

Let Your Light Shine – Matthew 5v16



**Mission Statement**  
 “A Caring Christian Family Where We Grow Together”

# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

**Effective Date:** 01/04/2017

**Review Date:** September 2024 Annual

Review Date	Signed Head Teacher	Signed Director RCSAT
16/11/2018	<i>J. K. J. J.</i>	<i>P. Roberts</i>
20/09/2019	<i>J. K. J. J.</i>	<i>P. Roberts</i>
31/10/2020	<i>J. M. Badger</i>	<i>P. Roberts</i>
30/09/2021	<i>J. M. Badger</i>	<i>P. Roberts</i>
05/09/2022	<i>J. M. Badger</i>	<i>P. Roberts</i>
22/09/2023	<i>J. M. Badger</i>	

Persons Responsible for Policy:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT
Approval Date	01/04/2017
Signed:	Director RCSAT
Signed:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT



**1. Named Persons**

1.1. At Rural Church Schools Academy Trust (RCSAT), the named personnel with designated responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding are:

<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>
Mrs Nicola Badger (Principal Bunbury EHT all schools) Ms Katherine Charlesworth (all Schools) Mrs Louise McDonough (St Oswald's) Mrs Kate Appleby (Warmingham)	Miss Charlotte Hickson (Bunbury) Mrs Alison Tomlinson (St Oswald's) Mrs Sally Allen (Warmingham)	Mrs Suzie Waddington (Bunbury) Mr Malcom Gates (Warmingham) Brenda Brockbank (St Oswalds)

1.2 The named personnel with responsibility regarding allegations against staff/those working in the school are:

<b>Designated Senior Manager</b>	<b>Chair of Trust (in the event of an allegation against a Senior Manager)</b>
Mrs Nicola Badger (EHT) Mrs Nicola Badger (Bunbury) Mrs Louise McDonough (St Oswald's) Mrs Kate Appleby (Warmingham)	Mr Piers Bostock (across all schools)

1.3 The named person with designated responsibility regarding Cared for Children is:

<b>Designated teacher for cared for children</b>
Katherine Charlesworth (RCSAT Pastoral Lead across all schools)

1.4 The named person with designated responsibility regarding Mental Health

<b>Designated teacher for Mental Health</b>
Ms Katherine Charlesworth (RCSAT Pastoral Lead all schools)

**2. Aims of the Procedure**

- 2.1. To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities;
- 2.2. To ensure consistent good practice across the school;
- 2.3. To demonstrate RCSAT's commitment to protecting children;
- 2.4. To raise awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- 2.5. To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection;

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- 2.6. To promote safe practice and encourage challenge for poor and unsafe practice;
- 2.7. To promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially with Children’s Social Care and the Police;
- 2.8. To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children;
- 2.9. To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support pupils who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. Child in Need/ Child Protection Plan.

### 3. Scope of the Procedure

- 3.1. This procedure shall apply to all members of the school community (including staff, pupils, volunteers, parents/carers, visitors, agency staff and students, Directors, or anyone working on behalf of Rural Church Schools Academy Trust (RCSAT)).
- 3.2. This procedure shall be maintained consistent with Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (CESCP) child protection procedures.

### 4. Definitions of Terms

- 4.1. Child Protection: refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 4.2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children’s health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.
- 4.3. Early Help: means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
- 4.4. Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can involve 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.
- 4.5. Staff: refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school/education setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity, full time or part time. This also includes parents, Governors and Directors.
- 4.6. Child: refers to all children who have not yet reached the age of 18. On the whole, this will apply to pupils from RCSAT schools, but the procedure will extend to visiting children from other establishments.
- 4.7. Parent: refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role e.g. carers, step-parents, foster parents, and adoptive parents.

### 5. Prevention

- 5.1. Children feel secure in a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. RCSAT schools shall achieve this by ensuring that:
  - 5.1.1. Children develop realistic attitudes to their responsibilities in adult life and are equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe, including understanding and recognition of healthy/unhealthy relationships and support available.

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- 5.1.2. Children are supported in recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet, being able to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable, recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being and supporting them in developing effective ways of resisting pressure.
- 5.1.3. All staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.
- 5.1.4. Importance and prioritisation is given to equipping the children with the skills needed to stay safe; including providing opportunities for Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education throughout the curriculum.
- 5.1.5. Ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place, being careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- 5.1.6. Ensure that all adults feel comfortable and supported to draw potential safeguarding issues to the attention of the EHT, Principal and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children.
- 5.1.7. Emerging themes are proactively addressed and fed back to the local authority and CESC to ensure a coherent approach so that multi-agency awareness and strategies are developed.
- 5.1.8. Ensure that there is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded and there is a separate procedure that is robustly delivered throughout the school and curriculum.
- 5.1.9. Support and planning for children in custody and their resettlement back into the school community is undertaken, where necessary, as part of our inclusive approach.
- 5.1.10. Compliance with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018 and supporting the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (CESCP) Timely Support for Children and Families in Cheshire East, which supports professionals to access the **right help and support** for children and their families at the **right time**.
- 5.1.11. Systematic monitoring of pupil welfare, keeping accurate records, speaking to parents and notifying appropriate agencies when necessary.
- 5.1.12. All staff are aware of children with circumstances which mean that they are more vulnerable to abuse/less able to easily access services and are proactive in recognising and identifying their needs.
- 5.1.13. All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened; this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication whilst ensuring safer working practices.
- 5.1.14. The voice of the child is paramount and RCSAT pupils are actively involved in safeguarding development. There is an established student group/student involvement mechanism which works with and challenges staff in order to develop aspects of safeguarding e.g. through the curriculum, approaches and displays.
- 5.1.15. Consulting with, listening and responding to pupils through the class Teacher and Pastoral Lead.
- 5.1.16. Using research evidence to inform prevention work.

## 6. Early Help

- 6.1. All staff understand the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (CESCP) ‘Threshold of Need’ and Child Protection procedures; Right Help, Right Time - Delivering effective support for children and families in Cheshire East, Multi Agency Threshold of Need Guidance (see Timely Support – link above) to ensure that the needs of our children are effectively assessed; decisions are based on a child’s development needs, parenting capacity and family & environmental factors.
- 6.2. Staff shall ensure that the most appropriate referrals are made, actively supporting multi-agency planning for these children and, in doing so, providing information from the child’s point of view, bringing their lived experience to life as evidenced by observations or information provided.
- 6.3. Staff shall know how to pass on any concerns no matter how trivial they seem.
- 6.4. Staff shall always act in the interests of the child and shall be aware of their responsibility to take action as outlined in this procedure.
- 6.5. Staff shall be aware that they must be prepared to identify those children who may benefit from early help.
- 6.6. The staff shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
  - 6.6.1. is disabled or has certain health needs and has specific additional needs,
  - 6.6.2. has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan),
  - 6.6.3. has a mental health need,
  - 6.6.4. is a young carer,
  - 6.6.5. is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups and county lines
  - 6.6.6. is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home,
  - 6.6.7. is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation,
  - 6.6.8. is at risk of being radicalised or exploited,
  - 6.6.9. has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
  - 6.6.10. is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse,
  - 6.6.11. is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves,
  - 6.6.12. has returned home to their family from care,
  - 6.6.13. is at risk of ‘honour’ based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
  - 6.6.14. is a ‘privately fostered child’.
  - 6.6.15. Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences or part of the school day
- 6.7. If there are concerns about a child’s welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse, the school shall consider whether the Early Help approach should be considered.
- 6.8. Staff shall be aware that early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.
- 6.9. The multi-agency threshold framework is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. This support can be provided on a single agency basis or a multi-agency basis. The stepped approach aims to reduce risk and vulnerability and meet needs at the appropriate level of support and/or intervention. Access to effective early intervention and prevention services is essential to achieving this.

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- 6.10. All schools within RSCAT are Operation Encompass schools which means that we are able to give proactive support to those children and their families where domestic abuse is identified. Any information received shall be logged appropriately on CPOMS and appropriate action taken.
- 6.11. If a member of staff has concerns about a child, they shall need to decide what action to take.
- 6.12. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member may make a direct referral to children’s social care/consult service ChECS/contact the police. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and shall be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 6.13. The pyramid of support will help us to identify what advice and guidance is available and who to contact at each different level on the continuum of need. The Family Hub model that is being implemented across Cheshire East will strengthen existing partnerships in each locality making it easier for practitioners to get support for families.
- 6.14. In the first instance, staff shall discuss ‘Early Help’ requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 6.15. If early help is appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead shall support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.
- 6.16. As staff may be required to support other agencies and practitioners and parents/carers and children in an extra help plan or targeted help plan; all staff shall be aware of the relevant assessments and appropriate support shall be given to them when they undertake an early help assessment.
- 6.17. We have a suite of screening tools which may also help to identify the level of need, the best pathway of support, and the interventions you can be provided for children, young people and families
- 6.18. [cescp.org.uk/docs/multi-agency-toolkit/ce-scp-multi-agency-toolkit-final-oct-2021.docx](https://cescp.org.uk/docs/multi-agency-toolkit/ce-scp-multi-agency-toolkit-final-oct-2021.docx)
- 6.19. Concerns assessed as being at **lower tier Targeted Help** level for complex early help concerns will be triaged and managed by the **Family Help front door**.
- 6.20. Where early help and or other support is appropriate, staff shall ensure that the case is kept under constant review. If the child’s situation doesn’t appear to be improving, staff shall take appropriate action.
- 6.21. Pupils shall be made aware that there are adults whom they can approach if worried or in difficulty.
- 6.22. There shall be adequate signposting to external sources of support and advice for staff, parents and pupils. Support services are indicated in Staff toilets and pupil toilets with posters in key places, copies of which are available in the appendices to this procedure.

## 7. Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection

- 7.1. RCSAT schools shall follow Cheshire East’s Multi-Agency Practice Standards CE multi-agency practice standards to ensure that their work, on behalf of the children, is of a consistently good standard.
- 7.2. These standards shall be used to challenge other workers on behalf of children where the standards are not being met.
- 7.3. The Exec Headteacher/ Principal and the DSL are aware of the Cheshire East Escalation Procedure [Escalation \(cescp.org.uk\)](https://cescp.org.uk)

## 8. Concerns about a child - Recording and Reporting

- 8.1. Recording procedures shall be in line with those outlined in Cheshire East’s “Recording and Reporting Guidance.” 2023
- 8.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead shall be aware of this document.

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- 8.3. Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, they shall report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy, without delay.
- 8.4. A written record shall be made of these concerns as soon as possible following the disclosure/concern being raised. This shall be on the same working day.

**9. Talking to Children**

- 9.1. Where staff have conversations with a child who discloses abuse, they shall follow the basic principles:
  - 9.1.1. listen rather than directly question, remain calm;
  - 9.1.2. never stop a child who is recalling significant events;
  - 9.1.3. never ask a child if they are being abused;
  - 9.1.4. make a record of discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (child language – do not substitute words);
  - 9.1.5. advise that you will have to pass the information on;
  - 9.1.6. avoid coaching/prompting;
  - 9.1.7. never take photographs of any injury;
  - 9.1.8. never undress a child to physically examine them;
  - 9.1.9. allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support meetings;
  - 9.1.10. At no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult.
  - 9.1.11. All victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe
  - 9.1.12. Where abuse has occurred online or outside of the school or college it will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously
  - 9.1.13. Staff are aware that they should not question the child; other than to respond with TED: Tell me what you mean by that, Explain what you mean by that, Describe that. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.
- 9.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead shall obtain key information and agree relevant actions after making a timely assessment of the information.
- 9.3. Staff shall recognise that parents may hold key information about incidents/allegations.
- 9.4. **In the majority of situations, the Designated Safeguarding Lead shall speak to the parents and gain their consent** to discussing the situation with others.
- 9.5. Staff shall be aware that there will be very few instances where to speak to the parents could further endanger the child. In those situations, staff shall still consult/refer, but shall record clearly the reasons as to why they had not gained parental consent.
- 9.6. These shall be the instances in which parental consent would not be gained prior to a referral:
  - 9.6.1. Discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry,
  - 9.6.2. Sexual abuse is suspected,
  - 9.6.3. Organised or multiple abuse is suspected,
  - 9.6.4. Fabrication of an illness is suspected,
  - 9.6.5. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is suspected,
  - 9.6.6. Forced marriage is suspected,
  - 9.6.7. Honour Based Abuse is suspected,
  - 9.6.8. Extremism or radicalisation is suspected,
  - 9.6.9. County Lines activities are suspected.

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- 9.7. Staff shall also be aware that, even in situations where the parent does not give consent, the best interests of the child are paramount and that they shall share their concerns. In addition, the referral shall not be delayed if it has not been possible to contact the parents/carers.

For non-urgent contact for a referral or request to the front door, the **appropriate portal form** needs to be completed. There is one for children's social care where you feel the child / young person has reached their threshold for support (**upper tier Targeted Help and Statutory / Specialist Help**).

**Phone** – Immediate Safeguarding concerns:

0300 123 5012

Option 3 – Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

Choose Option 2 – ChECS / Immediate Safeguarding concerns

Anything you submit to ChECS that is deemed as meeting threshold for social care will be processed within either 2 hours or 24 hours as per statutory guidelines dependant on

## 10. Consulting Outside Agencies

- 10.1. A consultation shall take place with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and/or the police immediately.
- 10.2. Where a child lives in a different authority, the Designated Safeguarding Lead shall follow the procedures for that authority.
- 10.3. Where possible, staff shall ensure that contacts with outside agencies are through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy. Nevertheless, staff shall be aware that anyone may make this contact. Where a member of staff makes contact, they shall ensure that they inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

## 11. Record Keeping and Information Storage

- 11.1. Safeguarding Records shall be held electronically using CPOMS software.
- 11.2. Paper records relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns shall be kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored away from the main pupil file. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Executive Headteacher, Principal, Pastoral Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead. Information is kept confidential.
- 11.3. All records shall provide a factual, accurate, evidence-based account. Records shall be signed, dated and where appropriate, witnessed.
- 11.4. Each school shall ensure that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UKGDPR) and ensure that information is:
  - 11.4.1. used fairly and lawfully;
  - 11.4.2. for limited, specifically stated purposes;
  - 11.4.3. used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
  - 11.4.4. accurate;
  - 11.4.5. retained for no longer than necessary;
  - 11.4.6. handled according to people's data protection rights;
  - 11.4.7. kept safe and secure.
- 11.5. Staff shall ensure that information is transferred safely and securely when a pupil with a Safeguarding Record transfers to another school. Staff shall also ensure that Key workers or social workers are notified where a child leaves the school (as appropriate). Where children leave the school



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or college, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their safeguarding file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. Within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This allows the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. See the Cheshire East Record Keeping Guidance

**12. Safer Working Practices**

- 12.1. Use of mobile phones, cameras and internet. RCSAT and its staff take safeguarding seriously and understand that this procedure is over-arching.
- 12.1.1. Staff shall be referred to the ‘*Staff use of mobile phones and Social Media Policy*’, ‘*Code of conduct*’ and ‘*Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in Education Settings May 2022*’.
- 12.2. Personal mobiles and electronic devices. Personal mobile phones and recording devices (tablets, cameras, laptops etc.) shall never be used by staff at the school/setting.
- 12.2.1. If staff have personal phones or devices, these shall be stored securely in the staff room and shall be switched off or on silent whilst during the teaching day.
- 12.2.2. Electronic devices shall be password protected so that content cannot be accessed by unauthorised users.
- 12.2.3. It shall be the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that there is no illegal or inappropriate content stored or used on their device when brought on to school grounds.
- 12.3. School devices. School devices shall remain the property of RCSAT and in using them staff will follow the RCSAT IT acceptable use procedure March 2022.
- 12.3.1. Electronic devices shall be password protected so that content cannot be accessed by unauthorised users.
- 12.4. Cameras photography and images. The Schools in RCSAT shall obtain parents’ and carers’ written consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).
- 12.4.1. Staff shall ensure that only the schools/Trust designated camera or recording devices (tablets, cameras, laptops etc.) are used when capturing evidence of work undertaken.
- 12.5. Online safety. On all school equipment, appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems shall be in place. We refer you to our ‘*Online Safety Policy*’ which incorporates and considers the 4Cs as detailed in KCSIE 2023 to ensure an effective online policy. The school’s policy on the use of mobile and smart technology and their use reflects the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Our RCSAT mobile phones policy carefully considers how this is managed on the school premises.
- 12.6. Working off school premises. Where staff take school computer/digital equipment / or records in paper form off school site, they shall abide by the staff code of conduct 2023, IT acceptable use procedure March 2023 & School Homeworking Procedure September 2023 in handling them.
- 12.6.1. Staff are reminded that information, both in paper or electric form, is sensitive and protected under data protection and GDPR and should be safe and securely stored off the premises and during transportation. RCSAT data protection policy March 2023.

**13. Allegations against Staff**

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- 13.1. Support and advice shall be sought from Children’s Services or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), and our Personnel/ Resources advisor whenever necessary.
- 13.2. RCSAT schools recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children and that they may have:
  - 13.2.1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child,
  - 13.2.2. committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
  - 13.2.3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
  - 13.2.4. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.
  - 13.2.5. These can include incidents outside of school which do not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children.
- 13.3. Any concerns of this nature, about the conduct of other adults, shall be taken to the Principal without delay or, where that is a concern about the Executive Headteacher or Principal, to the Chair of Trust and the LADO.
- 13.4. Staff shall be aware that this must be done on the same working day.
- 13.5. RCSAT shall not investigate internally until instructed by the LADO.
- 13.6. All staff shall be aware of their duty to raise concerns. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them. They have been made aware of via RCSAT safeguarding contacts posters display in all schools, see appendix 1.
- 13.7. As part of RCSATs whole school approach to safeguarding we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the schools (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes allegations which do not meet the harms threshold, also known as low level concerns.
- 13.8. We understand that the term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
  - 13.8.1 is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
  - 13.8.2 does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
- 13.9 Examples of such concerns could include but are not limited:
  - 13.9.1 being over friendly with children
  - 13.9.2 having favourites
  - 13.9.3 taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
  - 13.9.4 engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
  - 13.9.5 humiliating pupils.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.
- 13.10 Low level concerns will be reported in the same way as a concern in relation to concerns and allegations that meet the harms test i.e. to the Exec Headteacher/ Principal or Chair of Governors/ Chair of Directors, if the concern is about the Exec Headteacher.



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13.11 Records of low-level concerns will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and responded to.

13.12 Where a pattern of behaviour is identified, the Principal/ Exec Head will decide on a course of action. This might be internal disciplinary procedures, or referral to the LADO if the harms threshold is met.

13.13 The Exec Head/ Principal will consider if there are any wider cultural issues in school that enabled the behaviour to occur and if appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of recurrence.

**Relating to Organisations or Individuals using School Premises**

If the schools receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), as with any safeguarding allegation, we will follow safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

**14. Safer Recruitment**

14.1. RCSAT staff shall pay full regard to DfE guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2023 and with reference to the ‘Position of Trust’ offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003).

14.2. Staff shall ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. This shall be achieved by:

14.2.1. Operating safe recruitment practices; including highlighting the importance we place on safeguarding children in our recruitment adverts and interview questions, appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining practitioner references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking the Children’s List and right to work in England checks in accordance with DBS and Department for Education procedures;

14.2.2. Ensuring that staff and volunteers adhere to a published code of conduct and other professional standards at all times, including after school activities. Staff are aware of social media/ on-line conduct;

14.2.3. Ensuring that all staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with pupils and parents, following the Code of Conduct;

14.2.4. Requiring all staff to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). Disqualification under the Child Care Act 2006 (amended following the 2018 Regulations);

14.2.5. Maintaining an accurate, complete, up to date Single Central Record.

**15. Staff Training and Updates**

15.1. RCSAT is committed to the continuous development of all staff, regardless of role with regard to safeguarding training.

15.2. All staff undertake Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership (CESCP) ‘endorsed’ Basic Awareness in Safeguarding and Child Protection training within the first term of their employment/placement. This

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training is refreshed every 3 years; to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

- 15.3. All staff shall receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- 15.4. The Designated Lead and any Deputy shall attend (CESCP) multi agency Safeguarding and Child Protection training or the equivalent on an annual basis.
- 15.5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, and/or Deputy shall attend the Designated Safeguarding Leads Meetings held each term coordinated by the SCiES Team, therefore enabling them to remain up to date with Safeguarding practices and be aware of any emerging concerns/themes within Cheshire East.
- 15.6. Each school shall acknowledge serious case review findings and share lessons learned with all staff to ensure no child falls through the gaps.

**16. Cared for children (Looked after children) and previously cared for children**

- 16.1. RCSAT staff shall have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep Cared for Children safe as they are aware that children often become cared for as a result of abuse and/or neglect.
- 16.2. RCSAT have identified a designated teacher for our Cared for Children; this person works closely with the Virtual school.

**17. Children with Special Needs and Disabilities**

- 17.1.1 We ensure that staff are aware that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline
- 17.2 Staff shall have the knowledge and understanding of the additional barriers which can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special needs/disabilities., including:
  - 17.1.1. assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration,
  - 17.1.2. children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs, and
  - 17.1.3. communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
  - 17.1.4. Staff shall obtain the necessary skills so that they can safeguard and respond to the specific needs of this group of children.

**18. The use of ‘Reasonable Force’**

- 18.1. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children.
- 18.2. The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children.
- 18.3. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 18.4. ‘Reasonable’ in these circumstances means ‘using no more force than is needed’.
- 18.5. We have a key emphasis on de-escalation and only use physical touch to prevent a child or others being harmed. If we do this, we ensure it is for the shortest time necessary.
- 18.6. Where it has been necessary to use physical intervention, we ensure the following:
  - The child’s wellbeing after the event is monitored and supported

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- parents are fully briefed
- the incident is fully recorded including antecedents, de-escalation attempted, and holds used.
- an individual plan is agreed and recorded so that it is clear what will happen should a similar situation arise in the future
- any incident involving the restraint of a child is always reported to an identified senior manager

RCSAT staff who have received training in de-escalation date as of Sept 23

5 x Teaching Assistants and 7 x Teacher

**19. Private Fostering**

- 19.1. RCSAT recognises it has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when staff become aware of, or suspect that, a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement.
- 19.2. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, that should last for 28 days or more.
- 19.3. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; (by marriage or where a legal order has been made, such as a Child Arrangement Order) it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.
- 19.4. Parents and private foster carers both 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.
- 19.5. To aide awareness of this issue, staff shall ensure that parental responsibility for each and every child is established, taking steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child when we register them.
- 19.6. Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, staff shall recognise that they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country.
- 19.7. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.
- 19.8. Where a member of staff becomes aware of private fostering arrangements, they shall be aware that they need to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 19.9. The Designated Safeguarding Lead shall then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of DSL's duty to inform Cheshire East.
- 19.10. The school shall also inform Cheshire East of the private fostering arrangements.

**20. Children who are absent from education**

- 20.1. Under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, RCSAT has a duty to investigate any unexplained absences especially as a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.
- 20.2. RCSAT follows Cheshire East's procedures for dealing with children that are absent or who go missing from lessons and/or school.
- 20.3. All staff shall be aware that children going missing, particularly repeated or prolonged, can 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. We will refer to: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

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- 20.4. Staff shall ensure that they are rigorous in their attendance procedures; these are outlined in RCSAT's attendance policy.
- 20.5. Where a child's destination is unknown after leaving an RCSAT school, staff shall ensure they carry out all necessary checks and refer them as Children Missing Education (CME), using the appropriate notification form on the Cheshire East website, so that they can be followed up on.
- 20.6. Staff shall be aware of the trafficking of children and the importance of rigour around attendance procedures to reduce this as a threat to children's safety.

**21.0 Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)**

- 21.1. Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.
- 21.2. Our Designated Safeguarding Leads will be aware of the fact a child has a social worker and will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.
- 21.3. Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

**22.0 Children requiring mental health support**

- 22.1. We recognise that schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. We are aware of how experiences of children can affect emotional wellbeing, mental health and school attendance
- 22.2 We acknowledge 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.
- 22.3 We ensure we have specific training and clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

**23. Educational Outcomes**

- 23.1. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that staff know the children who have experienced or are experiencing welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues so that, as relevant, we know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment; this means that we are able to make necessary adjustments to help these children to achieve. In this way we maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- 23.2. This includes children with a social worker and those previously known to social care; we ensure that teachers are made aware of those children in this category

**24. Specific Safeguarding Issues**

- 24.1. All staff shall have an awareness of safeguarding issues and shall be aware that these safeguarding issues may not directly involve the child in our school, but could be happening to their siblings or parents this includes the importance of understanding intra-familial harms and support for siblings where there is intra-familial harm.
- 24.2 Staff shall also be aware that some issues could be happening in the lives of staff members.
- 24.3. Staff shall be supported in accessing and completing the relevant screening tools.

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- 24.4. As listening schools, staff shall know how to identify and respond to:
- 24.4.1 Physical Abuse, Domestic Abuse
  - 24.4.2 Sexual Abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment
  - 24.4.3 Emotional abuse and Neglect
  - 24.4.4 Child abduction/community safety issues
  - 24.4.5 Children and the Court System
  - 24.4.6 Children with family member in prison
  - 24.4.7 Homelessness
  - 24.4.8 Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both pupil and parent),
  - 24.4.9 Child sexual exploitation / trafficked children,
  - 24.4.10 Criminal Exploitation including county lines and serious violence
  - 24.4.11 Extremism and Radicalisation
  - 24.4.12 Children missing education
  - 24.4.13 Domestic abuse
  - 24.4.14 Child-on-child relationship abuse/Teenage Relationship Abuse
  - 24.4.15 Child on child abuse
  - 24.4.16 Risky behaviours
  - 24.4.17 Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
  - 24.4.18 Sexual health needs
  - 24.4.19 Obesity/malnutrition
  - 24.4.20 On line grooming
  - 24.4.21 Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children
  - 24.4.22 Bullying, including homophobic, racist, gender & disability. Breaches of the Equality Act 2010.
  - 24.4.23 Mental Health issues including Self-Harm
  - 24.4.24 Honour based violence including - Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing, Forced Marriage
  - 24.4.25 Unaccompanied asylum seeking children
  - 24.4.26 Child Trafficking
  - 24.4.27 Modern Day Slavery

24.5 Staff shall be aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, deliberately missing education, sexting and sharing nudes or semi-nudes put children in danger.

24.6 An overview of specific safeguarding issues and RCSAT responses are provided in Appendix 6.

## **25. Local Governors Responsibilities**

25.1 Local Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

25.2 Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. (KCSiE 2023)

25.3 As schools we ensure that the LGC's and Directors ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. KCSiE 2023 highlights "This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding".

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25.4 The Governing Board fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Government guidance.

25.5 The Governing Board have agreed processes which allow them to monitor and ensure that the school:

- 25.3.1 Has robust Safeguarding procedures in place,
- 25.3.2 Operates safe recruitment procedures and appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and adults working on the school site,
- 25.3.3 Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against any member of staff or adult on site,
- 25.3.4 Has a member of the Leadership Team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Safeguarding and Child Protection issues,
- 25.3.5 Takes steps to remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses with regard to Safeguarding arrangements,
- 25.3.6 Is supported by the Governing Board nominating a member responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse against the EHT or Principal; this is the Chair,
- 25.3.7 Carries out an annual review of the Safeguarding policy and procedures,
- 25.3.8 Carries out an annual Safeguarding Audit (section 175 audit) in consultation with the Governing Board, sharing this with the CESC on request.

**26. Safeguarding Commitment**

- 26.1 All staff in RCSAT take the safeguarding of each and every child very seriously.
- 26.2 This means that, should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected.
- 26.3 This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly.
- 26.4 They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but, at all times, staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.
- 26.5 Further information on our safeguarding and related policy documents and procedures is available on request from the Principal/EHT or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**APPENDICES 1 TO 6 FOLLOW**



## Staying Safe at BUNBURY

<b>Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Mrs Nicola Badger</b> (RCSAT Executive Headteacher) <b>Ms Katherine Charlesworth (RCSAT Pastoral Lead)</b>
<b>Deputy Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Miss Charlotte Hickson (Deputy Principal)</b>
<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Mrs Susi Waddington</b>
<b>RCSAT Senco</b>	<b>Mrs Jo Cliffe</b>
<b>Mental Health Lead</b>	<b>Ms Katherine Charlesworth (RCSAT Pastoral Lead)</b>

### Our local contact numbers are:

<b>Safeguarding of children concerns</b> (Children living in <b>Cheshire EAST</b> )	<b>0300 123 5012</b> option 3 <b>CHECS (Cheshire East Consultation Service)</b> (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm)  <b>0300 123 5022</b> <b>Out of Hours Service</b>
<b>Safeguarding of children concerns</b> (Children living in <b>Cheshire WEST</b> )	<b>0300 123 7047</b> <b>I-ART (Integrated Access &amp; Referral Team)</b> (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm)  <b>01244 977277</b> <b>Out of Hours Service</b>
<b>Allegations against an adult working with children</b>	<b>01606 288931</b> <i>Cheshire East LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)</i>

**Prevent Referrals:** – Police or [cescp.org.uk](http://cescp.org.uk)

**Cyber Prevent Referrals:** [Cyber.Prevent@nwrocu.police.uk](mailto:Cyber.Prevent@nwrocu.police.uk)

**Mental Health Helpline:** 0300 303 3972

**Adult Safeguarding:** 0300 123 5010

**Police (Emergency):** 999

**Police (Non-Emergency):** 101





# Staying Safe at St OSWALD'S



<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Mrs Nicola Badger</b> (RCSAT Executive Headteacher) <b>Mrs Louise McDonough</b> (Principal) <b>Ms Katherine Charlesworth</b> (RCSAT Pastoral Lead)
<b>Deputy Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Mrs Alison Tomlinson</b> (Deputy Senco)
<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Mrs Brenda Brockbank</b>
<b>RCSAT Senco</b>	<b>Mrs Jo Cliffe</b>
<b>Mental Health Lead</b>	<b>Ms Katherine Charlesworth</b> (RCSAT Pastoral Lead)
<b>Our local contact numbers are:</b>	
<b>Safeguarding of children concerns</b> <i>(Children living in <b>Cheshire EAST</b>)</i>	<b>0300 123 5012</b> <b>CHECS (Cheshire East Consultation Service)</b> (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm)  <b>0300 123 5022</b> <b>Out of Hours Service</b>
<b>Safeguarding of children concerns</b> <i>(Children living in <b>Cheshire WEST</b>)</i>	<b>0300 123 7047</b> <b>I-ART (Integrated Access &amp; Referral Team)</b> (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm) <b>01244 977277</b> <b>Out of Hours Service</b>
<b>Allegations against an adult working with children</b>	<b>01606 288931</b> <i>Cheshire East LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)</i>
<b>Prevent Referrals:</b> – Police or <a href="http://cescp.org.uk">cescp.org.uk</a> <b>Cyber Prevent Referrals:</b> <a href="mailto:Cyber.Prevent@nwrocu.police.uk">Cyber.Prevent@nwrocu.police.uk</a> <b>Mental Health Helpline:</b> 0300 303 3972 <b>Adult Safeguarding:</b> 0300 123 5010 <b>Police (Emergency):</b> 999 <b>Police (Non-Emergency):</b> 101	





## Staying Safe at WARMINGHAM

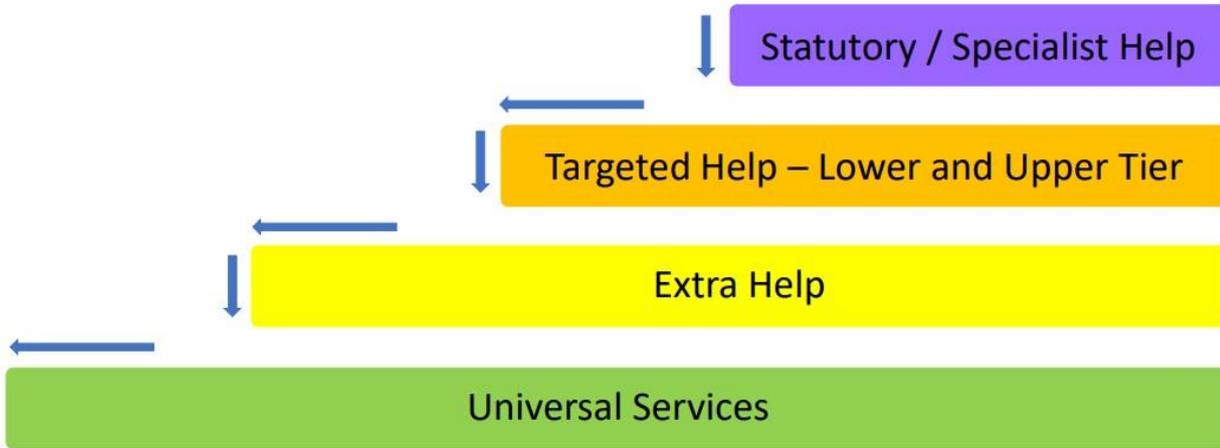


<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Mrs Nicola Badger</b> (RCSAT Executive Headteacher) <b>Mrs Kate Appleby</b> (Principal) <b>Ms Katherine Charlesworth</b> (RCSAT Pastoral Lead)
<b>Deputy Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Mrs Sally Allen</b>
<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Mr Malcom Gates</b>
<b>RCSAT Senco</b>	<b>Mrs Jo Cliffe</b>
<b>Mental Health Lead</b>	<b>Ms Katherine Charlesworth</b> (RCSAT Pastoral Lead)
<b>Our local contact numbers are:</b>	
<b>Safeguarding of children concerns</b> (Children living in <b>Cheshire EAST</b> )	<b>0300 123 5012</b> <b>CHECS (Cheshire East Consultation Service)</b> (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm)  <b>0300 123 5022</b> <b>Out of Hours Service</b>
<b>Safeguarding of children concerns</b> (Children living in <b>Cheshire WEST</b> )	<b>0300 123 7047</b> <b>I-ART (Integrated Access &amp; Referral Team)</b> (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm)  <b>01244 977277</b> <b>Out of Hours Service</b>
<b>Allegations against an adult working with children</b>	<b>01606 288931</b> <b>Cheshire East LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)</b>
<p><b>Prevent Referrals:</b> – Police or <a href="http://cescp.org.uk">cescp.org.uk</a>  <b>Cyber Prevent Referrals:</b> <a href="mailto:Cyber.Prevent@nwrocu.police.uk">Cyber.Prevent@nwrocu.police.uk</a>  <b>Mental Health Helpline:</b> 0300 303 3972  <b>Adult Safeguarding:</b> 0300 123 5010  <b>Police (Emergency):</b> 999  <b>Police (Non-Emergency):</b> 101</p>	



APPENDIX 2

Stepped Approach



Stepped Approach

Universal Services	Extra Help	Targeted Help	Specialist/Statutory Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people have needs that are met within universal provision (such as through their GP or school).</li> <li>All children and young people have a right to universal services, such as maternity services at birth, health visiting, early years settings, schools, colleges, and health providers.</li> <li>In addition, information, advice and guidance is available through the web pages of the Cheshire East Live Well site, the Family Information Service web pages and helpline, and the Family Hubs.</li> <li>Universal services seek to meet all the needs of children and young people so that they are happy, healthy, and able to learn and develop securely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people with extra needs that can be met through a single agency response and / or partnership working.</li> <li>Many children and young people require some additional support. Parents, carers, and sometimes young people themselves, may access these services by applying directly to them or by asking the relevant universal service to help them. Children with 'extra' needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as educational settings, health partners, police community support officers (PCSO's), family hubs, commissioned services, voluntary and faith sector organisations; organising additional support with local partners as needed.</li> <li>Where the needs are such that there are a number of services involved it will be advisable to assess the child or young person's needs using appropriate screening tools and record this on the extra help plan. The agreed actions and interventions should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are effective and that the agreed outcomes are achieved. A copy of the extra help plan should be shared with the family help front door so they are aware who is providing this valuable support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lower Tier:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the complexity of a child or young person's needs increase then a family help assessment must be completed. Where needs are identified, a targeted, coordinated response plan must be implemented with a lead professional. A graded care profile 2 (GCP2) is often required at this level too.</li> <li>The existing lead professional of the extra help plan, where relevant, should either progress to the family help plan or contact the family help front door to request the services of Cheshire East Council's Family Help team. The extra help plan will need to be shared at this stage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Upper Tier:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This level includes those children and young people whose needs cannot be met without the involvement of children's social care (Children Act 1989). This includes concerns that will be assessed through a children and families assessment and may go on to be supported at a Child in Need level.</li> <li>In addition, this includes children and young people requiring intensive health, education and social care support, due to complex and additional needs whose needs will be met by the Children with Disabilities or Short Breaks Team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people with acute or severe needs, or who are children in need of protection, or who are cared for by Cheshire East Council.</li> <li>Specialist services are required where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and / or specialist help is needed to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. This will usually include children's social care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Tier 3 and 4, Youth Justice Service, or specialist educational provision.</li> <li>There are some children and young people whose needs are so complex that they will not reach their potential without specialist / statutory provision, or where they would be at risk from harm if such services were not available to them. These children need to be referred to the appropriate specialist / statutory service so that they can be appropriately assessed and provided with intervention to improve their life chances and to ensure they are safe. Where there is an allocated social worker, they will assume the role of lead professional ensuring that there is a multi-agency plan of intervention. This can be through a child in need plan, a child protection plan or pathway plan. The intervention of specialist / statutory provision is in addition to universal services and often in collaboration with those services already working with the family.</li> <li>Children who are cared for Local Authority.</li> </ul>

If at any point you are concerned about the safety of a child or young person, contact Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

- Tel: 0300 123 5012
- Tel: 0300 123 5022 (Emergency Duty Team for out of hours)



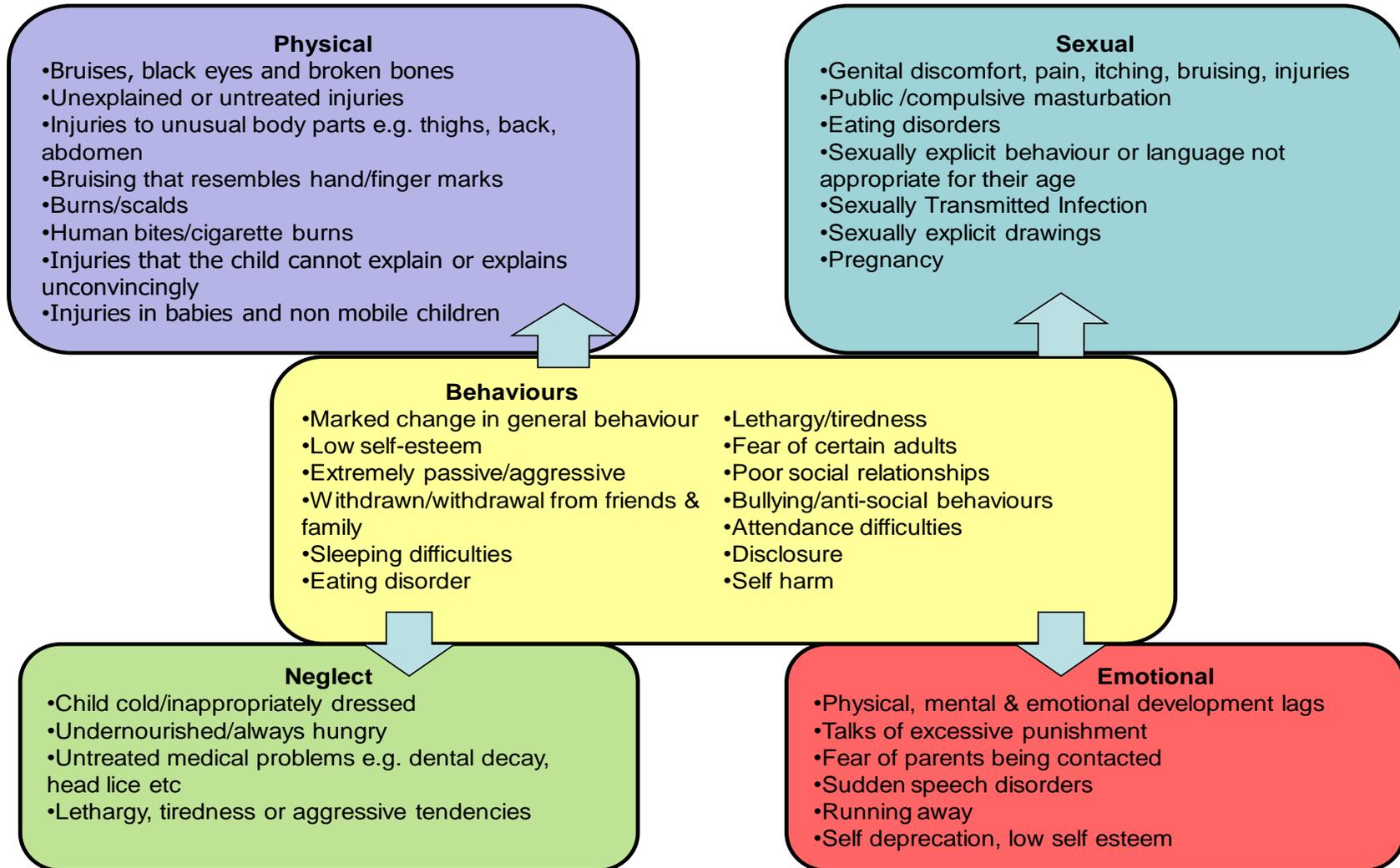
**APPENDIX 3**

**Definitions of Abuse**

<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <p><b>Sexual</b></p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Involves</b> forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.</li> <li>• <b>The activities may involve</b> physical contact: including assault by penetration e.g. rape or oral sex; or non-penetrative acts e.g. masturbation, kissing, rubbing &amp; touching outside of clothing</li> <li>• <b>They may also include</b> non-contact activities: e.g. involving children in looking at/ in the production of sexual images/ activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, grooming a child in preparation for abuse</li> <li>• Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.</li> </ul> <p>Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <p><b>Emotional</b></p> </div> <p>The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conveying to them that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.</li> <li>• not giving them opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate.</li> <li>• developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed; interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability</li> <li>• overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning</li> <li>• preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.</li> <li>• seeing / hearing the ill-treatment of another.</li> <li>• serious bullying (<b>including cyberbullying</b>) causing them frequently to feel frightened or in danger</li> <li>• exploitation or corruption of them.</li> </ul> <p>Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.</p>
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <p><b>Neglect</b></p> </div> <p>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. It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.</p> <p>Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)</li> <li>• protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger</li> <li>• ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)</li> <li>• ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.</li> </ul> <p>It may also include unresponsiveness to, or neglect of a child’s basic emotional needs.</p>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <p><b>Physical</b></p> </div> <p>A form of abuse which may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.</li> <li>• Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.</li> <li>• Injuries in babies and non-mobile children</li> </ul>



# Symptoms of Abuse



Appendix 4



## Receiving Disclosures:



### Receive

- Listen, try not to look shocked or be judgmental
- Believe what they say, accept what they say and take it seriously
- Don't make them feel bad by saying "you should have told me earlier"
- Don't 'interrogate' them – let them tell you, try not to interrupt
- Note the date and time, what was done, who did it, and where it took place
- Don't criticise the perpetrator
- Don't ask leading questions – use 'open' questions to clarify only (T.E.D)



Tell me what you mean by that?

Explain that to me

Describe that....



### Reassure

- Stay calm, tell the **child** they've done the right thing in telling you
- Reassure them they are not to blame
- Empathise – don't tell them how they should be feeling
- Don't promise confidentiality, explain who needs to know
- Explain what you'll do next
- Be honest about what you can do



### Report and Record

- Make a brief, accurate, timely and factual record
- Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy, without delay
- The DSL will assess the situation and decide on the next steps

#### Things to include:

- Time and full date of disclosure/incident and the time and full date the record was made
- An accurate record of what was said or seen, using the child's words as appropriate
- Whether it is 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> hand information
- Whether the child was seen/spoken to
- Whether information is fact/ professional judgement
- Full names and roles/status of anyone identified in the report
- Sign the record with a legible signature.
- Record actions agreed with/by the Designated Lead
- Avoid acronyms/jargon/abbreviations

*Review records regularly; add any new concerns respond to these immediately.*

**DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH INJURIES OR MARKS EVEN IF REQUESTED TO DO SO**

## Forms of Abuse

### Contextual Safeguarding

#### **Including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including,

- sexual identity
- cognitive ability
- learning difficulties
- communication ability
- physical strength
- status
- access to economic or other resources

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs and alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

#### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children

- being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines,
- working in cannabis factories,
- shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- they can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime
- or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they



have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g., through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections
- display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development
- become pregnant

### **County lines.**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media.

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

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

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



### **Children Missing from Home or Care**

Children who run away from home or from care can provide a clear behavioural indication that they are either unhappy or do not feel safe in the place that they are living. Research shows that children run away from conflict or problems at home or school, neglect or abuse, or because they are being groomed by predatory individuals who seek to exploit them. Many run away on numerous occasions.

Our school are aware of the [pan-cheshire-missing-from-home-protocol-2023-2024.pdf \(cescp.org.uk\)](#)

The association of chief police officers has provided the following definition a missing person *is*: ‘Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed’.

Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors need to be considered.

**Push factors** include:

- conflict with parents/carers
- feeling powerless
- being bullied/abused
- being unhappy/not being listened to
- the Toxic Trio

**Pull factors** include:

- wanting to be with family/friends
- drugs, money and any exchangeable item
- peer pressure
- for those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children there will be pressure to make contact with their trafficker

As a school we will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us).

If the parent is also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them, or we will take the relevant action.

### **Cyberbullying**

Central to our School’s anti-bullying policy is the principle that *‘bullying is always unacceptable’* and that *‘all pupils have a right not to be bullied’*.

The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any bullying including cyber-bullying that we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.

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

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

- bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- the use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation



- posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- using e-mail to message others
- hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal.

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

### **Domestic abuse/violence**

RCSAT believes that all our pupils have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, we are alert to the indicators of abuse, and we have a planned approach to supporting children in a proactive way.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. We understand that the term domestic abuse captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Section 2).

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

Domestic abuse can affect anybody; it occurs across all of society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth or geography. Domestic abuse affects significant numbers of children and their families causing immediate harm as well as damaging future life chances. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.

Domestic abuse negatively affects children. We know that they are often more aware of what is happening than parents think. How they respond depends on their age, personality and support network; but they recover best when they are helped to understand and to process what is happening/has happened to them. Their experiences will shape their self-worth, identity, and ability to relate to others in childhood and adulthood; making it much more difficult to succeed at school and develop friendships.

To support our children, we:

- have an ethos which puts children’s wellbeing at the heart of all that we do
- create a predictable school life with set routines
- ensure that rules and expectations are clearly stated and understood by all



- understand that oppositional and manipulative behaviours are not attempts to ‘provoke us’, but may be attempts by these children to control their world when so much feels out of control for them
- model respectful and caring behaviour, positive conflict resolution and respectful interactions, helping children learn not only what not to do, but what to do instead
- use the language of choice, making clear the benefits and negative consequences of their choices ensuring that we follow through with any consequences or sanctions
- support children to put feelings into words. We build up a vocabulary of emotional words with them so that they can begin to express their feelings more appropriately/accurately (*A child exposed to domestic abuse may have seen a lot of behaviours that express strong feelings, but may not have heard words to appropriately express/ describe these feelings*)
- understand that the child may experience conflicting and confusing emotions when thinking of or talking about their parents
- create opportunities for children to feel successful. We let the child know that they matter, taking an active interest in them
- accept that they may not be willing or able to talk about it right away (if ever)
- provide effective, non-verbal, systems for children to access support
- provide reassurance that only people who need to know about the incident will know
- allow the child, where necessary, to safely store work in school or shred it after completion when providing interventions
- have visible and accessible worry boxes/internal support systems /information regarding external sources of support e.g. child line etc.
- provide opportunities to teach about and discuss healthy and unhealthy relationships

### Children, Young People and Domestic Abuse

#### **Emotional abuse**

Staff are all aware that emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which can cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

We understand that it may involve the following:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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

#### **Honour Based Abuse including Breast ironing, FGM and Forced Marriage**

Staff are aware of “Honour-based” Abuse (HBA) which 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 staff will handle and escalate as such; they are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.” *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021*”

Awareness raising has taken place around HBA; staff are alert to possible indicators. They are aware that forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; that it is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence and that HBV and FM can affect both young men and women.

As a school we would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would speak to ChECS before sharing our concerns with the family.

### **Breast Ironing also known as Breast Flattening**

Staff have been made aware of an act of abuse performed on girls (from around the age of 9 years old) in which their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded, burned with heated objects or covered with an elastic belt to prevent or delay the development of their breasts; the intention being to protect the child from rape, forced marriage, sexual harassment or removal from education. It is a practice in Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa. It is often carried out by the girl’s mother.

Staff are clear that they would follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting this abuse where it is suspected.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (also known as female circumcision, cutting or Sunna) and that it is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Staff are also aware that FGM

- is child abuse; it’s dangerous and it is a criminal offence. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM however there is no valid reason for it.
- is illegal in the UK. It’s also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do this.

### **Indications that FGM may be about to take place:**

- when a female family elder is around, particularly when she is visiting from a country of origin.
- reference to FGM in conversation e.g. a girl may tell other children about it.
- a girl may confide that she is to have a ‘special procedure’ or to attend a special occasion to ‘become a woman’.
- a girl may request help from a teacher or another adult if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.
- a girl may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.
- a girl being withdrawn from PSHE or from learning about FGM (parents may wish to keep her uninformed about her body and rights)

### **Indications that FGM has taken place:**

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet possibly with bladder or menstrual problems



- unusual/a noticeable change in behaviour after a lengthy absence
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- prolonged absences/ persistent unexplained absence from school/college
- seek to be excused from physical exercise without the support of their GP
- child not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- close supervision of child by family/carers

Teachers in our school are aware of their responsibilities under section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 which says that “If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police”.

Members of our school community are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. They have been made aware that FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old. Potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM have been shared and the next steps have been identified, in that we take the same course of action as we would with any form of abuse; the Designated Safeguarding Lead plays a full part in the process of identification recording and reporting. We are mindful that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity is always shown when approaching the subject.

### **Forced Marriage**

Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages. Staff are aware of Forced Marriage and that it is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Children, especially girls who are forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development.

### **Indications that a Child is at risk of Forced Marriage:**

Staff are aware that they need to be aware of significant changes in the child’s presentation emotional and physical, in dress and behaviour.

- appearing anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem
- self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia
- criminal activity e.g. shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol
- declining performance, aspirations or motivation
- not allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities
- girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college
- attending school but absenting themselves from lessons
- stopping attendance at school/college
- a family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

### **Actions our school takes in relation to take around Honour Based Abuse:**



- when managing requests for absence, we use an absence request form which requests information on all siblings who attend other schools. Sometimes younger siblings tell teachers information that has a bearing on older members of the family, so it is important that we liaise with the other schools
- the Headteacher teacher requires a meeting with parents to discuss applications for extended leave of absence during term time, as we feel this can provide an opportunity to gather important information. We ask for the precise location of where the child is going; the purpose of the visit; the return date and whether it is estimated or fixed
- we check in with the child/children to see if they know and corroborate the purpose of the visit.
- if a return date has been specified and a child has not returned to school, we would contact our Attendance/Education Welfare Officer. We would never remove the child from the roll without first making enquiries about their disappearance in line with Cheshire East Children Missing Education Procedures and referring the case to the police and Children's Services as appropriate.

### **Modern Day Slavery including Trafficking**

The Modern Slavery Act came into Force in 2015. 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

Staff are aware that:

- a person commits an offence if they knowingly hold another person in slavery or servitude or if they knowingly require another person to perform forced or compulsory labour
- it is an offence to arrange or facilitate the travel of a person with a view to them being exploited. These are serious offences carrying a penalty of up to life imprisonment
- any consent victims have given to their treatment will be irrelevant where they have been coerced, deceived or provided with payment or benefit to achieve that consent
- children (under 18 years) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only to have been recruited, transported or harbored for the purpose of exploitation

### **Trafficked Children**

Human trafficking is defined by the United Nations, in respect of children, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim.

As a school we are alert to the signs both for our children and for their families and are aware that this may be if they:

- show signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy



- have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- are required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
- work in various locations
- have limited freedom of movement
- appear to be missing for periods
- are known to beg for money
- are being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
- are one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- have not been registered with or attended a GP practice
- are excessively afraid of being deported
- look malnourished or unkempt
- are withdrawn, anxious and unwilling to interact
- are under the control and influence of others
- live in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation
- have no access or control of their passport or identity documents
- appear scared, avoid eye contact, and can be untrusting
- show signs of abuse and/or has health issues

For those children who are internally trafficked within the UK indicators include:

- physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
- prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy
- reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation / the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- being in the community in clothing unusual for a child i.e. inappropriate for age/ borrowing clothing from older people
- relationship with a significantly older partner
- accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones etc. with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
- persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having not been at home
- having keys to premises other than those known about
- low self- image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity
- truancy / disengagement with education
- entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- going missing and being found in areas where the child has no known links
- possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is being trafficked, this will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be reported as potential abuse.



### **Neglect**

Staff are aware that 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
- may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse
- once a child is born, may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate **medical** care or treatment
- may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs
- may potentially be fatal
- causes great distress to children and leads to poor outcomes in the short and long-term
- has possible consequences which may include an array of health and mental health problems, difficulties in forming attachment and relationships, lower educational achievements, an increased risk of substance misuse, higher risk of experiencing abuse as well as difficulties in assuming parenting responsibilities later in life. The degree to which children are affected during their childhood and later in adulthood depends on the type, severity and frequency of the maltreatment and on what support mechanisms and coping strategies were available to the child

If we suspect neglect, we will use the [CESCP Neglect Screening Tool](#)

### **Online Safety**

With the current speed of on-line change, some practitioners, parents and carers have only a limited understanding of online risks and issues. Parents may underestimate how often their children come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet and may be unsure about how to respond.

Some of the risks could be:

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

The school therefore seeks to provide information and awareness to staff, pupils and their parents through:

- acceptable use agreements for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
- curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online
- information included in letters, newsletters, web site
- parents evenings / sessions
- high profile events / campaigns e.g. Safer Internet Day
- building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications



- social media policy

### **Cyber crime: Preventing young people from getting involved**

Children are getting involved in cybercrime, many do it for fun without realising the consequences of their actions – but the penalties can be severe. Cybercrime is a serious criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act. If we become aware of any incidents of cyber crimes, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate, or we are required to do so.

### **Risks associated with Gaming**

Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in.

The school raise awareness by:

- talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate
- supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and child safety mode
- talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
- highlighting relevant resources
- making our children aware of the dangers including of online grooming and how to keep themselves safe
- making our children aware of how to report concerns

### **Child on child abuse**

Children can abuse other children and this is often referred to as child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nude’s images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- ‘Up skirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Staff are clear on our procedures with regards to child on child abuse and do not take it any less serious than adult to child abuse; they are aware that it should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”. We ensure that we apply the same thresholds.

In our school we have referred to the [Respectful School Communities toolkit](#) for advice on creating a culture in which sexual harassment of all kinds is treated as unacceptable.



Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged then the school follows the guidance issued by the DfE in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

[Where sharing nudes or semi nudes \(youth produced sexual images\) are part of the abuse then the school follows the UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings](#)

### **Physical abuse**

Staff are aware of the signs of potential physical abuse and that it might involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

They are also aware that physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism**

At RCSAT we recognise that children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. RCSAT adheres to the Prevent Duty Guidance, July 2015 (most recently updated in April 2021) and seeks to protect children against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent them being drawn into terrorism; including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The school community has been made aware of the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism; they are also aware that the normalisation of extreme views may make children vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

In order to raise awareness and reduce risks we ensure that our preventative work is specifically considered, outlined and highlighted in all relevant policies and procedures, including those for Information technology, Special Educational Needs, attendance, assemblies, the use of school premises by external agencies, behaviour and anti-bullying and the RE and PSHE curriculum.

Our taught curriculum includes educating children of how people with extreme views share these with others; 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.

In our school community we are aware of these specific issues, relevant to our school's profile

All staff have received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism. This training is reinforced by yearly refresher training.



RCSAT is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern; therefore, concerns need to be recorded and discussed with the DSL; with timely, appropriate action then being taken.

The **Prevent Duty** requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for political; environmental; animal rights; or faith-based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral. (this could be about an adult and/or a child).

In Cheshire East if we suspect a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, including being radicalised we would contact:

Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS): **0300 123 5012 (Option 3)**, Then choose **Option 2** – ChECS / Immediate safeguarding concerns

**and** complete a [Prevent referral](https://www.stopadultabuse.org.uk) on the stopadultabuse.org.uk website.

#### **Where necessary individuals may be discussed at Channel:**

Staff are aware of Channel being a partnership approach to support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists. The Channel Duty Guidance: protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, was updated in 2020.

#### **In Cheshire East the Channel Co-ordinator is Sandra Murphy – Head of Adult Safeguarding.**

The CE Channel Panel meets monthly. Attendees sign a Confidentiality Agreement and share case information. Discussion covers the vulnerabilities of individuals and their families, current support, and risks for the individual and community. Attendees agree if the case is appropriate for Channel and the support plan which is needed.

For those already open to Panel support plans are tailored, building on existing support, and may consist of help with family problems, mental health support, religious education, mentoring etc. Consent is then sought from the adult / parent with parental responsibility

For those who are not Channel appropriate: a safe exit from Channel or a referral elsewhere is discussed.

The Safeguarding Children in Education Settings (SCiES) team represent education settings at these meetings. This means that SCiES may contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead before a meeting to request our view regarding the lived experience of the young person. They contact us afterwards to give us an update. Schools may be invited to attend the meeting.

#### **Serious violence**

All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with



older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

### **Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes**

This form of abuse also includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging.

While sharing nudes can take place in a consensual relationship between two children under the age of 18, the use of explicit images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more commonplace. Sharing nudes can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers.

As the average age of first smartphone or camera enabled tablet is 6 years old, sharing nudes and semi-nudes is an issue that requires awareness raising across all ages.

The school use age-appropriate educational material to raise awareness, to promote safety and deal with pressure. Parents are made aware that they can come to the school for advice.



**Sexual abuse**

Staff are aware of sexual abuse and that:

- It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening
- The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse
- It can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse
- It is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education see child-on-child.

**Acronyms**

The policy contains a number of acronyms used in the safeguarding. These acronyms are listed below alongside their descriptions.

Acronym	Long form	Description
CCE	Child criminal exploitation	A form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
CSC	Children's Social Care	The branch of the local authority that deals with children's social care.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	A form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
DBS	Disclosure and barring service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body with responsibility for children's services, policy and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DPO	Data protection officer	The appointed person in school with responsibility for overseeing data protection strategy and implementation to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act.
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	A member of the senior leadership team who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the school.



EHC plan	Education, Health and Care Plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs for pupils who have significant needs that impact on their learning and access to education. The plan identifies any additional support needs or interventions and the intended impact they will have for the pupil.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	All procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
UK GDPR	UK General Data Protection Regulation	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation and ensure that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.
HBA	'Honour-based' abuse	So-called 'honour-based' abuse involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community.
KCSIE	Keeping children safe in education	Statutory guidance setting out schools and colleges' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LA	Local authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.
LAC in CE Cared For Children	Looked-after children	Children who have been placed in local authority care or where children's services have looked after children for more than a period of 24 hours.
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus	Term relating to a community of people, protected by the Equality Act 2010, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or other protected sexual or gender identities.
MAT	Multi-academy trust	A trust established to undertake strategic collaboration and provide education across a number of schools
NPCC	The National Police Chiefs' Council	The National Police Chiefs' Council is a national coordination body for law enforcement in the United Kingdom and the representative body for British police chief officers.
PLAC/PC4C	Previously looked-after children / cared for	Children who were previously in local authority care or were looked after by children's services for more than a period of 24 hours. PLAC are also known as care leavers.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which pupils learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
PHE	Public Health England	An executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care which aims to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing.
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all pupils. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction and sexuality, as well as promoting positive relationships.
SCR	Single central record	A statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches and instructors, and volunteers who attend the school in a non-visitor capacity.
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	A statutory role within all schools maintaining oversight and coordinating the implementation of the school's special educational needs policy and provision of education to pupils with special educational needs.



SLT	Senior leadership team	Staff members who have been delegated leadership responsibilities in a school.
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency	An executive agency of the DfE with responsibility for the regulation of the teaching profession.
TRA	Teenage Relationship Abuse	Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children known as teenage relationship abuse
VSH	Virtual school head	Virtual school heads are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for, and all children who currently have, or previously had, a social worker.

