



# Child Safeguarding Policy

**Date Created/Updated:** October 2023  
**Created by:** Will Smith/ Lisa Hewitt  
**Date to be reviewed:** October 2024

\*Amended 24/01/2024 - to reflect Working Together 2023 policy update and staff changes

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action

## **CONTENTS PAGE:**

<b>MUNDELLA PRIMARY PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN</b>	4
<b>EXTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACT DETAILS</b>	4
<b>SECTION 1: OUR SCHOOL POLICY AND PRINCIPLES</b>	5
1.1 OUR POLICY	5
1.3 TRAINING	5
<b>SECTION 2: RECOGNISING ABUSE</b>	6
2.1 CHILD ABUSE.	6
2.2 PHYSICAL ABUSE	7
2.3 EMOTIONAL ABUSE	8
2.4 SEXUAL ABUSE	8
2.5 NEGLECT	9
2.6 SEXUAL VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARRASMENT AND HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR	9
2.7 ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT	10
<b>SECTION 3: SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES</b>	11
3.1 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) & CHILDREN AT RISK OF EXPLOITATION (CRE)	11
3.2 CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE) INCLUDING COUNTY LINES	12
3.3 CARRYING KNIVES/OFFENSIVE WEAPONS, GANG CULTURE AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE	13
3.4 THE SENDING OF INDECENT IMAGES THROUGH DIGITAL MEDIA DEVICES	13
3.5 ONLINE SAFETY INCLUDING FILTERS AND MONITORING	14
3.6 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) AND SO-CALLED 'HONOUR-BASED' ABUSE (HBA)	15
3.7 CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE	17
3.8 MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	19
3.9 CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION	19
3.10 PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES	20
3.11 DOMESTIC ABUSE	20
3.12 HOMELESSNESS	21
3.13 RADICALISATION, EXTREMISM AND PREVENT DUTIES	21
3.14 LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN	21
3.15 CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON AND PART OF THE COURT SYSTEM	22
3.16 PARENTAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE	22
3.17 NON-COLLECTION OF CHILDREN	22

3.18 CHILDREN WHO ARE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL OR TRANS (LBGT+)	22
3.19 OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS- Home educated/ Young carers/ Privately fostered/ Children with Social workers	23
<b>SECTION 4 - CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT</b>	23
3.1 CHECKING THE IDENTITY AND SUITABILITY OF VISITORS	23
3.2 USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ EX. CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	23
SECTION 5: SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	24
ALL STAFF WILL:	24
5.2 THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)	25
5.3 THE GOVERNING BOARD	25
5.4 THE HEADTEACHER	26
5.5 VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADS	26
<b>SECTION 6: SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES</b>	26
6.1 EARLY HELP	26
6.2 REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	27
6.3 RECORDS	28
<b>APPENDIX A: SAFER RECRUITMENT</b>	29
<b>APPENDIX B: ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN</b>	34
<b>APPENDIX C - SAFEGUARDING TEAM CONTACT DETAILS</b>	41
<b>APPENDIX D -LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE</b>	42
<b>APPENDIX E -PROCEDURE IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S WELFARE</b>	43

## MUNDELLA PRIMARY PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

**HEADTEACHER:** Mr Will Smith

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD & DEPUTY:** Mr Will Smith - DSL, Miss Lisa Hewitt – DSD

**CHAIR OF GOVERNORS:** Mr Paul Hirst

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNORS:** Miss Michelle Phelan and Mrs Fran Lavender

**APPOINTED TEACHER FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/VIRTUAL SCHOOL:** Mrs Roxie Godden

**APPOINTED TEACHER FOR SEND:** Mrs Roxie Godden

**APPOINTED TEACHER FOR ON-LINE SAFETY:** Miss Emma Blakemore

**ONLINE SAFETY LEAD:** Mr William Smith

**APPOINTED TEACHER FOR HEALTHY MINDS:** Mrs J Kleeli

**\*CONTACT DETAILS FOR ALL MUNDELLA STAFF WITH SAFEGUARDING ROLES: See APPENDIX C**

## EXTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACT DETAILS

**LADO AND PREVENT** (Local Authority Designated Officer): 0114 2734850, 07814 382 424 or email [Steven.Hill@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:Steven.Hill@sheffield.gov.uk)

**DfE**- one single access web link to access all local authority's reporting webpage or phone number for any concerns/worries about a child, young person and vulnerable adults [Report Child Abuse](#)

**POLICE** non-emergencies: 101, Emergencies 999

**NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY - protecting children from online child sexual abuse -CEOP:** 0370 496 7622

**NSPCC NATIONAL HELPLINE:** 0808 800 5000

**CHILDLINE:** 0800 11 11

**SHEFFIELD SAFEGUARDING HUB:** 0114 2734855

**SOCIAL CARE WEST TEAM:** 0114 2734491

**MAST:** 0114 2037485

**CHANEL HELPLINE:** 02073407264

## SECTION 1: OUR SCHOOL POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

### 1.1 OUR POLICY

This Policy reflects the current statutory guidance of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023.

The school's Policy and Procedures will apply at all times when the school is providing services or activities directly under the management of Mundella Primary school staff. This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually and may be amended from time to time.

This policy is underpinned and written in reference to the guidance in APPENDIX D

Furthermore, we will utilise the guidance set out by the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).

<https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/scsp/education>

Paper copies can be found in the staff rooms, Headteacher's office, school office and on the school website.

<https://www.mundella.sheffield.sch.uk/>

An audit of our safeguarding provision (S175 Safeguarding Audit, which is a requirement of the Education Act 2002 & 2006) is completed annually by the DSL/DSD and governing board and a copy sent to the SSCP.

### 1.2 OUR PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding arrangements at Mundella Primary are underpinned by these key principles:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: anyone who has contact with a child or young person including governors, volunteers and contractors should play their full part in keeping children safe
- We will aim to protect children using national, local and school child protection procedures
- We aim to work in partnership and have an important role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out by Working Together 2023
- Anyone who has contact with a child or young person has a clear understanding regarding abuse and neglect in all forms and understands how to identify, respond and report it. This also includes knowledge in the process for allegations against professionals.
- All adults and children know that they can report any safeguarding concern including online concerns to the school and that these will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- A child-centred approach: a clear understanding of the needs, wishes, views and voices of children.

### 1.3 TRAINING

**All staff members** - undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

All staff complete basic safeguarding training every 3 years. This training will be regularly updated and will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning. Staff will also receive regular (at least annual) safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety and guidance to understand the schools monitoring / filtering system.

**The DSL/DSD** - have completed advanced safeguarding training and complete advanced safeguarding refresher training every year. They attend whole school basic training every 3 years in addition to attending refreshers/new training requirements as detailed on the Safeguarding Children Training Audit.

**Governors** – undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

Our Safeguarding governors complete specific safeguarding training to support their role as detailed in the Safeguarding Children Training Audit. They ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures (including filtering and

monitoring) in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

As the Chair of Governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse against the Headteacher, they should access training in managing allegations.

**Volunteers** - will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

## SECTION 2: RECOGNISING ABUSE

### 2.1 CHILD ABUSE.

**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 who know 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 by another child/children. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse.

In relation to children safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's 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.

There are four types of child abuse as defined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023':

- **Physical Abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/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** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **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 such as assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as kissing, rubbing, touching outside clothing. It 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by any gender or age.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. It may include a parent/carer purposefully failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter. A parent/carer failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers), and ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect, and that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL.

Staff have a real impact in supporting young people to disclose when they have suffered some form of abuse. Forming trusted relationships and being able to recognise and manage a disclosure is vitally important. We recognise that opening up about something traumatic takes an incredible amount of strength and a lot of trust. It is important that all staff remind children that they are in a safe space and that there is support available for them if they need to talk about anything. This reassurance can often be the thing that makes them feel safe enough to open up. Mundella has three Trauma Informed practitioners who offer support to pupils, training and guidance to staff and support to families.

Mundella Primary School takes seriously its duty of pastoral care and is proactive in seeking to prevent children becoming the victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

It does this in a number of ways:

- Through the creation of an open culture which respects all individuals' rights and discourages bullying and discrimination of all kinds
- By identifying members of staff who have overall responsibility for Child Protection matters
- By informing children of their rights to be free from harm and encouraging them to talk to school staff if they have any concerns
- By providing an on-going programme of support through the curriculum at an age appropriate level, to promote self-esteem and social inclusion, and to address the issue of child protection in the wider context of safeguarding.

All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSL(s), need to be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms).

Bullying and forms of bullying on- and off-line including prejudice based and cyber bullying is also abusive and will include at least one or more of the defined categories of abuse above. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

**Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. ANYONE CAN MAKE A REFERRAL but the DSL must be informed immediately.**

## 2.2 PHYSICAL ABUSE

Most children will collect cuts and bruises and injuries, and these should always be interpreted in the context of the child's medical / social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given; these can often be visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home.

## 2.3 EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify as there are often no outward physical signs. Indications may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, however, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Anxious behaviour
- Unusual aggression/ change in emotional presentation
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.

## 2.4 SEXUAL ABUSE

It is recognised that there is underreporting of sexual abuse within the family. All staff and volunteers play a crucial role in identifying / reporting any concerns that they may have through, for example, the observation and play of younger children and understanding the indicators of behaviour in older children which may be underlining of such abuse.

All staff and volunteers should be aware that adults, who may be men, women or other children, who use children to meet their own sexual, needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages. Indications of sexual abuse may be physical or from the child's behaviour. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Eating problems such as overeating or restrictive eating

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting



- Stomach pains
  - Discomfort when walking or sitting down
  - Pregnancy
- 
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
  - Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
  - Substance or drug abuse
  - Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
  - Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
  - Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

## 2.5 NEGLECT

It can be difficult to recognise neglect; however, its effects can be long term and damaging for children. Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Inappropriate or dirty clothing.
- Being constantly dirty or 'smell'.
- Losing weight, or being constantly underweight.

Neglect may be indicated by changes in behaviour which may include:

- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.
- Not having many friends.
- Complaining of being tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.

## 2.6 SEXUAL VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARRASMENT AND HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

**Sexual violence** refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE- Schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent, or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

**Sexual harassment** refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur in person, online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes.
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature \*Taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence.
- Up skirting (this is a criminal offence)- taking picture/video under clothing without consent
- Online sexual harassment. This includes:
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos – known as 'sexting'
- Sharing unwanted explicit content including images of sexual activity –human and animal
- Sexualised online bullying

- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media
- Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats

It is important that at Mundella all staff consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment if left unchallenged creates a culture that can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

It is important to differentiate between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age and that which involves any power imbalance, coercion or exploitation. This crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim.

Mundella creates opportunities to teach safeguarding /guidance regarding sexual violence and sexual harassment between children. Preventative education and a whole-school approach creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. This is supported by the school's behaviour policy and RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. This program will tackle at age-appropriate stages issues such as: healthy and respectful relationships boundaries and consent, stereotyping, prejudice and equality body confidence and self-esteem how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and how to access support, and what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.'

**Harmful sexual behaviour** - HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously. Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support. Peer-on-peer sexual abuse is a form of HSB where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development. Child-on-child sexual abuse is a form of HSB that takes place between children of any age or stage of development. To help staff identify HSB we use the Hackett Continuum. Problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) is developmentally inappropriate or socially unexpected sexualised behaviour which doesn't have an overt element of victimisation or abuse.

**'Consent'** is defined as having freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of activity but not to another, and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

## 2.7 ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is vital that children feel their concerns will be treated seriously. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Preplanning, effective training and effective policies will provide us with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports. Governing bodies should ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

Important considerations will include:

- 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 our duty and responsibilities to protect other children

- 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/are the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature, confident and well-known social standing? 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 children
- The importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or school 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. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) (and any other children involved/impacted).

### SECTION 3: SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

There are specific issues that have become critical issues in safeguarding. The school endeavours to ensure their staff, governors and volunteers are familiar with these issues.

#### 3.1 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) & CHILDREN AT RISK OF EXPLOITATION (CRE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person/male or female under the age of 18 into sexual activity for the following reasons

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

CSE may be a one-off occurrence or it may happen over time. It may also happen without the child's immediate knowledge; for example, the sharing of videos or images of them on social media by others.

Children aged 16-17 years old, who can legally consent to have sex, can still be affected by CSE. They may be coerced into sexual activities and not realise they are being exploited; for example, they may believe they are in a genuine, romantic relationship.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.

Indicators of CSE:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions           | • Children who associate with other children who have been involved in exploitation             |
| • Carrying weapons, access to or carrying unusual number of mobile phones | • Children who have older boyfriend/girlfriends   |
| • Unexplained injuries  | • Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being                                      |
| • Overly secretive  | • Children who misuse drugs/alcohol   |
| • Repeat concerns about sexual health                                     | • Children who truant   |
| • Association in gangs/ Engagement in offending                           | • Children who go missing from school or don't take part in education/ disengage from education |

All suspected or actual cases of CSE/CRE are a safeguarding concern in which child protection procedures will be followed; this will include a referral to Social Care - 0114 2734491 and the police. If any staff are concerned about a pupil, they should refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s within the school.

### 3.2 CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE) INCLUDING COUNTY LINES

Children are put in danger by criminals who are taking advantage of how innocent and inexperienced they are. Any child can be exploited, no matter their background.

Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. This can include those involved in serious violent crime. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

For the purposes of this policy, "child criminal exploitation" is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Signs which may indicate criminal exploitation:

- Persistently absent or missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones or unexplained injuries
- Excessive receipt of texts /phone calls
- Relationships with controlling /older individuals or groups or changes in relationships
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault /unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

More specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines include:

- Absent from school and going missing - subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owing a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

If there are concerns that a child in school may be being criminally exploited, staff must follow school's safeguarding procedures and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should refer to Social Care - 0114 2734491 and police. CSE and

CCE have joined with The Missing Young Persons Team to provide a multi-agency task force called the AMBER PROJECT. This service aims to provide support to all child exploitation cases. The screening tool is available via SSC website and should be completed before referral to social care.

### 3.3 CARRYING KNIVES/OFFENSIVE WEAPONS, GANG CULTURE AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Children bringing and carrying a knife/offensive weapon onto Mundella's premises is a criminal offence and immediate action could be taken by calling the police. The guidance on 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation for Head teachers, schools and Governors, January 2018' will be consulted and we will consider and may apply the disciplinary procedure.

If a member of staff suspects a pupil/student being involved in gang culture, this is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the DSL who will seek advice from agencies and professionals including reference to the safeguarding procedures as outlined by the local authority.

If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

### 3.4 THE SENDING OF INDECENT IMAGES THROUGH DIGITAL MEDIA DEVICES

In the event of such a safeguarding concern, we may seek advice from agencies and professionals. We will respond by working closely with parents and carers. We will teach children about this aspect of safeguarding through online safety lessons. These are linked to our RHSE, Online Safety policies and PSHE curriculum.

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

**The DSL will consider:**

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

**The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:**

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)

- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL and other members of staff as appropriate may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

\*Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive.

**Further review by the DSL** - If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate). If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

**Informing parents/carers** - The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

**Referring to the police** - If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done 101.

**Curriculum coverage** - Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

**Reporting systems for our pupils** - Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Build relationships with pupils to develop trust, use worry boxes and offer support via the pastoral team
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted in class discussions and assemblies
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

### 3.5 ONLINE SAFETY INCLUDING FILTERS AND MONITORING

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors – Smoothwall monitor all online activity daily and designated staff are responsible for following up reports of inappropriate use
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and personal devices for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

#### The 4 key categories of risk

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as 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



To meet our aims and address the risks above we will educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone / personal devices and cameras.
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety

### 3.6 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) AND SO-CALLED 'HONOUR-BASED' ABUSE (HBA)

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs". FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

**Any teacher** who either:

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

Must immediately report this to the police, personally, by calling 101. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

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

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

**Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures. NSPCC helpline 08088005000.

Signs may include:

- Being repeatedly absent from school or absent for a prolonged period
- Not participating in Physical Education
- Unauthorised and or extended leave, vague explanations or plans for removal of a female in a high-risk category (parents from a country who are known to practice FGM) especially over the summer period
- Plans to take a holiday which may be unauthorised, unexplained or extended in a country known to practice FGM
- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable



- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating, or having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
  - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
  - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
  - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
  - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it
  - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

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

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

## **Forced Marriage**

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

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they should speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will: speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place, activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the **Sheffield safeguarding hub 0114 2734855**, the local authority's designated officer or seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk), refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, class teacher, learning mentor, or member of the leadership team as appropriate.

In February 2023 it became 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.' Marriage under the age of 18 is illegal, even if parents and child consent.

### 3.7 CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- 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 nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Up skirting, 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)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don’t want to receive such content.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

#### **Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse where the allegation raises safeguarding concerns:**

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL may contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)
- The DSL may contact support services if agreed with parent/carers/child

- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator.

### **Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse**

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents. To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils know who and how they can share concerns in school
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL/Headteacher will take the lead role in any sanction of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as imposing any sanction.

Sanctions can in place while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or LA children’s social care to determine this
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

Incidents are recorded on CPOMS and monitored by DSL/DSD and reported on to the governing body.

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

### 3.8 MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

It is acknowledged that poor parental and/or child mental health can have a significant impact on the development and attainment of the child. It is important that staff understand that children's vulnerabilities related to mental health may mean that they could be more likely to be impacted by other safeguarding concerns. When making referrals, the child's mental health should be shared.

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. Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern for a child speak to the DSL to agree on a course of action. There are a range of support mechanisms in the school to support students with their mental health. Significant concerns will be referred to their GP or directly to CAMHS.

Staff understand the lasting impact of abuse, neglect and ACEs and the impact on a child's mental health. Staff are aware how mental health can impact behaviour, attendance and progress in school.

More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in schools' guidance:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

### 3.9 CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, physical health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become absent/missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions to prevent the risks of missing education in the future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority when applicable when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Mundella Primary school will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

Mundella Primary School will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

All cases of children and young people missing education or at risk of doing so should be reported to the CME Officer  
**Contact:** Children Missing from Education Team Level 5 West Wing, Moorfoot, S1 4PL Tel: 0114 2736462

### 3.10 PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children.
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Difficulties regarding cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

We are mindful of these additional challenges, and where required, will provide extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities. Staff need to be aware of the additional challenges faced by those with SEN or disabilities.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will involve close liaison with the DSL and the SENDCO. We will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

### 3.11 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 intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This definition includes 'honour' based violence and forced marriage.

Domestic abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

Psychological, Physical, sexual, Emotional and Financial which can impact on children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse- Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. A child does not have to witness Domestic Violence to be adversely affected by it as living in a home where abuse is heard can create an environment which is toxic. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships (teenage relationship abuse) as well as in the context of their home life.

Indicators of Domestic Abuse:

- 'Controlling' behaviour - making a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them for personal gain, depriving them of independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour
- 'Coercive' behaviour - assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim
- Psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional forms of abuse; stalking and harassment.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, it is likely that 'Operation Encompass' will contact the school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

(Operation Encompass is a project that runs jointly between schools, The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and South Yorkshire Police). This service will also report if a child goes missing from home. Staff are aware of the impact of DA on children and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedure should a concern arise.

### 3.12 HOMELESSNESS

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

### 3.13 RADICALISATION, EXTREMISM AND PREVENT DUTIES

Extremism refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

If you have a concern about extremism: If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL. In their absence speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to children's social care directly, if appropriate. Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#) (consent required from the child), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

Factors making students susceptible to radicalisation include:

- Pressure from peers & others or the internet
- Personal or political grievances
- Experienced race or hate crime against them or involvement in crime
- Anti-social behaviour and bullying
- Lack of self-esteem or identity

### 3.14 LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- We have appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

Sheffield Virtual School Team - Head of Virtual School - Telephone: 0114 273 4452

### 3.15 CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON AND PART OF THE COURT SYSTEM

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. A guide for 5-11-year olds explains each step of the process and the support and special measures that are available. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families, including for the children involved. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service.

### 3.16 PARENTAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Parents/carers with a dependency on alcohol and/or drugs can negatively impact children's physical and emotional wellbeing, their development and their safety. The impacts on children include:

- physical maltreatment and neglect
- poor physical and mental health
- development of health harming behaviours in later life, for example using alcohol and drugs and at an early age, which predicts more entrenched future use
- poor school attendance due to inappropriate caring responsibilities
- low educational attainment
- involvement in antisocial or criminal behaviour

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will make a referral to children's social care.

### 3.17 NON-COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

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

- A check will be made for information about changes to the normal collection routines
- Reasonable attempts will be made to contact: parents, carers or others with parental responsibility at home or at work or other adults authorised to collect the child or young person from the setting
- The child or young person will not leave the premises with anyone other than parents, carers, others with parental responsibility or another authorised person
- If no-one can be contacted to collect the child or vulnerable young person after one hour, the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub or Police will be contacted
- The child or young person will stay at the setting in the care of two staff members (where possible) until safely collected either by the parent, carer, a person with parental responsibility, other authorised person, social worker or police officer
- Staff should never take the child or young person home with them or provide a lift to them in their own car etc. unless authority has been given by the child's parent/carer and appropriate vehicle insurance is in place

A full written report of the incident and outcome must be recorded on CPOMS.

### 3.18 CHILDREN WHO ARE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL OR TRANS (LBGT+)

We recognise that the experience of children who are LGBT+ can be complex and they require additional support from school to ensure they are safe. 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. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory curriculum and we reference this throughout our RSE and PSHE curriculum.

### 3.19 OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS- Home educated/ Young carers/ Privately fostered/ Children with Social workers

**Home Educated Children** can be more vulnerable than other children. The school has a responsibility to those who are thinking about or who are about to home educate, including those who have been removed from the school roll with a view to home educate.

**Young carers** can be more vulnerable or placed at risk. It is important to identify young carers and ensure they are supported to help reach their potential with an understanding that the school will need to refer into early help social care services for an assessment of their needs and to Sheffield Young Carers if the child agrees.

**Private fostering** occurs when a child is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. The schools have a duty to notify the local authority via the Safeguarding Hub if it is thought or known that a child or young person may be Privately Fostered or subject to a host family arrangement which is unclear or ambiguous.

**Children with Social Workers** may be vulnerable and be educationally disadvantaged in attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Local authorities routinely share the fact a child has a social worker with school. DSL to hold this information and share with the appropriate staff to ensure the child's needs are met.

## SECTION 4 - CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We aim to create an environment in which:

- All staff, including governors and volunteers, feel able to raise concerns and are being supported in their safeguarding role.
- The buildings, including its surroundings, are safe and somewhere where children can feel safe
- Parents/carers know about our principles on safeguarding
- There are clear protocols on reception for visitors and contractors with procedures in place to ensure the appropriate questions are asked and checks made.

### 3.1 CHECKING THE IDENTITY AND SUITABILITY OF VISITORS

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff. If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting beyond the school office. Visitors should be ready to produce identification. Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and MAST, will be asked to show photo ID and will be asked to confirm their DBS clearance; or the organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be asked to provide photo ID and will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

### 3.2 USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ EX. CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Should the school hire/rent out the school facilities or premises to organisations or individuals it will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to keep pupils safe.

Activities which are supervised directly by school staff – usual safeguarding practice is observed. Where activities are provided by separate services- Mundella will seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child



protection policies and procedures in place. The school should ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement.

Extracurricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies will work in collaboration with school to safeguard children. Any allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school site to deliver activities for children, will be managed in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities/ clubs need to be aware of their safeguarding responsibility.

## SECTION 5: SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- A planned programme of relationships includes sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly.

### 5.1 ALL STAFF WILL:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with children/parents.
- Provide a safe space for pupils to speak out and share their concerns
- Share information in line with the data protection act and GDPR, across our safeguarding partners- key to the successful implementation of this policy. DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.'

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy, the behaviour policy, Online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

## 5.2 THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Will Smith – Headteacher. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online. During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. When the DSL is absent, the deputy– Lisa Hewitt – will act as cover. If the DSL and deputy are not available, Emma Hardaker is trained to advanced level, she will support Hannah Woodward – Deputy Headteacher will act as cover. Contact details are available in appendix A

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school.
- Ensure that roles and responsibilities to manage monitoring and filtering are allocated.
- Review filtering and monitoring at least annually
- Ensure devices are not unreasonably blocked which could impact negatively on teaching and learning.
- Ensure effective monitoring of alerts via Smoothwall and respond to safeguard pupils

## 5.3 THE GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL

Make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
- The leadership team and staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, SLT manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, contractors and users). Appendix B of this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate

- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

#### 5.4 THE HEADTEACHER

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

#### 5.5 VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADS

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, SENCOs, social workers, mental health leads and others.

### SECTION 6: SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES

If a child makes a disclosure to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation on CPOMS as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process

Bear in mind that some children may:

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

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

#### 6.1 EARLY HELP

The school will deliver its responsibilities for identifying and acting on early help needs, safeguarding and child protection in line with this policy and policies and procedures identified by the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership.

All staff, including governors and volunteers should be aware of 'Early Help' and the need to provide support as soon as a problem emerges. This means identifying emerging needs through observation and connection with child and carer.

For this to be effective, all agencies are required to work together to:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from support
- Undertake an assessment of need
- Provide services to address those needs
- Review progress to ensure that positive change has happened

If an early help assessment is appropriate, staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

The DSL will keep the case under review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving.

Children who are most at risk are those who:

- Are disabled and have specific additional needs.
- Have special educational needs.
- Are a young carer.
- Are privately fostered.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are showing signs of engaging in antisocial or criminal behaviour.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, and domestic violence.
- Are showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- Are showing signs of displaying behaviour or views that are considered to be extreme.
- Are misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Are not attending school or are at risk of exclusion from school.
- Frequently go missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, exploitation, radicalised.

## 6.2 REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Where welfare and safeguarding concerns are identified e.g. as a child having an injury or has made a disclosure of sexual abuse, this is a child protection concern and safeguarding procedures must be followed. Any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child, should be reported to the DSL/DSD as soon as possible. The DSL/DSD will act upon the information received. It should be noted that anyone can make a referral into social care.

When there are concerns for a child, and if the school is aware that the case is open to the Multi-Agency Team, they should discuss whether to request escalation to Children's Social Care. If the child does not at that time have a lead professional or allocated social worker then the appropriate numbers to contact can be found in the safeguarding file.

We will ensure we have spoken to the family about our concerns and proposed actions unless to do so would place the child at significant risk (imminent danger because of a disclosure made); the decision not to inform parents/carers should be justified and the details recorded. If a child makes a disclosure or presents with an injury of concern, it is imperative that advice is sought immediately prior to the child returning home and as soon as the school becomes aware of this.

Essential information for making a referral includes:

- Full names and dates of birth for the child and other members of the family
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the parents/ carers, including mobile
- Whereabouts of the child (and siblings)
- Details of the concern – description of injuries/circumstances which are causing concern, details of any explanation or comment from the child or carer.
- Detailed information to support the belief that abuse has occurred.
- Any background/ contextual information
- The details of the person making the referral
- Special needs of the child, including need for an accredited interpreter etc.

- A clear indication of the family's knowledge of the referral and whether they have consented to the sharing of confidential information

Other information that may be essential:

- Previous addresses and addresses of wider family members
- Schools and nurseries attended by the child and others in the household
- Name, address & phone number of GP/Midwife/Health Visitor/School Nurse
- Hospital ward/consultant/Named nurse and dates of admission/discharge
- Details of other children who may be in contact with the alleged abuser
- Details of other practitioners involved with the family
- Child's legal status and anyone not already mentioned who has parental responsibility
- History of previous concerns and any previous CAF or Initial Assessments completed
- Any other information that is likely to impact on the undertaking of an assessment or Section 47 Enquiry.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded. If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

### 6.3 RECORDS

**CPOMS:** Mundella uses CPOMS to record safeguarding concerns. This is an online tool that can only be accessed through username and password. The DSL, DSD and the pastoral team have full access to CPOMS. All other staff are able to add incidents/actions. Training will support the use of accurate recording of safeguarding concerns. All concerns about a child will be recorded on CPOMS and records kept in accordance with the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Records and documents will be stored as private and confidential records but allow access to key staff in a role to safeguard children at Mundella.

Records must be comprehensive and factual. Staff should give dates and times to all records, including the date and time information was obtained and the date and time of writing the record. Include the nature of any concerns, what gave rise to them, any action taken and the extent and nature of any involvement by others. If a disclosure is made staff must thoroughly record the content of the disclosure and any responses made. Names of those involved in any concern should be written in full.

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL/DSD.

Records should also include: details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

CPOMS is a secure computerised system of Child Protection records. Staff must ensure they protect their passwords and ensure the programme is logged off when not in use to ensure confidentiality. Reports on CPOMS should be accurate and follow the guidelines above.

We will not destroy any child protection/welfare records including records which hold information on allegations against staff and any other person working in the school or connected to the school.

**Record transfer:** Where children leave the school, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school 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 to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead will ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

**DPA and UK GDPR:** do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. **Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.**

- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: 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

## **APPENDIX A: SAFER RECRUITMENT**

### **Recruitment and selection process**

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

#### **Advertising**

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

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

#### **Application forms**

Our application forms will:

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

#### **Shortlisting**

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

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- We will inform all shortlisted candidates that we may carry out online searches to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online as part of due diligence checks.

#### **Seeking references and checking employment history**

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

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the Headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

#### **Interview and selection**

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this

- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

### **Pre-appointment vetting checks**

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

### **New staff**

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK.

These could include, where available:

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

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

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

### **Existing staff**

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

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more
- We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or



- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

### **Agency and third-party staff**

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

### **Contractors**

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

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

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

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

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

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

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

### **Trainee/student teachers**

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

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

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

### **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of

the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

### **Governors**

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

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

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

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)).
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

All governors will also have the following checks:

- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

### **Staff working in alternative provision settings**

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

### **Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

## APPENDIX B: DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, CONTRACTORS AND THOSE HIRING THE SCHOOL

The School will adhere to the procedures set out under 'Allegations against Persons who work with Children (including Staff, Carers and Volunteers)' (allegations of abuse by teachers and other staff). This document can be found on the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership website.

If a member of staff has concerns about another member of staff (including supply staff or temporary staff), this should be referred to the Headteacher. Where there are concerns about the Headteacher this will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

Low level concerns - at Mundella the Headteacher is also the DSL. He should be informed of all low-level concerns. (Unless they are in regard to him) KCSIE 2023 guidance clarifies that concerns which are shared about supply staff, contractors or those hiring the school for running an activity for children will be managed following the Mundella safeguarding policy including informing the LADO.

### **Allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO). We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

### **Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved**

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative. Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work.
- If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

### **Definitions for outcomes 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, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation

**False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

**Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

**Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

### **Procedure for dealing with allegations**

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

#### **Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff**

- If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.
- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)
- When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

#### **Timescales**

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal sanction, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

#### **Specific actions**

##### **Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution**

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including sanction, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

##### **Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated**

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

### **Individuals returning to work after suspension**

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this. The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

### **Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports**

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any sanction is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

### **Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations**

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any sanction is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

### **Confidentiality and information sharing**

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared?
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation

How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

### **Record-keeping**

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file). For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

All other records should be retained for at least until the accused has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

### **References**

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

## Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

## Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened. We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

**CONCERNS THAT DO NOT MEET THE HARM THRESHOLD** - This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above. Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

## Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

## Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately. We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer

- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

### **Responding to low-level concerns**

If the concern is raised via a third party, the Headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously

To the individual involved and any witnesses

The Headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff code of conduct. The Headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns.

### **Record keeping**

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken. Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school
- Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

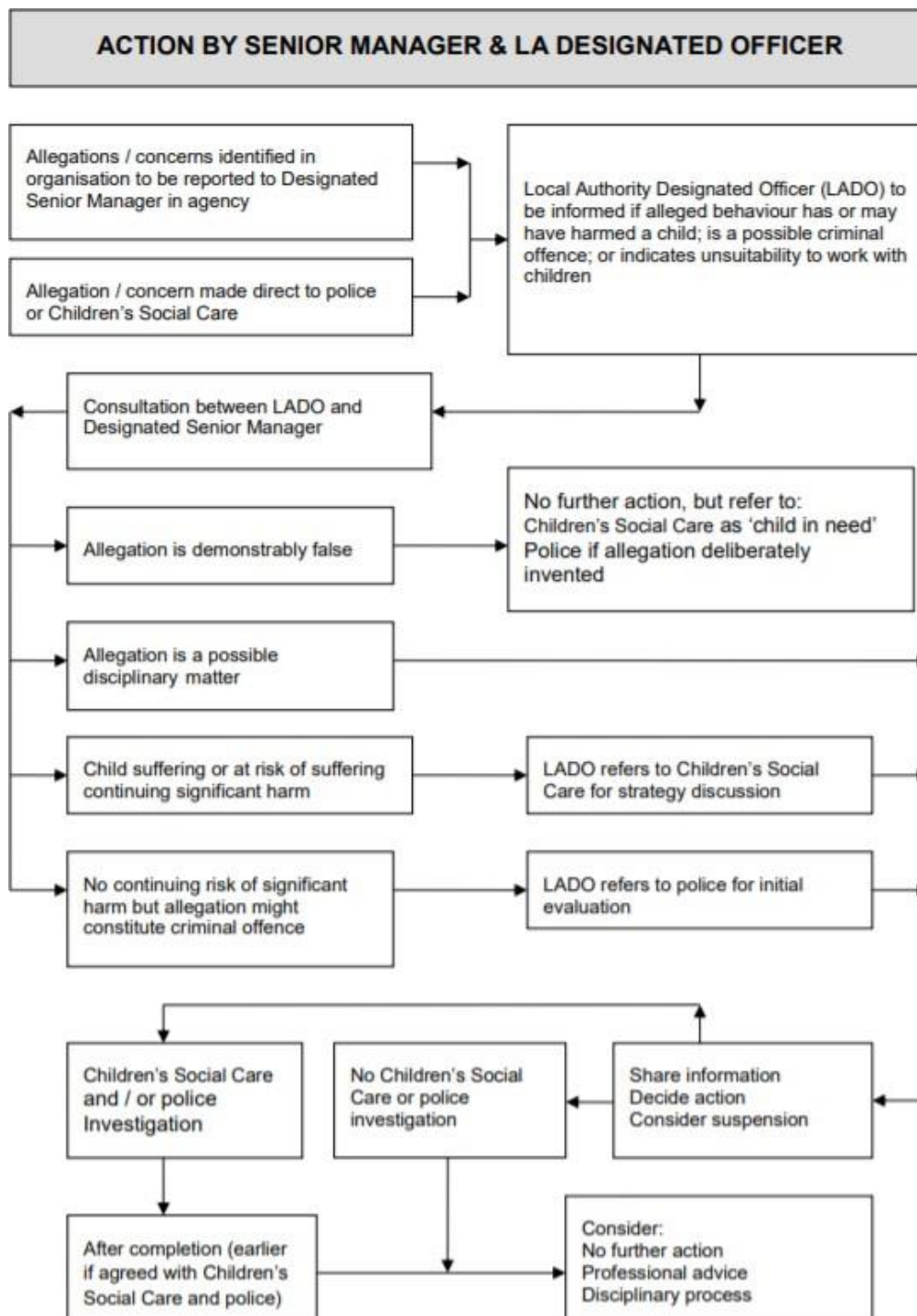
### **References**

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance



## Flow chart to support:



## APPENDIX C - SAFEGUARDING TEAM CONTACT DETAILS

### The Safeguarding Children Team in your setting includes:

**Head Teacher/:** responsible for implementing policies & procedures, allocating resources to the safeguarding team & addressing staff safeguarding concerns.

Name: Will Smith      [headteacher@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk)      Tel no: 2551348

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** teaching or pastoral staff from senior leadership team, responsible for all safeguarding issues, advising & supporting staff, liaising with the local authority & other agencies.

Name: Will Smith      Tel no: 2551348

**Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD):** a teacher, support or pastoral worker, in a post which requires assessment of children, deputises for the DSL. Not an administrative or finance worker.

Name: Lisa Hewitt      [lhewitt@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:lhewitt@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk)      Tel no: 2551348

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Lead:** support for pupils & staff to understand CSE & related topics & how to refer

Name: Roxie Godden      Tel no: 2551348

**Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo):** support for pupils with special education needs & disabilities as well as their parents & carers, staff & other agencies working with said pupils

Name: Roxie Godden      Tel no: 2551348

**Learning Mentor (or equivalent):** develops strategies & support to help pupils achieve their full potential

Name: Lisa Hewitt      Tel no: 2551348

**Looked After Children Designated Teacher:** promotes the education of 'looked after'/previously 'looked after' children

Name: Roxie Godden      Tel no: 2551348

**Online-Safety Coordinator:** develops & maintains a safe online culture within a

Name: Emma Blakemore

**Online Safety Lead:** Will Smith      Tel no: 2506865

**Attendance Champions:** addresses difficulties preventing pupils from attending      Tel no: 2551348

Name: Lisa Hewitt & Birju Kotak

**Trauma Informed Practitioners:** provides mental health support and advice to pupils

Name: Lisa Hewitt/ Emma Copeland/ Joanne Middleton/ Laura Wild      Tel no: 2551348

**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Lead:** supports staff to keep pupils up to 5 years old safe and well

Name: Kimberly Wright      Tel no: 2551348

**Medical Practitioner:** supports pupils medical needs, ill health absence, medicines & individual healthcare plans

Name: Lisa Hewitt/ Lisa Hunt/ Clare Casely / Kirstin Johnson/ Birju Kotak      Tel no: 2551348

### Your Safeguarding Children Team also links in with the:

**Safeguarding/Child Protection Governor:** ensures there are appropriate policies & procedures in place, that they are being implemented & followed, & challenges deficiencies & weaknesses that are identified.

Name: Michelle Phelan      Contact: [governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk)

Fran Lavender      Contact: [governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk)

**Chair of Governors/Management Committee:** leads on safe recruitment & allegations of abuse against Head Teacher/Principal/Senior Manager & other staff & liaises with Local Authority

Name: Paul Hirst      Contact: [governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk)

**SENDCo Governor:** link between the SEND Co-ordinator (SENDCO) and the governing body/management committee

Name: Rachel Stammers      Contact: [governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:governors@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk)

## APPENDIX D -LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

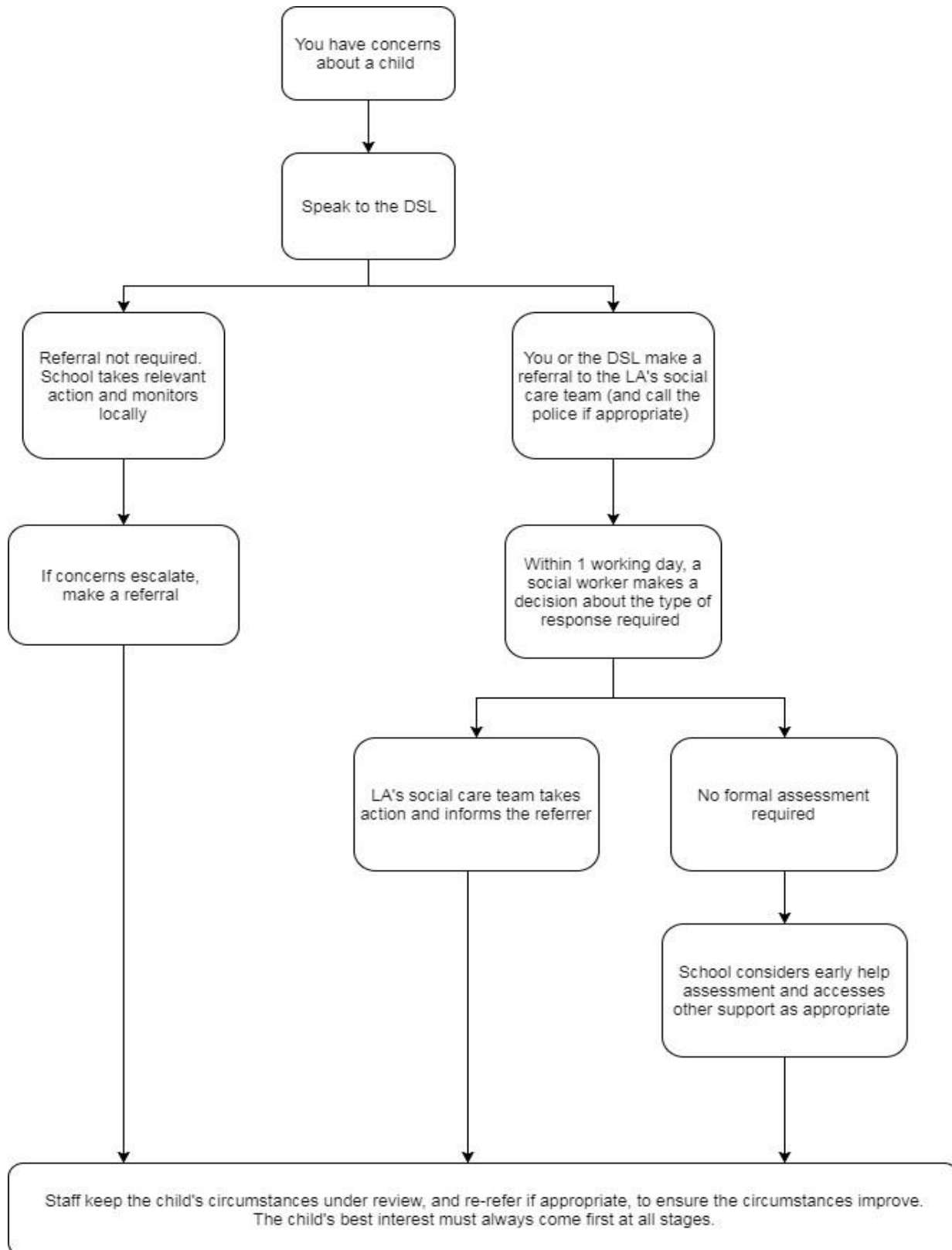
This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter
- -Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and Headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

## APPENDIX E -PROCEDURE IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S WELFARE

(As opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)



If you feel that concerns raised have not been adequately addressed, staff should discuss this with DSL/ DSD

Anyone can make a referral to the safeguarding hub – 0114 2734855