



Pilgrims School

Safeguarding Children Policy

October 2023


Next review date: October 2024

Please note: 'School' refers to Early Years Foundation Stage (Little Pilgrims, Kindergarten and Pre School) and Pilgrims Main School.

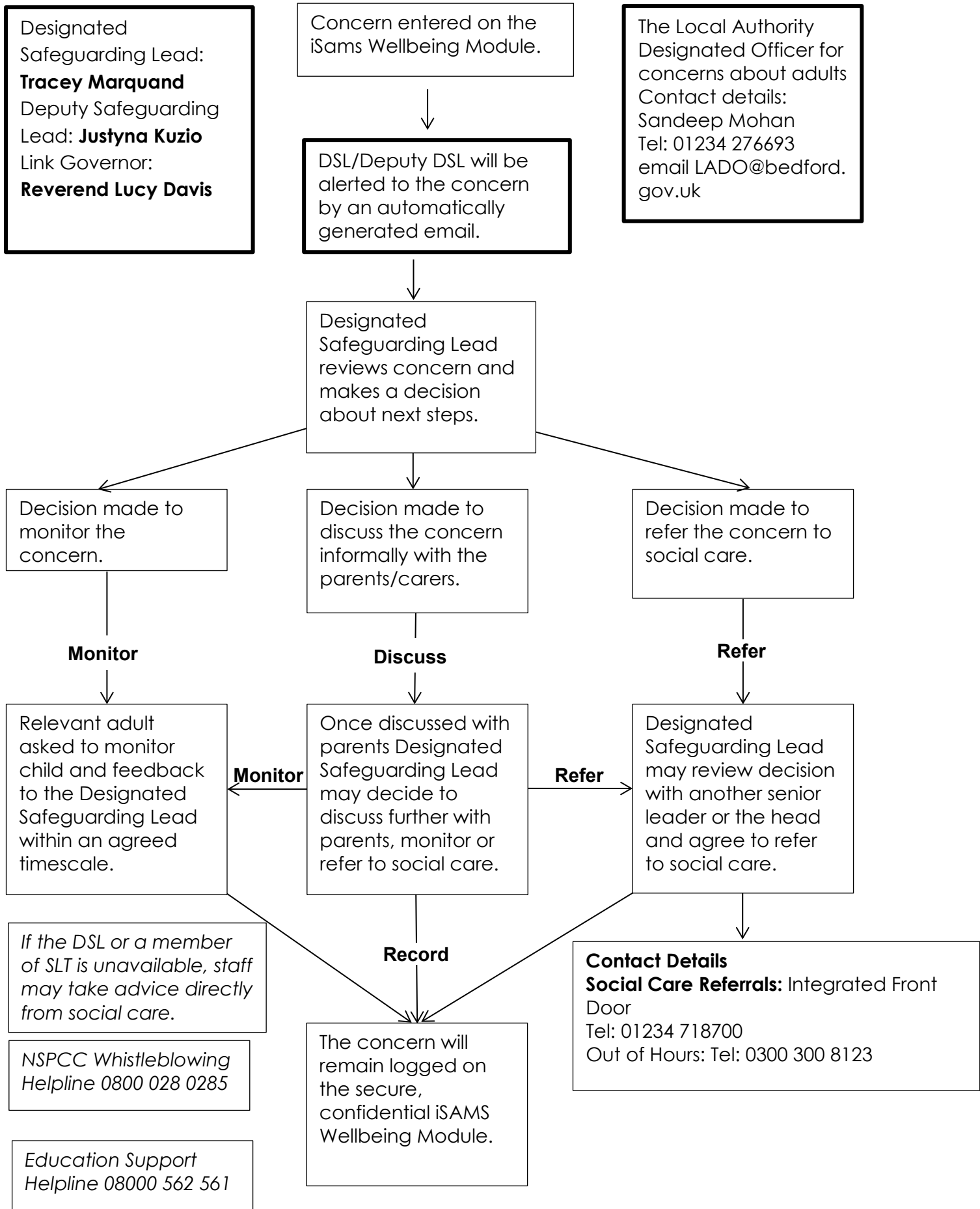


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Reviewed annually, date last reviewed	October 2023
Signed by Chair of Governors	

FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



Please note: 'School' refers to Early Years Foundation Stage (Little Pilgrims, Kindergarten and Pre School) and Pilgrims Main School.

1. Introduction and Ethos

- Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School is a community and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, governors, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Our school acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as¹:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection refers to the procedures and support given to those children who have experienced abuse in their lives.

- This policy provides all members of staff, volunteers, governors and families/carers with a clear and secure framework for ensuring that all children in the school are protected from harm, both while at school and when away from the school premises.
- We recognise that we should 'think the unthinkable' and be aware that serious safeguarding issues can arise in any school including ours. We will always act in the best interests of the child.
- We recognise the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to be safe and feel safe. This is underpinned by our school values of kindness, curiosity and respect. In our school children are respected and encouraged to talk openly if they are worried or concerned about something. All staff will reassure children that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- We understand that emotional and social aspects of learning create a foundation for all learning. If a child has not been supported to understand, express and resolve their feelings, they may not have the ability to share with other children, resolve the small conflicts that arise in day-to-day classroom life, or concentrate on learning. Their frustrations may cause a range of antisocial, disruptive, overly compliant or withdrawn behaviours.
- Our school ensures that safeguarding and child protection is at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Our school is committed to embedding and promoting a whole school approach to emotional health, wellbeing and resilience.

¹ (Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) paragraph 4)

2. Aims

In order to ensure children are protected, we will ensure that:

- All staff, regular volunteers* and governors are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures which include enhanced DBS checks.
 - * For the purpose of assessing whether a person is working in regulated activity, 'regular' includes 'frequent' and these are defined together as follows:
 - Frequently (once a week or more often)
 - Or on 4 or more days in a 30 day period
- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL who undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role at least once every two years. In addition to their formal training, their knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake Prevent awareness training and will cascade to all staff.
- All staff and governors are trained in basic Child Protection awareness every three years but regular (at least annually) safeguarding learning and development takes place for all staff and governors.
- All staff, volunteers and governors have read and understand the Safeguarding Children Policy and are aware of the indicators of child abuse and how to respond to concerns or disclosures of abuse by children.
- Staff are aware that when recognising abuse in pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, additional barriers can exist.
- The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its pupils. (Contextual Safeguarding).
- All staff, regular volunteers and governors have read Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', current guidance and all staff that work directly with children have read Annex B which has important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. It is important for all governors to read the whole document (not just Part 1, especially as Management of Safeguarding is in a different section) and also to be aware of the changes each year to inform your conversations with DSLs and other senior leaders.
- We have a designated co-ordinator who is responsible for children's pastoral care and SEND which includes behaviour, wellbeing and any additional identified provision. They will liaise with other professionals and agencies where appropriate.
- Our parents are aware of the Safeguarding Policy and the policy is published on the school's website.
- Children feel listened to, valued and respected and are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. We are sensitive to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it from trustworthy, reliable sources. As well as being covered in curriculum areas e.g. Science, where we cover topics such as medicines, lifecycles, feelings, emotions, health, growing and changing, safety and the environment, we deliver safeguarding teaching through:
 - Weekly PSHCEE lessons, including online safety, which have been planned using the DfE guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' and the framework 'Education for a Connected World – 2020 edition' from UKCIS (the UK Council for Internet Safety). These are taught discretely from Reception to Year 2. They cover relevant topics in an age and stage appropriate way, enabling pupils to learn about their rights and responsibilities to behave and stay safe in a variety of contexts on and offline. Discussions about personal safety and keeping safe reinforce the message that any

kind of violence is unacceptable, let children know that it is acceptable to talk about their own problems, and signpost sources of help.

- Assemblies including the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe programme, and other Health and Safety hazards such as Road Awareness.
- A half-termly focus on the NSPCC PANTS (underwear rule) to educate about appropriate and inappropriate touch and to promote talking to a 'trusted or safe adult'.
- An emotional resilience programme which equips children with the skills to manage their feelings and emotions. As part of this programme children are encouraged to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate responses and articulate when they do not feel safe through regular Kipsy Caterpillar 'feelings' sessions. Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Talk Time where children have the opportunity to share their feelings with a designated member of staff.
- School Council Meetings and feedback.
- Lessons planned to reinforce specific events such as Internet Safety Day.
- Our school provides adequate filtering systems to keep children safe when accessing the internet at school and online safety is reinforced within our discrete ICT curriculum.
- The school ensures adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of the children and the layout of the rooms allow for constant supervision. Where a child may need to spend time away from the rest of the group they are always in sight of an adult.
- We have developed and implemented an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- We have a designated governor for safeguarding.
- The safeguarding children policy is reviewed at least annually by the DSL and the governing body and as necessary in line with updated guidance.
- At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board Interagency Child Protection Procedures.
- Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with Bedford Borough Safeguarding Board thresholds.
- All staff are clear as to the information they can share with colleagues and/or partners including information about parents. Information is recorded and stored professionally and securely.
- Access to information should be on a need to know basis and decided case by case.
- Confidentiality is respected as far as possible, but the child's welfare is paramount.
- We use our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- We create and maintain an anti-bullying environment and ensure that we have a policy and procedures to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- We have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- We provide a safe physical environment for our children, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from school or who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. The Head Teacher will regularly liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to discuss all persistently absent pupils and those who go missing to identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to ensure that appropriate safeguarding responses have been put in place to reduce the risk of future harm.
- We will provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified. These may include if a child:
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs;
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);

- has an emotional wellbeing and/or mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

3. Legal Framework

Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies of independent schools to make the necessary arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, all independent schools are required to co-operate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.

Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the Local Safeguarding Children Board can require a school or further education institution to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.

3.1 This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, July 2018:
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2023

3.2 This policy should be understood alongside school policies and procedures on related safeguarding issues including our:

- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour and Assertive Discipline
- Attendance
- Care and Supervision
- Collection of Children
- Data Protection
- Equal Opportunities
- Online-Safety Policy

- EYFS Supervision Risk Assessment
- Promoting Fundamental British Values
- Harpur Trust Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Induction Policy and Process
- Intimate Care
- Out of Hours Care
- PSHCEE
- Safer Recruitment
- SEND
- RSHE
- Pilgrims Code of Conduct
- Harpur Trust Disciplinary
- Harpur Trust Whistleblowing
- Administration of medicines /Supporting children with medical conditions

4. Safeguarding Issues

4.1 The school acknowledges that this policy recognises a range of specific safeguarding issues including (but not limited to)²:

- Neglect.
- Physical, sexual or emotional abuse.
- Bullying including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying.
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse.
- Gender based violence /violence against women and girls.
- Child on Child abuse.
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour.
- Child sexual exploitation and trafficking.
- Child criminal exploitation and county lines.
- The impact of new technology on sexual behaviour for example sending nude photographs and accessing pornography.
- Substance misuse.
- Domestic abuse.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.
- Fabricated or induced illness.
- Poor parenting.
- Homelessness.
- Honour-based abuse.
- Online including grooming via social networking, online gaming and messaging.
- Any other issues that pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

4.2 Safeguarding also relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- Children's health and safety and well-being, including their mental health.
- Meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The use of reasonable force.
- Meeting the needs of children and young people with medical conditions.
- Providing first aid.
- Educational visits.

² (Also see Annex B within 'Keeping children safe in education' 2023)

- Intimate care and emotional well-being.
- Online safety and associated issues.
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and young people's security, taking into account the local context.

4.3 Areas of Particular Safeguarding Risks for Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School include:

- Personal/Intimate care due to age of children.
- Changing for PE and swimming.
- 1:1 working including tennis lessons, SEND sessions and music lessons.
- Overnight residential stay for Year 2.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our school to ensure that they carry out the requirements of the policy and, at all times work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the pupils in this school. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

5.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Named DSL: Mrs Tracey Marquand

Deputy DSL: Miss Justyna Kuzio

We have a deputy safeguarding lead to ensure that there is always appropriate cover for this role. In the rare event when no DSL is on site another senior member of staff from the leadership team (SLT) would take responsibility for dealing with any urgent safeguarding concerns. A list of the SLT contact details are in the office. Photographs of the DSL and Deputy DSL are displayed in the staff rooms in Little Pilgrims and main school and strategic areas of the school for parents. The responsibilities of all Designated Safeguarding Leads are described in detail in **Appendix A**.

- The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and their role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (and the deputies) will be explicit in their job description. The DSL takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) and this overall responsibility cannot be delegated.
- The DSL has the appropriate authority and is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and safeguarding matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
- Our Deputy DSL is trained to the same level as the DSL and will undertake this role operationally with direct oversight and management from the DSL.

5.2 All staff members

- All staff, regular volunteers and governors who work with/have contact with our children will have appropriate checks carried out to ensure they are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.
- All new staff, regular volunteers and governors are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy which includes the role of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies, the staff code of conduct, the behaviour policy, the Online-Safety Policy and the school's safeguarding response for those pupils who are absent from school.
- Every new member of staff or regular volunteer will receive training during their induction period. This programme will include information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, how to manage a disclosure from a child (including reassuring the child that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe), how to record, the processes for referral to Children Services and the statutory assessments under Section 17 and Section 47 as well as whistleblowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children. Staff will also receive on-line safeguarding training as this is part of the overarching safeguarding approach of our school.
- All staff must have read the following documentation:
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) (Part One); and school leaders and staff that work directly with children should also read Annex B.
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Safeguarding Children Policy
 - Anti Bullying Policy
 - Behaviour and Assertive Discipline Policy
 - School leaders and staff that work directly with children must also read the Attendance Policy
 - Online-Safety Policy
 - All staff are required to complete the most recent iHASCO training for KCSIE annually.
- Education staff play a crucial role in helping to identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. All staff should be aware of the guidance issued by the Safeguarding Children Partnerships within the Threshold of Need Guide in order to secure support and intervention for children at the earliest possible opportunity in the least intrusive way. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.
- If early help and or other support is appropriate the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving.
- All staff must promote a positive safeguarding culture for example by challenging anyone on the premises who cannot be identified by a visitor or staff lanyard or badge.
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that all safeguarding concerns, both minor and serious, are reported to the DSL as soon as reasonably possible. Staff should be aware that the DSL may have other information regarding a child or their family of which they may not be aware. Minor concerns may take on greater significance within the wider context of knowledge of a child or family that the DSL may have. It should be remembered that sometimes children will not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful but this shouldn't stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL.
- All staff members are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and always act in the best interests of the child.
- All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- If staff members have concerns about another staff member including the DSL, then this should be referred to the Headteacher or in her absence the Chair of Governors (Mrs Sarah Wheeler)

who will then alert the Chief Executive of the Harpur Trust and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose details can be found at the end of this policy. If staff members have a concern about the Headteacher this should be referred to the Chair of Governors. This must be carried out within one working day. Early Years registered settings such as ours must notify OFSTED immediately.

- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team.
- All staff must promote Fundamental British Values as part of The Prevent Duty.
- All staff and governors are aware of the procedures for reporting that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 or is at risk of FGM being carried out. This must be reported by law to the police and the DSL.
- Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender+ (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND.
- It is important to understand intra-familial harms and identify any necessary support for siblings following incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

5.3 Nominated Safeguarding Governor

Governor responsible for Safeguarding: Reverend Lucy Davis

The Governing Body must have regard to the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2023 to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the school are effective and fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day practice and comply with the law at all times. They will promote a positive safeguarding culture with an attitude of 'it can happen here'. A full description of the responsibilities can be found in the Harpur Trust Safeguarding Policy 2023. Members of the Governing Body must also take part in mandatory safeguarding training to ensure that they can 'assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective.' This training is regularly updated. (see KCSIE (2023), paragraph 81.) Although our Governing Body takes collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils, we also have a named person who champions safeguarding within the school.

The role of the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding includes ensuring:

- A senior member of staff from the leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that there is at least one deputy DSL who is appropriately trained to deal with any issues in the absence of the DSL.
- Training for the DSL takes place every two years and that the DSL is kept abreast of developments and changes in law.
- That sufficient time and resources are allocated to the DSL to carry out their role effectively.
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy, the staff code of conduct, the behaviour policy, the Online-Safety Policy and the school's safeguarding response for those pupils who are absent from education.
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of KCSIE 2023.
- All staff undertake appropriate child protection training that is updated annually and online safety training.
- The Single Central Record* is accurate and up to date with records for teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers and governors.
- Regular meetings with the DSL take place.

- The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available via our school website and has been written in line with Local Authority guidance and the requirements of the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board Interagency child protection procedures.
- The Governing Board is informed about safeguarding regularly and provided with an annual report and numbers and trends of safeguarding issues are monitored.
- The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with statutory guidance.
- Support is given to the DSL and Headteacher in preparing for Ofsted and other inspections.
- Children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The school remedies any weaknesses in regard to their safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.
- Safer recruitment and selection practice is in line with legal requirements, including the requirement for governors to have enhanced DBS checks.

* Single Central Register (SCR) All schools must have a SCR of recruitment, as recommended by the Department for Education. This is used to log all safer recruitment checks, including details of Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS).

5.4 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- A senior member of staff from the leadership team is identified to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and alternate members of staff have been identified to act in their absence to ensure that there is always cover for this role.
- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistleblowing procedures.
- They inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Chief Executive Officer of the Harpur Trust in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse in relation to allegations against a member of staff or volunteer.

5.5 Parents and Carers

- We are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.
- When children join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we need to make a referral to the Integrated Front Door.
- We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

- We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to the Integrated Front Door in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.
- In order to support our school in keeping children safe and providing appropriate care, parents/carers have a responsibility to:
 - Understand and adhere to the relevant school/policies and procedures.
 - Sign and abide by the Home/School Agreement.
 - Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the school in their safeguarding approaches.
 - Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online and seek help and support from the school, or other agencies.
 - Provide accurate and up to date contact information

6. Recognising Abuse

- A **child** is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- All staff, volunteers and governors will be made aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children/young person
- The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of **significant harm** as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children and young people and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should act to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child or young person who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

6.1 Children with additional needs

- While all children have a right to be safe, some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example children with disabilities or special educational needs or a child living with domestic abuse, parental mental ill health or substance abuse. We will ensure that staff, volunteers and governors understand that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:
 - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
 - these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
 - the potential for children and young people with SEND or certain medical needs being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
 - communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges;
 - cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so

At school our Pastoral and SEND Co-ordinator organises extra pastoral support where necessary for these children through our emotional resilience programme. Any reports of abuse involving children with these conditions will require close liaison with the DSL and Pastoral Lead.

6.2 Looked After Children and previously looked after children

- We recognise that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.
- The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Should the need arise a member of staff will be designated and provided with the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have details of a child's social worker and the name of the Virtual School head that looks after the child.
- The Governing board must ensure that a designated teacher is appointed if the need arises to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after.

7. Types of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. (KCSIE 2023 paragraph 26).

The following definitions have been taken from KCSIE 2023:

7.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

7.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development:

- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may include not giving 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. This can also occur when a child is a young carer for a parent who is disabled, has mental health problems or misuses alcohol or drugs.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another – for example where there is fighting or violence in the home.
- It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

7.3 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

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

7.4 Neglect

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

7.5 Signs and Symptoms

All staff have been trained to recognise symptoms and signs of abuse and neglect and some examples are included here:

Physical Abuse: antisocial behaviour, finger marked bruising, withdrawn, low weight, anxiety

Emotional Abuse: withdrawn, anxiety, lack of confidence

Sexual Abuse: inappropriate use of language, anxiety, promiscuity, sexualised behaviour

Neglect: withdrawn, low weight, bruising, unsuitable clothing, searching for food

Posters outlining symptoms and signs of abuse are on display in staffrooms in both main school and Little Pilgrims (**Appendix B**).

8. Specific Safeguarding Issues

8.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of imbalance in power or coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be most obvious factor, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. This abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and children/young people or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement based methods of compliance and maybe accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child/young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology (DfE, 2023).

All staff will be aware that being absent, as well as missing, from education can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation.

The school will have procedures in place in managing poor school attendance and this will need to be regularly reviewed.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child/young person's immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child/young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

- The school recognises that both boys and girls can be vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation and as such ensure staff are alert to signs and indicators
- The school recognises that there are various 'models' of CSE which include but not limited to:
 - o gangs and groups
 - o boyfriend/girlfriend model
 - o child on child

- o familial
- o online
- o abuse of authority
- Where concerns are identified in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation the [Threshold of Need Guide](#) will be consulted in order to ensure the child receives support at the earliest possible opportunity.
- An Early Help multi-agency response may be initiated from the school as the lead practitioner by completing an Early Help Assessment, or completing an Early Help referral through the Integrated Front Door (IFD).
- If a child is thought to be at risk of significant harm through child sexual exploitation a referral will be made to Children's Social Care.
- Advice will be sought to establish if a [National Referral Mechanism](#) is appropriate.
- In all cases, intelligence/information will be shared with Bedfordshire Police using the [Multi-Agency Information Sharing Form](#).

8.2 County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a referral to the Integrated Front Door will be made.

8.3 Modern Day Slavery / Forced Marriage

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

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

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

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry - this includes:

- o taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- o marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not)
- o breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order.

8.4 Child-on-child abuse

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children, and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to the DSL. This is most likely to include, but not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Gender-based violence
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (previously known as 'sexting').
- Initiation type violence and rituals.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020)

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

We believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students. We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

All staff will reassure children that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Children will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a child ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

We will work with other agencies including the police and Children's Services, as required to respond to concerns about sexual violence and harassment. Where children display sexualised behaviours, the behaviours will be considered in accordance with the children's developmental understanding, age and impact on the alleged victim. Tools such as Brook Traffic Light Tool may be used to assist in determining whether the behaviour is developmental or a cause for concern.

Support will depend on the circumstances of each case and the needs of the child, it may include completion of risk assessments to support children to remain in school whilst safeguarding other children and the victim, delivery of early intervention in respect of harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) and/or referral to The Emerald Centre (SARC) where a pupil discloses a rape, an attempted rape or a serious sexual assault whether this has happened recently or in the past. The SARC also has a 24/7 helpline 0330 223 0099 if pupils or staff need to speak to a Crisis Worker for help & advice.

8.5 Bullying

Role of the Safeguarding Team and SENDCo

'When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.' (Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2017)

Prevention of Bullying

A range of methods are used at Pilgrims to help prevent bullying. Pupils, parents and staff are expected to demonstrate and role model appropriate behaviours to promote the school values and establish a climate which encourages trust and mutual respect. Within the curriculum, the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHCEE lessons, circle time assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour. It is important for the children to understand that ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the person being bullied and that being a bystander is just as bad as being a bully.

Prevention in relation to Cyber Bullying

All pupils are encouraged to look after each other and to report any concerns about the misuse of technology or worrying issues to a member of staff. Proper supervision of pupils plays an important part in creating a safe ICT environment at school and everyone needs to learn how to stay safe outside the school. E-Safety information events are held for parents to raise awareness and develop understanding.

Responsibilities

All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it and in accordance with the school policy. Staff must not wait to be asked before raising a concern or wait to deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them. Staff must, therefore, be aware of those children who may be vulnerable.

Please see **Appendix A of the Pupil Anti Bullying Policy** – for investigating and recording an allegation of bullying and questions for supporting victims and perpetrators.

8.6 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), paragraph 44 says 'whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on teachers that if in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police'

In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure (unlike in the medical profession where an observation may have been made). If any staff are concerned that a child has experienced or is at risk of FGM a Child Protection referral will be made to the Integrated Front Door in accordance with interagency procedures produced by the BBSCP. In addition all teachers will follow mandatory reporting duties.

The mandatory reporting procedures say:

'It is recommended that you make a report orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number.'

'Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, professionals should report the case immediately to police, including dialling 999 if appropriate'.

In most cases 'reports under the duty should be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered, and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day'.

The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases. In these cases, you should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.

- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return.
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

8.7 'Honour-based' Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

8.8 Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

(The definition can be found here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Operation Encompass

- Our school is part of Operation Encompass. Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales. Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.
- Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school about all police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children PRIOR to the start of the next school day.

- We will receive Missing Persons notifications should a child go missing, in line with the addition to operation Encompass.
- Our DSL's and Headteacher have undertaken the online Operation Encompass Key Adult training and the principles of Operation Encompass have been cascaded to all other school staff and our Governors.
- Our parents are fully aware that we are an Operation Encompass school and we ensure that when a new child joins our school the parents/carers are informed about Operation Encompass.
- The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.
- As a staff we have discussed how we can support our children who are experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse on a day-to-day basis and particularly following the Operation Encompass notification. We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk.
- The Safeguarding Governor will report on Operation Encompass in the termly report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.
- We have used the Operation Encompass Key Adult Responsibilities checklist to ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken by the school.
- When the Head Teacher, DSL or DDSL leave the school and other staff are appointed, they will ensure that all Operation Encompass log in details are shared with the new Head Teacher /Key Adults and that the new member of staff will undertake the Operation Encompass online training.
- Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8am to 1pm Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990.

8.9 Contextual Safeguarding and Extra Familial Harms

KCSIE (2023), paragraph 23 says:

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

All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside our school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff and the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will consider the context within which such incidents and behaviours occur. This means we will consider whether wider environmental and community factors are present in a child or young person's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. When reporting concerns, staff should include as much information and background detail as possible so the DSL can make a referral with a holistic view of the child.

8.10 Prevent and Extremist Ideology

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

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding

Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

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

Children can be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our safeguarding approach. As with other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection.

Staff receive Prevent training and use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. This may include the DSL making referrals directly to Beds Police by completing the Prevent National Referral Form which is sent directly to police; online referrals can be made via; <https://www.beds.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/>. If there are any other safeguarding concerns they will need to be made in the same way as all other safeguarding referrals and the referral should mention that a Prevent referral has been made. A representative from the school may need to attend Channel meetings. Consent from parents/carers is not needed when making Prevent referrals.

Risk Reduction

The school governors, the Head Teacher and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment will include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly policy, the use of school by external agencies and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

8.11 Upskirting

All staff are aware of the criminal act of 'upskirting' defined by the Criminal Prosecution Service as a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person's clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission. It is not only confined to victims wearing skirts or dresses and equally applies when men or women are wearing kilts, cassocks short or trousers. It is often performed in crowded public places, for example on public transport or at music festivals, which can make it difficult to notice offenders."

8.12 Mental Health

All staff are aware that emotional wellbeing and 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. School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or Deputy. The DSL will liaise with the Pastoral Lead where the safeguarding concern is linked to mental health.

8.13 Private Fostering

Private Fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins. Parents and private foster carers have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence. Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery. Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility. School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

8.14 Cybercrime

We understand that cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL will consider a referral to the Cyber Choices programme which aims to intervene where children are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

9. Online Safety

Children should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but all staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being issues. Online-safety risks are traditionally categorised as one of the 4 Cs: Content, Contact, Conduct or Commerce (see section 136 of KCSIE 2023) and safeguards need to be in place to ensure that children are kept safe at all times. The Governing Board ensures the school has a holistic approach to online safety, including a clear policy on the use of mobile technology. The school ensures appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place. We ask all adults involved in the life of Pilgrims to sign an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) to outline how we expect them to behave when they are online, and/or using school networks, connections, internet connectivity and devices, cloud platforms and social media (both when on school site and outside of school).

General online-safety concerns must be handled in the same way as any other safeguarding concern; safeguarding is often referred to as a jigsaw puzzle, so all stakeholders should err on the side of talking to the online-safety lead / designated safeguarding lead to contribute to the overall picture or highlight what might not yet be a problem.

As part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, online safety training is also delivered. We ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout the curriculum and is reflected in relevant policies, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and any parental engagement.

We recognise that technology, and risks and harms related to the internet evolve and change rapidly. Therefore, we carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by a risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks that children face in our setting. We regularly review the effectiveness of the monitoring and filtering arrangements.

Parents and Visitors to Site - on entering the school premises, all parents and visitors are only permitted to use their phones in the main school reception area. The school allows parents to photograph their child using mobile phones and cameras during certain class or group performances which take place at school, such as Christmas nativity plays, music performances, Sports Day and the Year 2 performance. Parents should ask permission before taking any other photos, e.g. of displays in corridors or classrooms, and avoid capturing other children. Parents have no access to the school network or wireless internet on personal devices. As part of their acceptable use policy parents are reminded of the importance of not sharing without permission, due to reasons of child protection (e.g. looked-after children often have restrictions for their own protection), data protection, religious or cultural reasons, or simply for reasons of personal privacy. They are also reminded before school events.

Staff including volunteers - must establish safe and responsible online behaviours and must comply with the IT acceptable use policy, social media policy, the Online-Safety policy and the EY policy including the mobile telephone protocol. Adults should report to senior colleagues, any new and emerging technologies which may have a bearing on School practices and on the review of the IT acceptable use policy. Local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies should be followed.

Staff should also:

- ensure that their own personal social networking sites are set as private and ensure that pupils are not approved contacts

- ensure that they do not use any website or application, whether on a School or personal device, which publicly identifies their location while on School premises or otherwise in the course of your employment
- never use or access social networking sites of pupils and not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to pupils
- never use their own equipment (e.g. mobile telephones) to communicate with pupils - use equipment provided by the School and ensure that parents, guardians or carers have given permission
- only make contact with pupils for professional reasons
- recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and only when other forms of communication are not possible.

Personal mobile telephones and electronic devices: It is understood that staff may need to check text messages and / or personal emails in the case of an emergency or during break times. Mobile telephones must be stored in staff lockers or classroom cupboards and be switched off except during break and lunchtimes. Exceptions to this must be approved by the Headteacher/Deputy Head. Teachers or Room Leaders may give permission for parents to use the camera on their phone to take photographs of their own child at a school event.

Photographs – All staff are governed by their contract of employment and the school's Acceptable Use Policy, which covers the use of mobile phones/personal equipment for taking pictures of pupils, and where these are stored. At Pilgrims no member of staff will ever use their personal phone to capture photos or videos of pupils unless prior permission is given by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These will be appropriate, linked to school activities, taken without secrecy and not in a one-to-one situation, and always moved to school storage as soon as possible, after which they are deleted from personal devices or cloud services (NB – many phones automatically back up photos). Photos are stored on the school network in line with the retention schedule of the Harpur Trust's Data Protection Policy.

- **Personal social media:** staff including volunteers must not publish anything which could identify pupils, parents or guardians on any personal social media account, personal webpage or similar platform. This includes photos, videos, or other materials such as pupil work.
- **Communicating outside the agreed protocols:** email or text communications between an adult and any pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to a report to external agencies in accordance with the School's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, disciplinary action and / or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based websites.

10. Online Learning

Staff engaging with pupils and /or parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times. It is the responsibility of the staff member to act as moderator. Staff will adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Online Safety policy.

Susan Quince (Deputy Headteacher) is responsible for co-ordinating the whole school online learning approach with support from Jo Webster (Headteacher), Tracey Marquand (Designated Safeguarding Lead), David Carr (IT Teacher) and expert guidance from The IT Department at Bedford School. They have risk assessed and reviewed potential safeguarding issues created by teaching online.

We have a whole school approach to online teaching and one-to-one tuition online is not permitted unless it has been authorized by the headteacher and agreed in advance with parents. The following ways of communicating with children and supplying online learning are utilized:

- Purple Mash – lesson plans and pre-recorded videos are available for parents and children. All children from Reception upwards have their own Purple Mash login account.
- Pilgrims closed Facebook Page which is monitored closely by Karen Sinclair.
- Use of Microsoft Teams for teaching. Only Pilgrims Teachers can contact the children as Teams is a closed ecosystem requiring Pilgrims Accounts. This service enables teachers to disable microphones and video cameras if needed however there is a level of parental responsibility involved to ensure that their child is using the service responsibly.
- The Team meetings will be recorded and held within the team meeting for 21 days. They will automatically delete after this period of time.
- If the videos need to be kept for any reason e.g. a safeguarding concern, they will be downloaded and then uploaded into Stream.
- All members of a meeting can watch the recording after it has finished for 21 days. If for any reason, for example safeguarding, access to the video needs to be restricted staff would need to download the video and delete it from the Teams meeting.
- Children also have access to pre-recorded videos on Stream through embedded URL links which are accessed on their daily timetables in Purple Mash.
- Staff must use their school email address when communicating with parents.
- If staff need to contact a parent by phone and do not have access to a work phone, they should discuss this with a senior member of staff and if there is no alternative always use 'caller withheld' to ensure the parent is not able to identify the staff member's personal contact details.

Training on the systems identified above is provided to staff. The IT Department at Bedford School in liaison with David Carr provide the technical knowledge to maintain safe IT arrangements. Teams / Stream and Purple Mash are closed Ecosystems, so we control access and content. The Harpur Trust have risk assessed the use of live learning using webcams. Internet usage and filtering at home is the responsibility of the parent and we advise parents to check their security provisions at home.

GDPR

It is important to keep all business information confidential whilst working at home in the same way as it is within the workplace. This includes ensuring other household members do not have access to any confidential information. This also includes ensuring that relevant passwords are used, and screens are locked if staff are not at their computer. The Data Protection Policy and Information Security Policy will still apply, and staff are advised to read these policies prior to working from home.

Use of Equipment and security

- School laptops are Trust/School property, it is for staff use only, and every care should be taken to ensure it is not lost, stolen or damaged.
- Staff may use their own equipment when working remotely however the user is responsible for ensuring security of equipment on their Network / Internet connection.
- Staff must work from a secured space at home as opposed to using any kind of public WiFi network. Any work-based systems or databases should be accessed directly via the work portal only to ensure that the relevant protection is in force and to prevent any security breaches.
- Staff should use only trusted sources for any information and be particularly cautious of junk mail and phishing attempts. If staff have any questions, or notice something suspicious on their computer or work phone they must immediately contact IT.

Additional considerations for online tuition

- Avoid one to one online tuition to help safeguard children and staff.
- Staff must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household who may inadvertently walk past the online session.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and where possible be against a neutral background. Backgrounds if possible, should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded by the member of staff initiating the session and stored on Streams, so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Resources and videos must be age appropriate. Staff must check the suitability of any online source that they recommend.
- If a member of staff is unable to run a live session, due to ill health for example, they must advise their line manager. Alternative cover for the session will then be provided by either Jo Webster, Susan Quince or Kim Goodwin.

School Safeguarding Procedures during online teaching

During any online teaching our usual Safeguarding guidelines continue to apply however we recognise that communicating online may allow us a view into a young person's world that we would not have seen at school. This may generate some safeguarding concerns for that child. Whilst working remotely and communicating online with children and parents we will continue to follow our regular safeguarding processes as detailed in this policy.

Safeguarding Guidance for Parents

We recognise that children may be using the internet on a variety of devices. The DSL and communications team will send information to parents to help raise awareness of:

- The potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online.
- Only using reputable online sites if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides.
- Knowing where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.
- How to report any concerns, including online bullying.

11. School Attendance and Children Who Are Absent From School

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. All staff are aware that children who do not attend school regularly act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Our school and the Governing Board will monitor attendance and patterns of attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who are absent from education (especially on repeat occasions).

3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
 - a. leave school to be home educated
 - b. are permanently excluded

Staff must be aware of our school's Attendance Policy and children missing from education procedures and must ensure they follow the school procedures.

We adhere to the following procedures and processes to ensure there is an appropriate safeguarding response to children who are missing:

- An attendance register is taken at 8:45am and 1:30pm each school day;
- We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school by 9:30am. Our school ensures that parents /carers provide at least two emergency contact numbers and these details are updated as required and at least annually. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.
- Staff will alert DSLs to any concerns raised regarding children who are absent from school.
- We will follow the procedures outlined in our attendance policy including undertaking first day calling and monitoring data to ensure we intervene early in cases of poor attendance and/or unexplained absences.
- We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority. When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date and contact the school to ensure the child has attended as expected.

12. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Our school shares information lawfully and fairly having regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Information is held safely and securely. Staff and volunteers understand the importance of sharing information as early as possible. If staff or volunteers are unsure about whether or not to share information they understand that they must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Everyone understands that fears about sharing information will not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to protect the safety of children. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.

13. Monitoring and Record Keeping

The school can play a vital role in helping children and those who are suspected of being abused, by monitoring and recording certain aspects of the child's progress and behaviour in school. In line with KCSIE (paragraph 102) Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that: child protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C. Evidence from reports and reviews into the deaths of children indicate the vital importance of record keeping as indicated in the 'Working together to safeguard children – a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children March 2018'.

Early Help Assessment Referral Forms will be used by the school as well as references made to the referral thresholds as set by the Local Safeguarding Partners in which the child resides, to ensure support is provided as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

- When referring, anything said by the child should be written down as a verbatim report.

- Information will be recorded on the child's file on iSAMS in a factual, non-emotive, non-judgmental terms, with notes of the time, date and context of the events in question.
- Access to the data will be restricted and will only be shared within the school on the basis of 'need to know in the child's interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.
- When the child transfers to a new school, the Child Protection File will be forwarded to the receiving school by recorded delivery within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the school to have support in place for when the child arrives. The DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information that would allow the new school or setting to continue supporting the child in advance of them leaving.
- For audit purposes a note of all children's records transferred or received will be noted electronically on the child's iSAMS account and will include details of to whom the records have been sent and the date sent or received.
- If a child is being removed from the school in order to be home educated, the school will ensure all relevant safeguarding information is shared with the Elective Home Education team.
- Child Protection Records, the Data Protection Act and GDPR Child Protection records can be kept on computer and are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 1984.
- For manual records the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989 exempt information relating to child abuse from the requirement of disclosure. However, in cases of alleged child abuse which come to court, the court may require the School to provide its Child Protection records.
- The school is fully GDPR compliant and recognises and promotes that a fear of breaching data protection regulations should not stop staff taking action where necessary for the purposes of safeguarding and child protection.
- We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of worth. They may experience feelings of helplessness, humiliation or self blame.

14. Child Protection Procedures

If you have a concern about a child's wellbeing, based on:

- Something the child or parent has told you;
- Something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health, or appearance;
- Something another professional said or did;

you must report it to the DSL or deputy DSL. It should be remembered that sometimes children will not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL. In the main school the DSL is Tracey Marquand and in Little Pilgrims the Deputy DSL is Justyna Kuzio. Even if you think your concern is minor, the DSL may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a child.

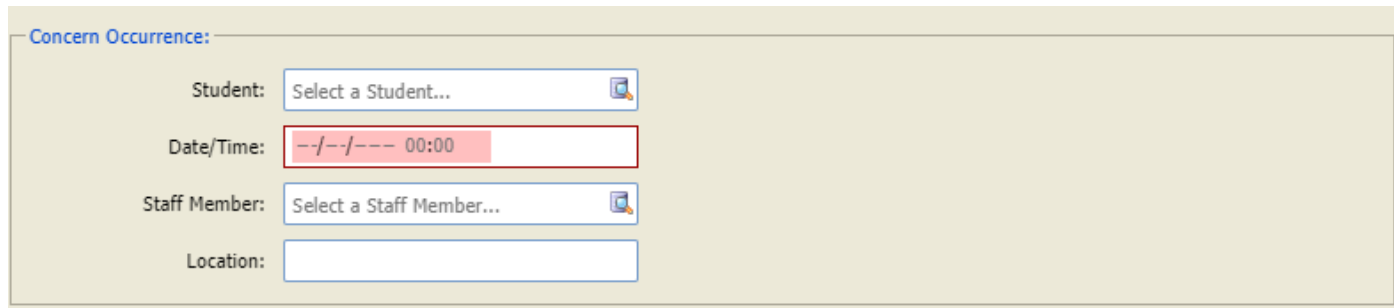
It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns, but it is always your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small. If you think it, report it

With support from the DSL or Deputy DSL decide whether you need to find out more by asking the child, or their parent to clarify your concerns, being careful to use open questions, beginning with words like: 'how', 'why', 'where', 'when', 'who'?

Complete a concern form by making an electronic entry on iSAMS.

Guidance for completing concern forms:

Log on to iSAMS, open the Wellbeing Module and select 'Create a concern'.

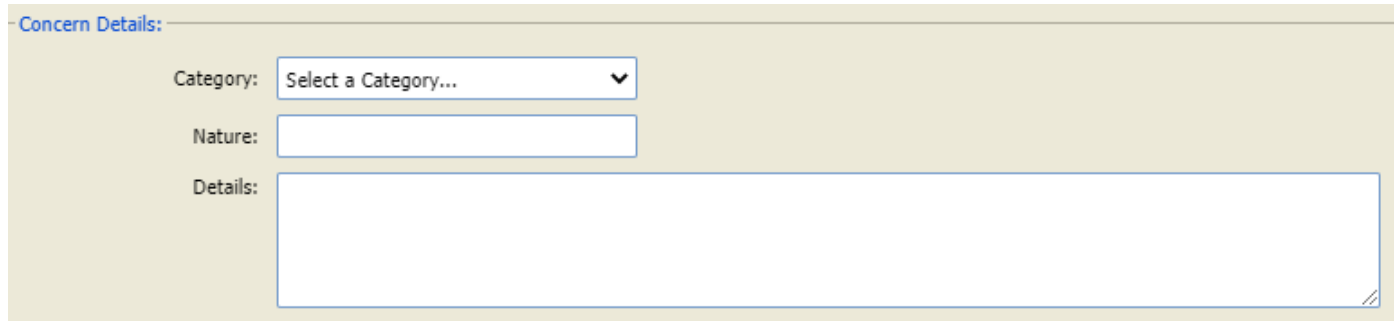


Select the student name by typing in the surname and then clicking on the appropriate name from the menu.

Select the date and time of the incident.

Add your name in the staff member box. **Remember** don't report what other people have told you – they must write their own concern form.

Type in the location e.g. Dining Hall or 2TM classroom.



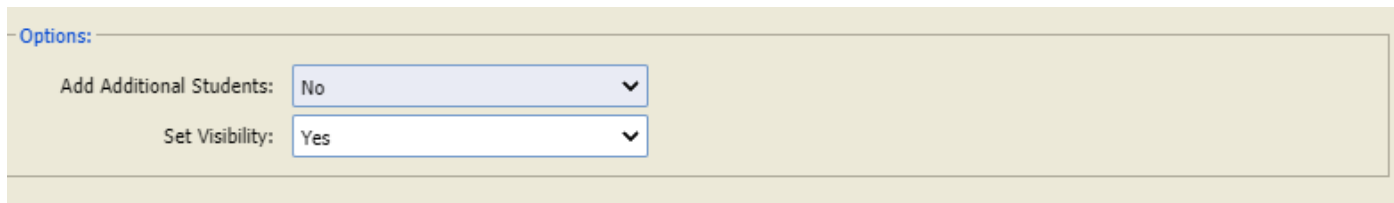
Select the category **Safeguarding** from the drop-down menu.

Type either **Disclosure**, **Observation** or **Other** in the Nature box.

Include as many details in the text box as possible, if it was a disclosure or you observed a child saying something please use their own words as much as possible.

Use the child's full name and do not use initials. Indicate who is who in the report, give the role of each person and do not use initials.

Complete as soon as practicable and do not leave overnight.



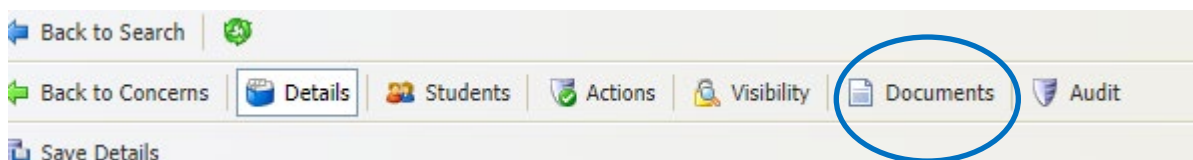
Add additional students if needed. Only write about one child on each concern form. If you are concerned about the welfare of another child involved in the same incident you must complete a separate concern for them.

The information will go to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and they will decide if information needs to be shared with anyone else. You should not share your concerns with other colleagues.

Remember that concern forms are used in court cases and inquests as primary documents, so they must be complete and accurate.

Set the visibility to Yes and add your own name from the options given.

If you made notes on a piece of paper whilst talking to the child, or have evidence you would like to attach to the concern such as emails please scan it and upload it to the concern using the Documents tab.



If you are unable to access iSAMS or are unsure how to complete the form online please speak to the DSL, Deputy DSL, a member of the SLT or your Line Manager.

Coaches and Club Leaders who are not directly employed by the school

Complete a paper copy of the iSAMS logging a safeguarding concern form which will be stored in your Club bag and pass to the DSL via the confidential envelope held at Reception. Remember all verbal conversations should be promptly recorded in writing. Do not use any other form or piece of paper. Writing on the back of other forms can cause confusion and error.

If you jotted your notes down on a piece of paper whilst talking to the child or immediately afterwards, attach that to the completed concern form. Avoid using an email to send your concern; emails are insecure, get missed, go to the wrong person and cannot be signed.

The envelope will be checked by the member of staff on Reception each morning and passed to the DSL.

If your concern needs immediate action please speak to the DSL, a member of the SLT or the member of staff on late duty for advice.

Unexplained marks, cuts and bruises

When a member of staff or volunteer notices a mark, cut or bruise that has occurred out of school an explanation will be sought from the parent or child as appropriate. A purple record sheet (**Appendix C**) will be completed along with a body map (**Appendix D**) which should include a satisfactory explanation. Where the explanation raises a concern please log a concern on iSAMS through the Wellbeing module as detailed above. This will inform the DSL.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to you it can be very distressing for both them and you. It is essential to remain calm and controlled. The member of staff to whom the disclosure has been made should:

- **Reassure the child** - do not let the child take the blame. A child cannot be held responsible for abuse received at the hands of an adult or older sibling or carer.
- **Listen** carefully.
- **Avoid asking leading questions** – observe and listen. When asking questions always ask open questions using the TED principle of Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me. Only ask questions for clarification and avoid asking any questions that may suggest a particular answer.
- **Let the child / parent know what you plan to do next.** Make it clear that you will have to share the information. **Do not promise to keep what they tell you secret.** Example: 'I am worried about your bruise and I need to tell Mrs Smith so that she can help us think about how to keep you safe'.
- **Make a written record** (careful and detailed notes as they may be needed later) as soon as possible after the event, noting:
 - Name of child, address, date of birth.
 - Date, time and place.
 - Who else was present.
 - What was said / What happened / What did you notice about the child's speech, behaviour or appearance?
 - All verbal conversations must be promptly recorded. If the child or parent spoke, record their words rather than your interpretation.
- **Inform the DSL immediately.** If the DSL is not available, inform their Deputy. If neither of these staff members are available, speak to the Headteacher or another senior member of staff. If there is no other member of staff available, you must make the referral yourself.
- The DSL will decide whether it is appropriate to contact parents. Do not contact parents yourself.

On receiving details of a concern the DSL will take the following action:

- All concerns will be viewed alongside [Bedford Borough's Thresholds of Need Guide](#) in order to ensure the appropriate support or intervention is provided at the earliest opportunity in the least intrusive way. The school also places due regard to the guidance contained in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused', 2015.
- If, in consultation with the Bedford Borough's Thresholds of Need Guide, the level of concern sits at Level 2 then support will be provided by the school as the Lead Practitioner. The [Bedford directory](#) can be used to identify appropriate agencies and wider support for families. If, in consultation with the Thresholds of Need Guide, the concern sits at a Level 3, a referral will be made into the Integrated Front Door via the portal <https://llchildandfamilies.bedford.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>. If there is an urgent referral that requires an immediate response phone the Integrated Front Door on: 01234 718700 during office hours or 0300 300 8123 during out of hours. Additional support or advice for this work may be sought from the Early Help Service as a multi-agency response.
- The referral will note all previous interventions by the school with the child, any relevant history relating to the child, their siblings or the family. The child may be the responsibility of another local authority depending on their home address or legal status, but the Integrated Front Door is still the first point of contact.
- The parent/carer will be informed of the referral unless informing the parent may place the child at increased risk of harm. If unclear, it is recommended advice is sought from the Integrated Front Door. They may suggest delaying informing the parent in cases of suspected sexual abuse, or where informing the parent might put the child or young person at further risk, to prevent them being harmed or intimidated (and retracting their disclosure). In cases of suspected Fabricated or Induced Illness by proxy, the parent is not informed that this is being considered. If a decision is made not to discuss concerns with the

child's parents or carers, this must be recorded in the child's Safeguarding file with a full explanation for the decision and the reason for this decision.

- The school will review each case to ensure that any support or intervention provided has impacted positively on the welfare/safety of the child and that improvement is sustained.
- In the event that provision of support has not led to improvements for the child or concerns escalate, the school will follow the step-up [Escalation procedures](#) published by the BBSCP.
- In the event of a professional disagreement in relation to a specific concern, the school will follow the Escalation procedures.
- If there is an immediate risk to the child's safety, the police will be called.
- The DSL will share information with other relevant professionals, recording reasons for sharing information and ensuring that they are aware of what action the other professionals will take as a result of information shared.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with the Integrated Front Door, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, a member of the leadership team and the Headteacher are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

You can also call the NSPCC helpline on Tel: 0808 800 5000 on Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm or 9am – 6pm at the weekends or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Once a formal record of concern has been started the DSL will update accordingly as the case proceeds. The DSL will decide when to start and finish monitoring the child and decide upon further action to be taken.

If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point. Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point, they should escalate their concerns using the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board's Escalation procedures.

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

The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise, record and refer.

Multi-agency work

- The school understands its role in the [Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements](#) (BBSCP). Governing bodies, proprietors and the senior leadership teams, especially the DSLs, will make themselves aware of and follow their local arrangements.
- We will work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of children. The school will, where necessary, liaise with the school nurse, initiate an effective support response,

and make referrals to Children's Social Care. Referrals and contacts should be made by the DSL or one of the Deputy Leads to Early Help/Children's Social Care. Where the child already has a social worker, the request for a service will go immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence to their team manager or duty social worker.

- We will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by Children's Social Care: The school will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as Team Around the Family/Strategy meetings, Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, together with core group meetings.
- We will provide reports as required for these meetings in accordance with the BBSCP interagency procedures. If the school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent. The report will, wherever possible, be shared with parents/carers at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- Where a child is subject to an Inter-agency Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or TAF Support Plan, the school will contribute to the preparation, implementation and review of the plan as appropriate.
- If a child is subject to a referral to a multi- panel such as [Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference \(MARAC\)](#) or [CHANNEL Panel](#), the school will contribute to such arrangements.

15. Safer Recruitment

Safer Recruitment processes aim to:

- Deter potential abusers by setting high standards of practice and recruitment.
- Reject inappropriate candidates at the application and interview stages.
- Prevent abuse to children by developing robust policies and agreeing on safe practice.
- At all times the Headteacher and Governing Body will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2023). At least one person involved in conducting an interview will have received safer recruitment training.
- We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities.
- We require details of a candidate's present (or last) employment and reason for leaving; full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment and evidence of original academic certificates. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, and shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. We use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. Structured questions are agreed by the interview panel and any potential areas of concern are explored to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children.
- Shortlisted candidates are informed that online searches are done as part of due diligence checks.
- The school follows the Harpur Trust Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedures which ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance. We will undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks and other pre-employment

checks as outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' to ensure we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children.

- We will maintain a Single Central Register (SCR) of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. A senior member of staff will check the SCR regularly to ensure that it meets statutory requirements.
- We recognise that safer recruitment is not just about carrying out the right DBS checks and is not limited to recruitment procedures. Therefore, we understand the importance of continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. Further information about all of these processes can be found in the Harpur Trust Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedures.
- The school has procedures in place to make a prompt DBS referral if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned. This is a legal duty.
- Volunteers who have not had checks undertaken are not left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

16. Allegations Against Staff

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the headteacher without delay (or where that is not possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead); any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors (Mrs Sarah Wheeler). Alternatively, concerns can be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in Children's Social Care, who will liaise with the Chair of Governors and they will decide on any action required.

We will follow our safeguarding policies and procedure in the event of an allegation regarding an 'incident that happened when an individual or an organisation was using our school premises for the purposes of running activities for children. This includes events such as community groups, sports associations and more.

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken. The headteacher has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).

Allegations

It is an allegation if the person* 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 he or she 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 (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay' and the guidance in KCSIE (Part Four) should be followed.

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

Low-level Concerns

Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over 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; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language or,
- humiliating children.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Organisation Responsibilities

- To recognise that allegations of abuse can be made by children and they can be made by other concerned adults.
- All allegations against staff or volunteers should be immediately brought to the attention of the Headteacher.
- If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, this should be brought to the attention of the Chair of Governors (Mrs Sarah Wheeler).
- In all cases, **the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** and the Chief Executive of the Harpur Trust should be notified.

All staff, governors and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding procedures and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. If staff do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally they should refer to the Harpur Trust Whistle-blowing Policy.

A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a legal obligation has been breached
- there has been a miscarriage of justice
- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed

For external advice about disclosing a suspected wrongdoing, staff can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline which is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.or.uk. The Modern Slavery helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns about modern slavery internally. Staff can call on 08000 121 700.

Employers have a duty of care to their employees. The school will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended.

The Headteacher will take the following actions:

- Ensure that the child reporting the allegation is safe and away from the member of staff, volunteer or governor against whom the allegation is made.
- Contact the LADO in Bedford Borough immediately.
- Contact the Chief Executive Officer of the Harpur Trust and inform OFSTED.
- Contact the parents/carers of the child following advice from the LADO.
- Following advice from the LADO and HR, review the member of staff's working arrangements, volunteer or governor role, and if no safe alternative is identified suspend the member of staff, volunteer or governor pending the investigation.
- Attend joint evaluation meetings (JEMs) convened by the LADO and act upon the decisions made at these meetings.

Suspension should be considered when:

- There is a cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm; or
- The allegation warrants investigation by the police; or
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

Any disciplinary investigation should be carried out once the child protection investigation has been completed.

Outcome of Allegations

The outcome of allegation investigations should be identified as one of the following:

Outcome Type	Definition	Action after Investigation	Recording
Substantiated	There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.	Discussion with HR and /or other professionals, about referral to DBS and/or TRA for Disciplinary Hearing.	There should be a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was flowed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, and decisions reached. This should be kept in the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.
False	There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.	Where the allegation is found to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious, the information should not be included in any reference.	
Unsubstantiated	This is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.	Where the allegation is found to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious, the information should not be included in any reference.	Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records.
Malicious	There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.		

In addition, there is a further outcome type, 'unfounded', which the school may wish to use, after liaison with their HR/legal advisors. This is where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

17. Visitors /contractors/suppliers

- All visitors are required to sign in at the front desk and wear a visitor badge.
- Parents collecting children will be checked at the Reception Desk before being allowed into the main building.

- Parents are asked to authorise other 'responsible' people who will be collecting their children from school on a regular or ad-hoc basis by completing the Pre-authorised Collection form as detailed in our Collection of Children Policy.
- We recognise that on occasions, a person who is not listed on the 'Pre-authorised Collection' form may be required to collect a child. In this instance the parents/carers must give verbal/written consent for another 'responsible' person to take their child home. This information will be recorded by the school on the Changes to Pre-authorised Collection slip.
- No visitors, including tradespeople, should be allowed to wander around the premises unaccompanied when children are present.
- Staff should be alert to strangers frequently waiting outside a venue with no apparent purpose.
- Regular contractors who are carrying out work around the school building unsupervised, should be subject to the same enhanced DBS checks as staff, regular volunteers and governors and the employing authority of the contractor should be prepared to make available employment checks on request (e.g. references).

18. Use of premises for non-school activities

- Where we hire or rent out our facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we issue a Club contract. All current clubs and new clubs have the DFE (September 2023) 'After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition Safeguarding guidance for providers' as an appendix to the club policy.
- Safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.
- Whilst the provider is responsible for their own safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, the school may refer any concerns they have about the provider to the local authority.

19. Use of Force, Restraint and Positive Handling

The law forbids a teacher or other members of staff from using any degree of physical contact that is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or that is primarily intended to cause pain or injury or humiliation.

Teachers at a school are allowed to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils under certain exceptional circumstances. In some circumstances, teachers and authorised members of staff can restrain pupils in order to protect them and others.

Any concerns or allegations that a member of staff, volunteer or governor may have acted inappropriately should be brought to the Headteacher immediately, in confidence. The Headteacher, in turn, will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The current guidance is: *Use of reasonable force: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies*, July 2013.

20. Staff Conduct

In order to protect children and members of staff, we encourage staff, volunteers and governors to follow our professional code of conduct which can be found in the Pilgrims Code of Conduct. This is issued to all new members of staff and referred to during their induction. This covers appropriate dress, the use of appropriate boundaries, social contact outside the setting (including

on social networking sites), the receiving and giving of gifts and favouritism, and the safe use of technology.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- Being alone with a child
- Physical contact / restraint
- Social contact outside setting / appropriate boundaries
- Gifts and favouritism
- Behaviour management
- Intimate care
- Administration of medicine
- Safe use of technology (Security / Internet / mobile phones / digital images of children, etc.)
- Appropriate use of social networking sites

The Code of Conduct is reviewed annually, and staff are made aware of any updates at the beginning of each new academic year.

Appropriate and safe staff conduct is supported in the following policies:

- Single Central Register and Recruitment Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Staff Discipline Policy
- Grievance Policy

21. Child Protection Training and continuing Safeguarding Learning and Development

Induction Training is mandatory for all new staff as detailed in section 5.2 of this policy.

Staff and governors receive regular safeguarding updates, as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. It is our practice to include a safeguarding and child protection agenda item in staff meetings.

Members of the Governing Body of the school will take part in mandatory safeguarding training.

Staff receive training about the safeguarding issues surrounding the internet and other online technologies.

Safer Recruitment Training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

Our school provides briefings for parents/carers about good practice around using the internet and other IT technology to help them safeguard their children at home.

The DSL with support from HR will keep detailed records of all staff child protection training and will issue reminders when training updates are required. Any staff unable to attend training will attend an additional session or complete an online course.

22. Implementation, Dissemination and Review Strategies

This policy is reviewed annually by the DSL and is considered and approved by the Governing Body. It will reflect the experience and expertise of school staff, volunteers and governors.

Informed by the DSL the governor with specific responsibility for Safeguarding reports any concerns or issued to the school committee each term using a termly safeguarding report form **(Appendix E)**. The Chairman and Headteacher of our school will bring any matters of significant concern to the attention of the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Trust as soon as they arise. The school committee will report to the Board annually in the Autumn term (for the January meeting) confirming that the safeguarding arrangements in the school have been formally reviewed and have met the statutory requirements, drawing the Trustees' attention to any significant incidents or themes. The report to the Board should include a Termly/Annual Safeguarding report to the school committee **(Appendix F)**, which collates or summarises the data presented in that year's termly reports and highlights any themes from previous years, and a completed Safeguarding Compliance Checklist **(Appendix G)**.

We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.

We will complete an annual audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The school's senior management and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

Copies of this policy and supporting materials are easily accessible on the school website: **www.pilgrims-school.info**

Please note this policy is a 'live' document and procedures are updated regularly therefore the accurate version is always the on-line version on this website.

Useful Contacts:

Bedford Borough Integrated Front Door For emergencies outside of working hours contact the Social Care Emergency Duty Team (EDT)	Tel: 01234 718700 during the following hours: 9:00am-5:00pm – Monday to Friday multiagency@bedford.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 8123 at all other times.
Central Bedfordshire Central Bedfordshire Access & Referral Hub The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) For emergencies outside of working hours contact	Tel: 0300 300 8585 (Mon-Thurs 8:45 am to 5.20pm & Fri 8:45am to 4:20pm) cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 8123
Luton Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub Out of hours	Tel: 01582 547653 MASH@luton.gov.uk Tel: 0300 3008123
Bedford Police	Tel: 01234 841212 or 101 In an emergency 999
LADO Bedford Borough	Sandeep Mohan 01234 276693 Lado@bedford.gov.uk
Statutory Education Welfare Officer, Bedford Borough Education Support Services	David Blake Tel: 01234 276043 EWS Duty Phone: 01234 228304 educationwelfareservice@bedford.gov.uk
North Bedfordshire CAMHS	01234 893300
NSPCC Helpline	Tel: 0808 800 5000

