

Charitable Objects of St. Catherine's School- *The Objects for which the Company is established are to promote and provide for the advancement of education by providing, conducting, governing, carrying on and maintaining in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, a boarding or day School or Schools for girls in which the teaching shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.*



WHOLE SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Whole School refers to all staff and students in the St. Catherine's Preparatory and Senior Schools which includes: Pre-Prep School (EYFS and Key Stage 1), Prep School (Key Stage 2); Middle School (Key Stage 3); Senior School (Key Stage 4) and the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5).

This policy was revised in October 2024 in line with the School's Policy Review Schedule, which ensures that all policies are kept up to date, and replaces that which was written prior to 1998 and updated in 1999 and 2000. The policy is revised as a minimum annually but also with any new legislative change. It underwent major revisions as follows and is always subject to review with every change in Child Protection Legislation/Regulations: in 2005/6, 2006/7; significant changes in 2009 and September 2010; September 2012, July 2013, January and July 2014, March 2015, September 2016, October 2017, September 2018, September 2019, April 2020, October 2020, September 2021, September 2022, November 2022, September 2023, May 2024 and September 2024.

In addition, this policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

Staff Recruitment, Induction of New Staff, Equal Opportunities, Anti-Bullying, Anti-Bullying in the Workplace, Whistleblowing, Educational Visits (Prep and Senior), Action in Case of a Missing Pupil, Code of Conduct for Staff, ICT Policy – Guidelines for the use of Digital Technology, Discipline, Awards and Rewards (Prep School), Rewards and Sanctions (Senior School) and associated EYFS Policies and the PSHE/PSHCE (Life Matters) scheme of work in Prep and Senior Schools. School absence procedures are outlined in the Parent and Staff Handbooks. Specific care for Boarders is covered in the Resident Staff Handbook.

St. Catherine's School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and works in partnership with Surrey and Sussex police as part of Operation Encompass. DSLs will work closely with the three safeguarding partners as and when required.

The Child Protection policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School and is subject to annual review by the governing body.

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Safeguarding Statement

“It could happen here”

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, both day and boarding.

We make every effort to provide an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to talk if they are worried, believing they will be effectively listened to.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school. The policy also informs parents and carers how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Key Personnel

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

Mrs. Kirsty Meredith

Contact details: kirsty.meredith@stcatherines.info **01483 899604**

Deputy DSLs are:

Mrs. Denise Irons

Contact details: denise.irons@stcatherines.info **Tel: 01483 899745**

Miss. Emily Jefford (EYFS safeguarding lead)

Contact details: emily.jefford@stcatherines.info **01483 899667**

Mrs. Vic Alexander

Contact details: vic.alexander@stcatherines.info **01483 899651**

The nominated child protection governor is

Mrs Clare S Johnstone [Dr C S Higgs] MBBS (London), MRCS LRCP, MD, FRCP (London)

Contact **c/o St. Catherine’s School** businesssteampa@stcatherines.info **Tel: 01483 893363**

The Chair of the Governors is: Matthew P Lowe MBE MA RCDS

Contact **c/o St. Catherine’s School** businesssteampa@stcatherines.info **Tel: 01483 893363**

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children’s mental or physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes;

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Early Help means providing support as soon as any needs emerge or are identified at any point in a child’s life. This is support for children of all ages that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child(ren) includes everyone under the age of 18, both day and boarding pupils. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however, the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Social Care refers to Children's Services in the area in which the child is resident, unless a child is a Looked After Child then this will be the Children's Services in their home authority.

MAP refers to the Surrey Multi-Agency Partnership.

C-SPA refers to the Children's Single Point of Access and the Child Protection Consultation Line.

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, and in line with statutory guidance: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018, Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' 2000, 'What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused' 2015, Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010.

The policy also reflects both statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 (KCSIE), and [Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) (SSCP) Procedures and National Minimum Standards for Boarding (NMS)

The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure there are robust arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm or at risk of suffering harm.

This school actively promotes the wellbeing of pupils by being focussed on:

- Physical and Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Protection of pupils from harm and Neglect

Pupil voice is valued, and we listen in respect of pupils' concerns, with a view to being supportive and available.

This policy applies to all members of staff and governors in the school.

Guidance and documents referred to in this policy

- [Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership protocols, guidance and procedures](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#) (updated September 2024)

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education \(updated September 2021\)](#)
- [Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and well-being](#)
- [Promoting and supporting mental health and well-being in Schools and Colleges](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#)

The Prevent Duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation

- [The use of social media for online radicalisation](#)
- [Educate against Hate: Hosting Speakers on School premises](#)
- [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak \(August 2021\)](#)
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(updated 2018\)](#)
- [FGM Act 2003 Mandatory Reporting Guidance 2016 \(updated 22/01/2020\)](#)
- [‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ 2015](#)
- [Teacher Standards 2011\(updated 2021\)](#)
- [Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners’ guidance 2015\(Updated 2024\)](#)
- [SCC Children Missing Education\(updated 2024\)](#)
- [SCC Touch and the use of physical intervention when working with children and young people \(2020\)](#)
- [Filtering and monitoring standards \(DfE\) \(updated 2024\)](#)

Policy Principles & Values

The welfare of the child is paramount.

Maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the school will ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account.

All staff should be aware the children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. We recognise that as a boarding school we have an additional factor to consider.

Children have a right to feel safe and secure - they cannot learn effectively unless they do so.

All children have a right to be protected from harm and abuse.

All staff have a role in the prevention of harm and abuse and an equal responsibility to act immediately on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in the school or in the community, taking into account contextual safeguarding, in accordance with statutory guidance. This is a whole school approach to safeguarding and underpins all aspects of process and policy development putting child protection at the forefront.

We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership, working to protect and safeguard children.

Whilst the school will work openly with both parents of day students and boarders as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact Social Care or the police, without notifying parents, if this is believed to be in the child's best interests.

Policy Aims

To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.

To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of their responsibilities to safeguard children through identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.

To enable the school to contribute effectively to Early Help, assessments of need and support for those children.

To provide robust school systems and procedures that are followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation.

To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, in particular Early Help providers, the Police, Health and Social Care.

To ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, an online check and a satisfactory DBS check (according to KCSIE guidance), and a single central record is kept for audit.

We comply with the [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#) guidance issued in August 2018.

Supporting Children

We recognise that school may provide a safe place and the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses abuse and/or violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our school will support all children:

We will promote a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.

We will encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum and through positive relationships within the school community.

We will ensure children are taught to understand, recognise and manage risk through Life Matters lessons (PSHE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and through all aspects of school life. This includes online safety.

We will be responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress and anxiety.

We will offer details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support.

We will liaise and work in partnership with other support services and agencies involved in Early Help and the safeguarding of children.

We will notify Social Care immediately if there is a significant concern.

We will provide continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that information is shared under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensure the school records are forwarded as a matter of priority and within statutory timescales.

Prevention / Protection

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school will:

Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.

Include regular consultation with children.

Have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Ensure that all children know there is and can access an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including in Life Matters lessons, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular, this will include anti-bullying work, online-safety, accessing emergency services and road safety. The school has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. There is also focused work in Year 6 to prepare for transition to their senior school that includes more personal safety/independent travel.

Ensure 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

Ensure staff have an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

Visiting Speakers

Staff should:

- Recognise that outside speakers are an integral part of our education provision and allow them to encourage healthy debate and the opportunity to listen to different views and outlooks. In particular staff are encouraged to ensure diversity in the range of speakers invited into school.
- Follow the school practice of inviting speakers who are known to the school, whom they have heard speaking themselves or who are recommended by reputable contacts so that there are no surprises during the presentation.
- Investigate the background of speakers not known to the School, usually by using the internet and social media to ensure that speakers do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Review materials to be included in the presentation ahead of the speaker visiting, including slides, handouts etc.
- Seek approval from a member of SMT for a speaker who will have contact with pupils
- Be alert always to the possibility of Radicalisation and recall staff training under Prevent. When deciding whether to host a particular speaker, staff should consider carefully whether the views being expressed, or likely to be expressed, constitute views that are used to encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism, or are shared by terrorist groups.
- Be prepared to bring a session to a close immediately if it is clear that the content is inappropriate or offensive and send for a member of SMT for support

Safe School, Safe Staff

We will ensure that:

The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children.

All staff receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, the school's safeguarding statement, staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), child protection policy, the role and names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy(ies), and [Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 or annex A. and Annex B for more information.](#)

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction in line with advice from [Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) which is regularly updated and receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually.

All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns.

All staff and governors have regular child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL team as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The child protection policy is made available via the school website and that parents/carers are made aware of this policy.

All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the Child Protection Policy and reference to it in the school's handbook.

We provide a coordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contribute to early help arrangements and inter-agency working and plans.

Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.

Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's Child Protection Policy, guidelines and procedures.

The name of the designated members of staff for child protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy(ies), are clearly advertised in the school with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected harm and abuse.

All staff will be emailed a copy of Part 1 or Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and will sign to say they have read and understood it. This applies to the Governing Body in relation to part 1 & part 2 of the same guidance. Staff who do not work directly with children may read Annex A rather than part 1 of KCSIE. This will be decided on a case by case basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

All School Staff:

Have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this, they will:

Provide a safe environment in which children can learn, including online learning. Staff will have an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring

Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.

Are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals will attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

Are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken, following our child protection policy and procedure and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Will recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, this doesn't mean it isn't or can't happen here.

Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.

Attend training in order to be aware of, and alert to, the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" with regards to safeguarding.

Know how to respond to a pupil who discloses harm or abuse following training of 'Working together to Safeguard Children', and 'What to do if you are worried a child is being Abused' (2015).

Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused, neglected or exploited and report these to the DSL immediately that day. If the DSL is not contactable immediately a Deputy DSL should be informed.

Be prepared to refer directly to the Multi Agency Partnership (MAP), and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or DDSL is not available.

Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.

Follow the procedures set out by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education.

Provide support for children subject to Early Help, Child in Need or Child Protection that is in keeping with their plan.

Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to "keep a secret".

Notify the DSL or their Deputy of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods.

Have an understanding of early help and be prepared to identify and support children who may benefit from early help.

Will identify children who may benefit from early help, liaising with the DSL in the first instance. (Options may include managing support for the child internally via the school's pastoral support process or an early help assessment). In some circumstances it may be appropriate for a member of school staff to act as the lead professional in early help cases.

Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.

Know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and know how to contact them.

Have an awareness of the role of the DSL, the school's Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policies and Staff Code of Conduct, and procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education.

Be mindful that the Teacher Standards states that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

If, in exceptional circumstances, The DSL or DDSLs are not available this should not delay the action being taken. Staff should speak to a senior manager or take advice from C-Spa Assist the Governing Body and Headteacher in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities set out in legislation and statutory guidance.

The Headmistresses:

In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the Headmistresses will ensure that:

The school fully contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.

All staff are aware of the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), including the identity of the DSL and any deputies.

Sufficient time, training, support, funding, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL to carry out their role effectively, including the provision of advice and support to school staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions/meetings and other inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so; and to contribute to the assessment of children.

That opportunities are provided for a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.

Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL and the role is explicit in their job description.

Adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements are in place for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Where there is a safeguarding concern that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

Child-centred systems and processes are in place for children to express their views and give feedback.

All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures.

Pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.

That allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and Surrey County Council (SCC).

That statutory requirements are met to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and additionally in the case of teaching staff the Teacher Regulation Agency where they think an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if the person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the DSL will:

Hold the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the school, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
. This responsibility is not able to be delegated.

Have an “it could happen here” approach to safeguarding.

Liaise with the local authority and work in partnership with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

NPCC (National Police Chief’s Council) – [When to Call the Police](#) will help DSLs to understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

Manage and submit a Request for Support Form for a child if there are concerns about suspected harm or abuse, to the Children’s Single Point of Access (C-SPA), and act as a point of contact and support for school staff. Requests for support should be made securely by email to cspa@surreycc.gov.uk using the [Request for Support Form](#) and urgent referrals should be made by telephone 0300 470 9100 (and ask for the priority line).

Report concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, following the Channel/ [Prevent referral process](#) and use the Prevent referral form to refer cases by e-mail to preventreferrals@surrey.pnn.police.uk . If the matter is urgent then Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In cases where further advice from the Police is sought dial 101 or 01483 632982 and ask to speak to the Prevent Supervisor for Surrey.

The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Liaise with the “case manager” and Local Authority Designated Officer for child protection concerns in cases which concern a member of staff or a volunteer; and refer cases where a person is dismissed or left service due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency, as required.

Follow DfE and KCSIE guidance on ‘Child on Child Abuse’ when a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a pupil abusing another pupil within the school and make it clear there is a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse.

Be available during term time (during school hours) for staff in school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Appropriate and adequate cover arrangements will be arranged by the DSL and the school leadership for any out of hours/term activities.

Act as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole school community.

Encourage and promote a culture amongst all staff of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.

Access training and support to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. DSL training should be updated at least every two years and their knowledge and skills refreshed at regular intervals but at least annually.

Have a secure working knowledge of SSCP procedures and understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including the local authority levels of need criteria and referral arrangements.

Have a clear understanding of access and referral to the local early help offer and will support and advise members of staff where early help intervention is appropriate.

Understand and support the school delivery with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and provide advice and guidance to staff on protecting children from radicalisation.

Liaise with school staff (especially pastoral support, behaviour leads, school health colleagues and the SENDCO) on matters of safety and safeguarding and consult the [SSCP Continuum of Support](#) to inform decision making and liaison with relevant agencies.

Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with SEND and young carers and recognise they can be more vulnerable.

Understand the risks associated with online activity and be confident that they have the up-to-date knowledge and capability to keep children safe whilst they are online at school; in particular understand the additional risks that children with SEND face online and the associated and appropriate support they require.

Keep detailed, accurate records (either written or using CPOMS), that include all safeguarding concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, recording the rationale for decisions reached and the outcome.

Ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional child protection file is marked on the pupil school file record.

Ensure that when a pupil transfers school (including in-year), their child protection file is passed to the new school as soon as possible, and within statutory timescales (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and that confirmation of receipt is received.

Ensure that where a pupil transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, their information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. In addition, consideration should be given to a multi-agency schools transition meeting if the case is complex or on-going.

If the transit method requires that a copy of the Child Protection file is retained until such a time that the new school acknowledges receipt of the original file, the copy should be securely destroyed on confirmation of receipt.

Ensure that all appropriate staff members have a working knowledge and understanding of their role in case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency planning meetings, to ensure that they attend and are able to contribute effectively when required to do so; where a report is required, this should be shared with the parents prior to the meeting.

Report to the Headteacher any significant issues for example, use of the [SSCP](https://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/sktp/complaints-and-disagreements/inter-agency-escalation-policy-and-procedure) <https://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/sktp/complaints-and-disagreements/inter-agency-escalation-policy-and-procedure>, enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.

Ensure that the case holding Social Worker is informed of any child currently with a child protection plan who is absent without explanation.

Ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the School's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy (code of conduct) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 1 and annex A and ensure that the policies are used effectively.

Organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all school staff and keep a record of attendance and address any absences.

Ensure that in collaboration with the school leadership and governors, the child protection policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.

Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is available publicly and that parents are aware that referrals about suspected harm and abuse will be made and the role of the school in this.

Establish and maintain links with the Local Authority safeguarding partners to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Ensure that the names of the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead and deputies are clearly advertised, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected neglect, abuse and exploitation.

Meet all responsibilities as set out for DSLs in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the Deputy DSL will:

Be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensure the role is explicit in their job description.

Provide support and capacity to the DSL in carrying out delegated activities of the DSL.

In the absence of the DSL, carries out the activities necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The Governing Body:

All members of The Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities to ensure that:

The school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures including a Child Protection Policy, a Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct, a Behaviour Policy and a response to children who go missing from education.

Policies are consistent with Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection policy is available on the school website.

The SSCP is informed in line with local requirements about the discharge of duties via the annual safeguarding audit.

The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training. If there is not a panel conducting interviews then the individual will have completed the safer recruitment training.

At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years.

Staff have been trained appropriately and this is updated in line with guidance and all staff have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) part 1 or Annex A and mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance.

All staff including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy.

The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (as applicable) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.

A nominated governor for safeguarding is identified.

A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed by the Governing Body as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that role is explicit in the role holder's job description.

On appointment, the DSL and deputy(s) undertake interagency training (SSCP Foundation Modules 1&2) and also undertake DSL 'New to Role' or 'Update' training every two years as well as attending DSL network events, to refresh knowledge and skills.

Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE).

The governors and school will ensure application filters and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children online.

The school will comply with DfE and Surrey County Council [Children Missing Education](#) requirements.

Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place.

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. The Governing body will ensure they are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

Enhanced DBS checks (without barred list checks unless the governor is also a volunteer at the school) are in place for all Governors.

Any weaknesses in Safeguarding are remedied immediately.

Confidentiality, Sharing and Withholding Information

All matters relating to child protection will be treated as confidential and only shared as per the [‘Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners’ \(DfE 2024\) guidance](#).

The Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

Information will be shared with staff within the school who ‘need to know’. Relevant staff have due regard to Data Protection principles which allow them to share (and withhold) information.

The school will refer to the guidance in the Data Protection: Toolkit for Schools – guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with GDPR alongside the school’s Data Protection policy. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools>

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) are not a barrier to sharing information where a failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm. There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies who have a statutory duty for child protection.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child’s safety or wellbeing. However, staff are aware that matters relating to child protection and safeguarding are personal to children and families. In this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

All staff will always undertake to gain parent/carers consent to refer a child to Social Care unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

Child Protection Procedures

The following procedures apply to all staff working in the school and will be covered by training to enable staff to understand their role and responsibility.

The aim of our procedures is to provide a robust framework which enables staff to take appropriate action when they are concerned that a child is being harmed or abused or is at risk of harm or abuse.

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult, the interests of the child must be paramount.

All staff are aware that very young children and those with disabilities, special needs or with language delay may be more likely to communicate concerns with behaviours rather than words. Additionally, staff will question the cause of knocks and bumps in children who have limited mobility.

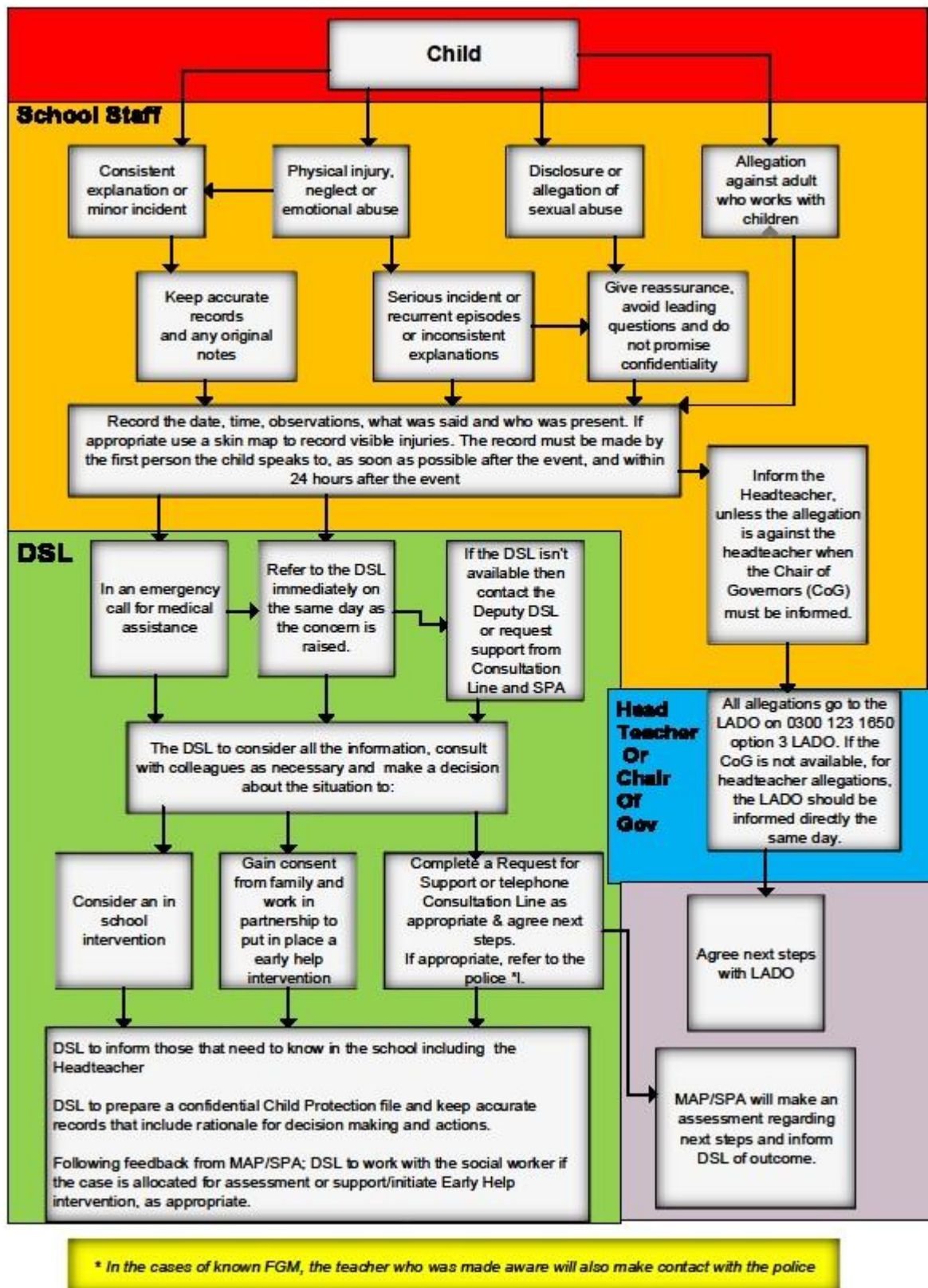
If a member of staff suspects abuse, neglect or exploitation, spots signs or indicators of abuse, or they have a disclosure made to them they must:

1. Make an initial record of the information related to the concern.
2. Report it to the DSL immediately.
3. The DSL will consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, however urgent medical attention should not be delayed if the DSL is not immediately available.
4. Make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:
 - Dates and times of their observations
 - Dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved
 - Any injuries
 - Explanations given by the child / adult
 - Rationale for decision making and action taken
 - Any actual words or phrases used by the child
5. The records must be signed and dated by the author or / equivalent on electronic based records.
6. In the absence of the DSL or their Deputy, staff must be prepared to refer directly to C-SPA (and the police if appropriate) if there is the potential for immediate significant harm.

Following a report of concerns the DSL must:

1. [Using the SSCP Continuum of Support](#) decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm, in which case a request for support must be made to the C-SPA and the police if it is appropriate.
2. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement before making a referral to the C-SPA. However, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk or could impact a police investigation. The child's views should also be taken into account.
 - If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or abuse the DSL must contact the C-SPA by sending a [Request for Support Form](#) by secure email to: cspa@surreycc.gov.uk and contacting the C-SPA consultation line on 0300 470 9100 to discuss the concerns. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the Police (dial 999) must be called. The DSL must also notify the C-SPA of the occurrence and what action has been taken.
3. If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary, they can phone the C-SPA to discuss concerns.
4. If there is not a risk of significant harm, the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or consider offering early help.
5. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with the C-SPA or the police whether the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation.
6. When a pupil is in need of urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse, the DSL or their Deputy should take the child to the accident and emergency unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified the C-SPA. The DSL should seek advice about what action the C-SPA will take and about informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention.
7. The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the teacher to report directly to the police. The DSL should also be made aware.

Child Protection Procedures Flowchart



Dealing with disclosures/reports

All staff:

A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.

Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

All staff know who the DSL is and who to approach if the DSL is unavailable. All staff have the right to make a referral to the C-SPA or Police directly and should do this if, for whatever reason, there are difficulties following the agreed protocol, for example, they are the only adult on the school premises at the time and have concerns about sending a child home.

Guiding principles, the seven R's:

Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and take it seriously
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only so far as is honest and reliable
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be all right now' or 'I'll keep this confidential'
- Do reassure - for example, you could say: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you came to me', 'I am sorry this has happened' or 'We are going to do something together to get help'

Respond

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions i.e. 'did he touch your private parts?' or 'did she hurt you?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court
- Do not ask the child why something has happened.
- Do not criticize the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be a senior member of staff

Report

- Share concerns with the DSL immediately.

- If you are not able to contact your DSL or the Deputy DSL, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact the C-SPA or Police, as appropriate directly
- If you are dissatisfied with the level of response you receive following your concerns, you should press for re-consideration

Record

- If possible, make some very brief notes at the time, and write them up as soon as possible
- Keep your original notes on file
- Record the date, time, place, person/s present and noticeable nonverbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words
- If appropriate, complete a body map to indicate the position of any noticeable bruising
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'

Remember

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues
- Get some support for yourself if you need it

Review (led by DSL)

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

What happens next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are. The member of staff should be informed by the DSL what has happened following a report being made. If they do not receive this information, they should seek it out.

If they have concerns that the disclosure/report has not been acted upon appropriately, they might inform the Headteacher or Safeguarding Governor of the school and/or may contact the C-SPA.

Receiving a disclosure/report can be upsetting for the member of staff and schools should have a procedure for supporting them after the disclosure/report. This might include reassurance that they have followed procedure correctly and that their swift actions will enable the allegations to be handled appropriately.

In some cases, additional counselling might be needed, and staff should be encouraged to recognise that disclosures/reports can have an impact on their own emotions.

Safeguarding concerns and allegations against adults who work with children

Procedure:

This procedure should be used in all cases in which it is alleged a member of staff, including supply staff, or volunteer in a school, or another adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children;
- behaved or been involved in an incident outside of a setting which did not involve children but could impact on their suitability to work with children.

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Headteacher immediately.
- If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the concerns need to be raised with the Chair of Governors as soon as possible. If the Chair of Governors is not available, then the LADO should be contacted directly.
- There may be situations when the Headmistress or Chair of
- Governors will want to involve the police immediately if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

Once an allegation has been received by the Headmistress or Chair of Governors, they will contact the LADO (as part of their mandatory duty) on 0300123 1650 option 3 LADO.

Email: LADO@surreycc.gov.uk immediately and before taking any action or investigation.

Following consultation with the LADO inform parents of the allegation unless there is good reason not to.

In liaison with the LADO, the school will determine how to proceed and, if necessary, the LADO will refer the matter to Children's Social Care and/or the police.

If the matter is investigated internally, the LADO will advise the school to seek guidance from local authority colleagues in following procedures set out in part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020) and the SSCP procedures.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff, including supply staff and volunteers, should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school,

they should speak in the first instance to the Area Schools Officer or LADO in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.

Low Level Concerns

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 may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff Code of Conduct. This would include inappropriate conduct outside work which does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that the concern is insignificant.

Examples of such behaviour are given in KCSIE (2023) part 4, section 2. If the concern relates to the Head Teacher, then it must be shared directly with the Chair of Governors.

If staff have a low level safeguarding concern about something they themselves may inadvertently have done that could be misinterpreted, or something another colleague/member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) may have done which would be a matter of concern, that does not meet the safeguarding harm threshold, then this **must** be shared with the Director of Staff (Sen. Sch.) or Deputy Head – Staff (Prep. School) in the first instance. For all such concerns, they will inform the Head Teachers.

The concern must be recorded in writing. This should include the details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing the concern should also be noted (with their agreement). Records can then be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified.

The safeguarding governor reviews an anonymised sample of the school’s Low-Level Concerns Record at regular intervals.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about a way a concern is being handled by their school. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Important Note

One of the major reasons for the inclusion of boarding Schools within the Children Act 1989 was to ensure that local child protection procedures are followed in cases of alleged child abuse, neglect or exploitation. These procedures require that, to minimise the risk of problems that have occurred in the investigation of abuse elsewhere in the country, the interviewing of children and adults involved is now carried out by specially trained staff only. This follows procedures agreed between (amongst others) the local authority and police, in line with government requirements and in the light of the recommendations of past inquiries. These are designed to avoid unnecessary or repeated interviewing and examinations, to involve the police and medical personnel as appropriate and, in the light of the experience of previous investigations, to avoid the ‘cross contamination’ of evidence that may later be needed in court by interviews that may have ‘led’ a witness. Similarly, boarding

inspectors will not interview or investigate allegations of child abuse, neglect or exploitation themselves. They, too, will refer the investigation to specialist Children’s Services and police staff.

It is important to acknowledge that the Children Act will inevitably lead to some investigations being triggered which do not substantiate the allegation made, as well as those that do. It is a basic assumption that it is better to endure some ‘false alarms’, than to fail to initiate specialist investigation of instances of real abuse, neglect or exploitation

. The Local Authority Designated Officer will work with the Head, staff and pupils involved in any ‘false alarm’ investigation to assist in recovery from the incident, as well as working with the School to assist in ‘living through’ and recovering from a substantiated investigation.

Appendix What is child abuse?

.....
Mrs A M Phillips
Headmistress

.....
Miss N Bartholomew
Headmistress of Preparatory School

Date:

This policy will be reviewed annually or more regularly if required by regulatory change. The DSLs, Senior Management Team and Designated Child Protection Governor will be involved in this review which is then followed by scrutiny and approval by the full Governing Body.