will make sure they can:

- identify the most vulnerable children in school
- update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary

- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans
- the local authority designated officer and children's social care
- reporting mechanisms
- referral thresholds
- children in need

6. Monitoring attendance

If there is another period of school closure we anticipate the DFE attendance form will be rejuvenated and we will complete that daily..

Where any child we expect to attend school during the closure does not attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by email, then telephone and then in person by visiting the address stored in the school database
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

7. Child on Child Abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of child on child abuse.

Staff should continue to act on **any** concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Low Level Concern Policy.

Staff should continue to act on **any** concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency..

9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who do not meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

We currently have no such children on roll.

11. Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to **any** signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
No contact from children or families
Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls
Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.
See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school. Pupils causing concern will be discussed weekly at SLT and at staff meeting.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff Code of Conduct and IT acceptable use policy and abide by the **Online Home Learning Responsible User Agreement. Wychwood School Face to Face Online Learning Protocol** and **Online Learning Guidelines**, all updated for 2022-2023.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report **any** concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

13.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

13. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Counselling would be available by phone or online instead of face to face. Progress tutors will meet their pupils daily to assess their mental state.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. We have added a staff wellbeing folder to the T Drive.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and those set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who are not in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022_revised.

14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

The DSL will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

14.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- The Wychwood Safeguarding pack

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

14.4 Keeping records of who is on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the signing in file to log:

Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'

15. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated by the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the full board of directors.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Anti-bullying policy

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

E-safety policy

Health and safety policy

ICT policy

Low Level Concerns Policy

Online Home Learning Responsible User Agreement

Online Learning Guidelines

Staff code of conduct

Whistle-blowing policy

Wychwood School Face to Face Online Learning Protocol

Safer Recruitment Policy