



WALES HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING INCORPORATING CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

(Including; Safer Recruitment, allegations against staff and low level concerns)

Revised September 2026

REVISION DATE	APPROVED BY	DATE OF APPROVAL
September 2024	Governing Body	8 October 2024
September 2025	Governing Body	30 September 2025
September 2026		

To be reviewed annually

All policies are available on the school website

AWAITING FULL GOVERNOR APPROVAL

Key contacts in school

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Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on the school website and is available on request from the school office. Parents and carers are informed of the school's safeguarding arrangements when students join the school and through regular communications.

All staff, including temporary staff, agency staff, governors, volunteers and contractors, receive this policy as part of their safeguarding induction. They are also provided with the relevant statutory safeguarding guidance, including **Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**, together with the Staff Code of Conduct and other safeguarding procedures relevant to their role.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff are expected to read and understand Part One of KCSIE annually and confirm that they have done so. Leaders ensure safeguarding updates are provided throughout the year in response to changes in legislation, local safeguarding arrangements or emerging risks.

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Relevant safeguarding legislation
- Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
- South Yorkshire safeguarding arrangements
- Guidance issued by the Department for Education, the Home Office and other relevant government departments.

The Governing Body will review this policy annually or sooner should legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding procedures change.

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Purpose and Aims:

At Wales High School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority.

We are committed to creating a culture where every child feels safe, respected, valued and listened to. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that every member of staff has an important role in identifying concerns early and taking appropriate action.

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- every student is protected from harm;
- safeguarding arrangements are effective, robust and fully compliant with statutory guidance;
- all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- concerns are identified and acted upon promptly;
- early help is provided where appropriate;
- children receive the right support at the right time;
- all decisions are made in the best interests of the child.

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including:

- governors;
- school leaders;
- teachers;
- support staff;
- volunteers;
- agency staff;
- contractors;
- visitors.

The school recognises that safeguarding includes protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation both inside and outside the home, including online.

Safeguarding also includes promoting children's physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing, attendance, educational outcomes and their right to grow up in safe, stable and nurturing environments.

The school always adopts a child-centred approach. Every safeguarding decision will consider the wishes, feelings and best interests of the child alongside statutory responsibilities.

1. Legal framework

This policy has been written in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance.

Primary Legislation

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002 (Sections 157 and 175)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 (where applicable to safeguarding practice)

Statutory Guidance

The school has due regard to the following statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- Prevent Duty Guidance: guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales.
- Female Genital Mutilation: Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance
- Mobile Phones in Schools 2026
- Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners
- Children Missing Education Guidance
- Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance

The school also follows procedures published by:

- Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- South Yorkshire Police
- NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

Safeguarding arrangements are underpinned by local multi-agency procedures and effective partnership working.

The Governing Body recognises its statutory responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to ensure that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Governing Body also ensures that safeguarding considerations underpin every aspect of school leadership, governance, curriculum development, recruitment, behaviour management and pastoral care.

Safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond child protection and include:

- protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- promoting welfare and wellbeing;
- recognising children who may benefit from early help;
- protecting children from radicalisation and extremism;
- promoting online safety;
- protecting children from child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and county lines;
- responding appropriately to child-on-child abuse;
- ensuring safer recruitment;
- maintaining effective information sharing;
- ensuring staff receive appropriate safeguarding training.

The school recognises that safeguarding is a whole-school responsibility requiring an open, transparent safeguarding culture in which concerns are identified, recorded, shared and acted upon promptly.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to safeguard children and must maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here."**

The welfare of the child is, and will always remain, paramount.

2. Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every student at Wales High School is safeguarded from harm and that their welfare is always promoted. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where every child can achieve their full potential.

The school recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff, governor, volunteer, contractor and visitor has a role to play in identifying concerns, acting upon them promptly and working collaboratively with other agencies to ensure children receive the right help at the right time.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of every child.
- Protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, including online.
- Provide early help and support as soon as concerns emerge.
- Ensure concerns are identified, recorded, shared and acted upon appropriately.
- Promote a culture where children feel safe, listened to and respected.
- Ensure staff understand their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.
- Support children to achieve the best possible educational, social and emotional outcomes.
- Work effectively with parents, carers and partner agencies to safeguard children.

The school recognises that safeguarding extends beyond child protection and includes all aspects of children's welfare, including:

- physical and emotional wellbeing;
- mental health;
- attendance;
- behaviour;
- online safety;
- contextual safeguarding;
- healthy relationships;
- exploitation;
- equality and inclusion.

We recognise that abuse, neglect and exploitation can occur:

- within the family;
- within the community;
- within education settings;
- between children;
- online;
- through the misuse of technology.

The school adopts a child-centred approach to safeguarding. Decisions will always be made in the best interests of the child, taking account of their wishes, feelings, lived experiences and individual circumstances.

We recognise that some children are more vulnerable to abuse or may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting concerns. This includes, but is not limited to, children who:

- have a social worker;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND);
- are young carers;
- have mental health needs;
- are absent from education;
- are experiencing domestic abuse;
- are at risk of child criminal exploitation (CCE) or child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- are vulnerable to radicalisation;
- are privately fostered;

- identify as LGBTQ+ and may be at greater risk of bullying or discrimination;
- experience discrimination because of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sex or any other protected characteristic;
- are pregnant and/or a parent
- have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- are studying on a part-time timetable.

The school will work proactively with families and partner agencies to identify concerns early and provide timely support through Early Help or statutory safeguarding procedures where required.

Safeguarding is embedded throughout school life and underpins all aspects of leadership, governance, curriculum planning, behaviour, attendance, pastoral care and school improvement.

3. Our Ethos

At Wales High School, we believe that every child has the right to feel safe, valued and respected. We are committed to fostering a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and where students know they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported.

The welfare of the child is paramount in all decisions made by the school. We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe and secure. Our safeguarding culture promotes trust, openness and respect, encouraging students to seek help whenever they are worried about themselves or others.

We strive to create an environment where:

- students feel safe both in school and online;
- diversity is celebrated;
- discrimination is challenged;
- respectful relationships are promoted;
- everyone understands their safeguarding responsibilities;
- concerns are acted upon without delay.

All staff maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and understand that safeguarding concerns may present in many ways. Staff understand that children may not always recognise abuse, may not disclose concerns immediately and may communicate their worries through changes in behaviour, attendance, presentation or emotional wellbeing.

Every member of staff is expected to:

- remain professionally curious;
- build trusted relationships with students;
- recognise indicators of abuse or neglect;
- respond calmly and appropriately to disclosures;
- record concerns accurately and promptly;
- report safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with school procedures.

We will never promise confidentiality to a child where doing so may place them at further risk. Children will always be informed, in an age-appropriate manner, about what will happen next and who information may need to be shared with to keep them safe. The curriculum plays a fundamental role in safeguarding.

Through Personal Development, RSHE, PSHE, assemblies, tutor programmes, enrichment activities and the wider curriculum, students are taught how to:

- stay safe in different situations;
- recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships;
- understand consent and personal boundaries;
- identify grooming, exploitation and abuse;
- keep themselves safe online;
- recognise misinformation, disinformation and manipulated online content, including AI-generated material;
- report concerns and seek help;
- develop resilience, confidence and emotional wellbeing.

The curriculum promotes:

- equality;
- mutual respect;
- British Values;
- inclusion;
- diversity;
- tolerance;
- responsible citizenship.

We maintain a zero-tolerance approach towards:

- child-on-child abuse;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- misogyny;
- sexualised language;
- discrimination;
- bullying, including prejudice-based bullying;
- racism;
- homophobia;
- biphobia;
- transphobia;
- online abuse.

The school recognises that effective safeguarding depends upon strong partnerships with parents, carers, children's social care, health professionals, police, local safeguarding partners and other agencies.

Where appropriate, we will share information promptly and lawfully to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding is reviewed continuously through quality assurance, governor monitoring, safeguarding audits, staff training and student voice to ensure our practice remains effective and responsive to emerging risks.

4. Understanding the views of children

Wales High School is committed to maintaining a child-centred approach in which the voice of the child informs all safeguarding practice. We recognise that children are more likely to disclose concerns when they feel listened to, respected and believed.

The school will ensure that every student knows:

- who they can talk to if they are worried;
- how to report concerns;
- that they will be listened to;
- that their concerns will be taken seriously;
- that appropriate action will be taken to keep them safe.

Staff understand that children may communicate their worries in different ways depending upon their age, maturity, communication needs, culture, disability or previous experiences. All staff receive training to help them recognise when children may be attempting to communicate concerns through behaviour, attendance, emotional presentation or other non-verbal indicators.

When responding to a disclosure, staff will:

- remain calm;
- listen carefully without interruption;
- avoid asking leading questions;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking out;
- explain honestly what will happen next;
- make an accurate factual record as soon as possible;
- report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The school recognises that children may not disclose abuse immediately. Some children may:

- minimise what has happened;
- feel ashamed or embarrassed;
- fear not being believed;
- worry about getting someone into trouble;
- be frightened of the consequences of disclosure.

For this reason, staff will maintain professional curiosity and remain vigilant to changes in behaviour, wellbeing, attendance or presentation that may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Children's wishes and feelings will always be considered when determining what action to take. However, staff understand that safeguarding decisions must always prioritise the child's safety and welfare.

Where appropriate, children will be involved in planning the support they receive and will be given opportunities to express their views throughout any safeguarding process.

The school actively seeks students views through:

- RISE tutor programmes;
- student leadership opportunities;
- student surveys;
- pastoral support;
- safeguarding questionnaires;
- wellbeing initiatives;
- restorative conversations;
- school council and other student voice activities.

Gender-Based Premises

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. All students have the right to learn in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where their dignity and wellbeing are prioritised.

The school recognises that some children may question aspects of their identity, including their gender. Any concerns, requests for support, or disclosures relating to gender identity will be approached sensitively, with careful consideration of the individual circumstances of the child and their safeguarding needs.

Decisions relating to gender-related support will always be made in line with:

- the child's best interests and wellbeing;
- safeguarding responsibilities;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- relevant Department for Education guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*;
- the school's behaviour, equality and inclusion policies.

Gender-Based Premises Arrangements

The school recognises that access to facilities, including toilets, changing areas, residential accommodation and other gender-based spaces, must be managed carefully to ensure the safety, privacy and dignity of all students.

The school will:

- ensure that all students have access to safe and appropriate facilities;
- consider the needs and circumstances of individual students when responding to requests relating to gender identity;
- maintain appropriate boundaries around single-sex spaces, ensuring these spaces remain safe, private and suitable for their intended purpose;
- consider reasonable adjustments and alternative arrangements where appropriate to support individual students;
- ensure that decisions are not made on assumptions about a child, but following careful consideration of safeguarding, wellbeing, age, developmental stage and the wider impact.

Any concerns regarding access to facilities, peer relationships, bullying, harassment or discrimination will be managed through the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

Supporting Children Questioning their Gender

Where a child raises questions about their gender or requests support, staff will:

- listen respectfully and provide a safe space for the child to share their feelings;
- avoid making assumptions about the child's needs or wishes;
- seek advice from the EDI Lead, Child Protection Officers or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where appropriate;
- consider whether there are any safeguarding concerns requiring further support;
- work with parents/carers where appropriate and lawful, considering the child's individual circumstances and best interests.

Gender questioning is not, in itself, a safeguarding concern. However, staff should remain alert to potential risks including bullying, harassment, exploitation, emotional distress, family conflict or other vulnerabilities.

All staff should report safeguarding concerns in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Feedback from students helps inform school policies, curriculum development and safeguarding practice, ensuring that our provision reflects the needs of our community.

The Governing Body and senior leaders are committed to ensuring that the voice of the child remains central to safeguarding arrangements across the school and that every decision made reflects the principle that **the welfare of the child is paramount**.

5. Children with a social worker

The school recognises that the presence of a social worker is an indicator that a child may have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse circumstances and is therefore likely to require additional support.

Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker may face barriers to education including poor attendance, interrupted learning, emotional wellbeing difficulties and reduced educational attainment. The school is committed to promoting positive educational outcomes for these children.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure that information about children with a social worker is shared appropriately with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis so that suitable support can be provided.

When making decisions about a child who has a social worker, the school will always consider:

- safeguarding and welfare;
- attendance and punctuality;
- behaviour and wellbeing;
- educational progress and attainment;
- access to pastoral support;
- participation in extracurricular activities;
- transition arrangements;
- any additional vulnerabilities or protected characteristics.

The DSL will work closely with:

- Children's Social Care;
- Early Help Services;
- Virtual School Heads;
- education welfare services;
- health professionals;
- the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO);
- mental health practitioners;

- other relevant professionals.

Where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or other statutory intervention, the school will actively participate in multi-agency meetings, contribute to assessments and implement agreed actions.

Virtual school heads

The school recognises the statutory responsibilities of the Virtual School for children who are looked after and the strategic responsibilities to promote the educational outcomes of children with a social worker. The DSL and Designated Teacher will work collaboratively with the Virtual School and other agencies to ensure appropriate educational support is in place.

The Virtual Headteacher for Rotherham is Peter Douglass, but as a school we work with several other local authorities.

6. Family Help and support for children in need

The school believes that providing help at the earliest opportunity is the most effective way of improving outcomes for children and preventing concerns from escalating.

Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any stage in a child's life.

Any child may benefit from Family Help, particularly those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.

Staff should be particularly alert to children who:

- have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND);
- have a physical health condition or disability;
- have mental health needs;
- are young carers;
- have a social worker;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- are frequently absent from education;
- are persistently absent;
- are at risk of exclusion;
- attend alternative provision;
- are experiencing domestic abuse;
- misuse drugs or alcohol;
- are vulnerable to exploitation;
- are vulnerable to radicalisation;
- are affected by parental substance misuse;
- are affected by parental mental ill health;
- are affected by parental imprisonment;
- experience poverty or housing instability;
- are privately fostered;
- have family members involved in criminal activity;
- are at risk of honour-based abuse, including forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM);
- are pregnant and/or a parent
- have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- are studying on a part-time timetable.

All staff are expected to identify concerns at the earliest opportunity and report them to the DSL.

The DSL will determine whether:

- school-based support is appropriate;
- a Family Assessment of Need should be undertaken;
- a referral should be made to Family Help services;
- Children's Social Care involvement is required.

The school will work in partnership with children, families and partner agencies to ensure coordinated support is provided. Staff understand that Family Help is voluntary and should, wherever possible, be undertaken with the knowledge and agreement of parents or carers. However, where there are safeguarding concerns or a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, appropriate referrals will be made without delay.

Professional Curiosity

All staff are expected to demonstrate professional curiosity. This means respectfully exploring information that does not appear consistent, noticing patterns of concern and asking appropriate questions where necessary to understand a child's lived experience.

Staff will avoid making assumptions and will remain professionally inquisitive where there are indicators that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Contextual Safeguarding

The school recognises that safeguarding risks may occur outside the family home.

Children may experience abuse or exploitation:

- within their peer groups;
- in the wider community;
- online;
- through organised criminal groups;
- within intimate relationships.

Safeguarding assessments will therefore consider both family circumstances and any wider environmental factors affecting a child's safety.

7. Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

The school recognises that abuse, neglect and exploitation can occur inside and outside the home, online and offline, and may be perpetrated by adults or by other children. Abuse may occur over a period of time or as a single incident. Safeguarding concerns will always be taken seriously.

Child protection: refers to activities undertaken to prevent a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm

Abuse: is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm

Victim: is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about the terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they

say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

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

Specific safeguarding issues

Staff should be aware of a wide range of safeguarding issues that may place children at risk.

These include, but are not limited to:

- child-on-child abuse;
- child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- county lines;
- serious violence;
- domestic abuse;
- coercive and controlling behaviour;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- forced marriage;
- honour-based abuse;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- online abuse;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sharing of nude and semi-nude images;
- AI-generated intimate images and digitally manipulated sexual content;
- modern slavery;
- trafficking;
- missing education;
- substance misuse;
- homelessness;
- mental health concerns where these may indicate abuse;
- private fostering;
- bullying, including prejudice-based bullying.

The DSL will ensure staff receive regular safeguarding updates regarding emerging risks affecting children locally and nationally.

Child on Child Abuse

Child on child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in child on child abuse is under the age of 18. 'Child on child abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim. Child on child abuse can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Child on child abuse may not just occur between peers, but also family members, siblings, etc.

Key areas where child on child abuse occurs are:

- Bullying, including online/cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, religious, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Gender based violence/violence against girls and young women
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Physical abuse
- Issues relating to gang activity and youth violence
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence, including texting and harmful sexual behaviour
- Upskirting - taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (carries a 2-year sentence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- AI-generated abuse and image-based sexual abuse

Most cases of students hurting each other will be dealt with under our schools Behaviour Policy but the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns.

This might include where the alleged behaviour is:

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking

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

CSE can occur in all communities and amongst all social and ethnic groups and can affect girls and boys. Children as young as 8 years have been identified, particularly in relation to online concerns. CSE is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess however, all those working in our school are made aware of the potential indicators of grooming and exploitation and how to refer concerns on appropriately. 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 do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

There are two different types of **trafficking** of children and young people for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Firstly, there is trafficking from abroad into the United Kingdom. The second category is internal trafficking, where children and young people are moved from one place to another in the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation. This may be from one street to a neighbouring street, from one area of a town or city to another area, or across county borders. It is not the distance that is relevant in the definition of internal trafficking, but the movement of a child or young person for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Criminal Exploitation of Children (CCE)

The criminal exploitation of children (CCE) is a geographically widespread form of harm that typically crosses county boundaries. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, this can affect any child under the age of 18, appear consensual and could involve violence or threats of violence and enticement.

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. 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.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM can take place between birth and 18 years old.

School is aware of the common risk factors for FGM which include:

- Low level of integration into UK society
- Mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- Visiting female elder from the country of origin
- Being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- Talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.

FGM is addressed as part of the procedures around '**Honour Based Abuse (HBA)**' which is defined as "crimes which have been committed to protect and defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, Forced Marriage and practices such as Breast Ironing"

Our school has due regard to the **mandatory reporting duty (FGM Act 2003)**, which places a **statutory duty** on all teaching staff (along with social workers and healthcare professionals) to personally report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years.

Our staff will be vigilant and will report promptly any FGM or other honour-based abuse concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If a member of staff has reason to believe FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 years and this occurs out of school, then they must exercise their statutory duty and report this to the police personally.

More information on these issues is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Chapters 2.2.11, 2.2.12 and 2.2.13 of the Rotherham LSCP child protection online procedures: <https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Mental Health

School staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are well placed in their daily contact with children to be able to identify behaviour that suggests they may be developing or have a mental health problem.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that our 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 for a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they must take immediate action by following the child protection procedures and speaking to the DSL. All concerns must be logged on the school recording system, along with the actions taken.

For further information on mental health, see chapters 2.1.8, 2.1.9 and 2.1.10 of the RSCP multi-agency child protection online procedures: <https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Serious violence and violent crime

All staff, through training, will be made aware of the indicators which may signal that a student is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships
- New relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in academic performance
- Signs of self-harm
- A significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

If any staff member suspects that a child may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will report it immediately to the DSL.

Wales High School recognises that children and young people may be affected by serious violence and violent crime both within and outside of the school environment. Serious violence can have a significant impact on a child's safety, physical and emotional wellbeing, educational outcomes and future life chances. The school understands that involvement in, exposure to, or fear of serious violence may be an indicator that a child is experiencing vulnerability, exploitation or wider safeguarding concerns. The school adopts a contextual safeguarding approach, recognising that risks to children may exist beyond the family home and may occur within peer groups, the wider community, online environments and through relationships with others.

Staff are expected to remain professionally curious and understand that children involved in serious violence may be:

- victims;
- witnesses;
- coerced participants;
- exploited by others;
- both vulnerable and responsible for causing harm.

Indicators that a child may be at risk of involvement in serious violence or violent crime may include:

- unexplained injuries or frequent accidents;
- changes in behaviour, attitude or presentation;
- increased aggression, intimidation or threatening behaviour;
- carrying or discussing weapons;
- association with individuals involved in criminal activity;
- unexplained access to money, gifts or expensive items;
- increased secrecy around friendships, phones or online activity;
- changes in attendance or punctuality;
- missing episodes;
- involvement with older peers or adults;
- concerns regarding exploitation or grooming;
- increased anxiety, fearfulness or emotional distress;
- involvement in bullying, intimidation or harmful behaviour towards others.

Staff should understand that these indicators do not automatically mean a child is involved in criminal activity. However, they may indicate that a child requires additional support or safeguarding intervention. Staff are expected to report concerns about students carrying weapons – or their intent to do so to the DSL, who must carry out risk assessments relating to both the student individually and the school as a whole.

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more different urban or rural areas, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children groomed and exploited to move [and store] drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas, rural areas and market and seaside towns. Gangs use coercion, intimidation, violence, sexual violence and weapons to ensure the compliance of their victims.

Staff members who suspect a student may be vulnerable to, or involved in, this activity will immediately report all concerns to the DSL. The DSL will consider referral to MASH and the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis.

Indicators that a student may be victims of criminal exploitation include the following:

- Persistently going missing or being found out of their usual area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- Relationships with controlling or older individuals or groups
- Leaving home without explanation
- Evidence of physical injury or assault that cannot be explained
- Carrying weapons
- Sudden decline in school results
- Becoming isolated from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in mental state

- Parental reports of concern

More information on CCE is contained in Annex B Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We understand that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Where there are any concerns raised about the safety and welfare of a child with SEND in school, we will ensure that these will be treated in the same way as with any other child, with careful consideration of any additional needs.

More information on children with SEND is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Chapter 2.1.5 of the RSCP child protection online procedures:

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent Duty)

Our school has due regard to the **Prevent Duty** Guidance 2015, under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which aims to prevent children and young people from being drawn into extremism and terrorism.

In our school we use age-appropriate curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet. We are committed to ensuring that our students 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.

We will engage with parents and families as we are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation and we will assist and advise those families who do raise concerns and point them in the direction of support mechanisms ie, the Local Authority, Police and/or the **Channel Programme**. We will provide a link, via the school's website, to the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership website which provides information on radicalisation for children and young people, their parents/carers and professionals: www.rscp.org.uk

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

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. Referrals to the Channel Panel in Rotherham are via the LA Children's Social Care Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01709 336080.

More information on Prevent and Channel is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Rotherham LSCH child protection online procedures:

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Children witnessing domestic abuse

Witnessing domestic abuse is really distressing and scary for a child and causes serious harm. Children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening are at risk of other types of abuse too. Children can experience domestic abuse or violence in lots of different ways. They might:

- see the abuse
- hear the abuse from another room
- see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards
- be hurt by being nearby or trying to stop the abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that children are victims of domestic abuse in their own right.

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

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

More information on these issues is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Chapters 2.2.8 of the Rotherham LSCH child protection online procedures:

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Our school recognises that many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience, however, this is not the case for all, and this can sometimes mean that some children are less visible to services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. School will work in partnership with the Elective Home Education Team that is based within the Access to Education Team and report/inform the LA when a child is taken off role. Wherever possible, the school, LA and other key professionals will coordinate a meeting with parents/carers before a final decision has been made to ensure that the decision is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important where the child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. Where a child has an Education Health Care plan; the LA will need to review the plan and work closely with parents and carers.

Operation Encompass

As a school we support an initiative called '**Operation Encompass**' a partnership between South Yorkshire Police and Education, supported by each Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Operation Encompass has been designed to provide support for any child in school who may be affected by a domestic abuse incident where the police have attended.

A key safeguarding member of staff in school will be informed when a domestic abuse incident has been recorded within the previous 24 hours or over the weekend. This will enable staff in school to monitor

children possibly affected and provide appropriate support to promote their welfare. This will remain confidential; no information about specific incidents is shared with school. The school will, however, be able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children who have been involved in, affected by, or witnessed a domestic abuse incident.

We are keen to offer the best support possible for our children and young people and we believe that Operation Encompass will enhance safeguarding within our school. This will be extremely beneficial for all those involved.

Our Key Safeguarding Adults are:

- Mr Richard Harrison – DSL
- Mr Jamie Taylor – Deputy DSL
- Miss Chloe Watts – Child Protection Officer

Private fostering

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, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it **does not** include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers 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.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. It is recommended the designated safeguarding lead speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA.

Further information on Private Fostering can be found in Part One and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and chapter 2.3.7 of the Rotherham RSCP child protection online procedures:

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Contextual safeguarding

School staff, particularly the DSL and their deputy(s), are aware that the children in our schools may face additional extra-familial risks outside of the school context.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026 states that, "These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including:

- exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines;
- trafficking;
- online abuse;
- teenage relationship abuse;
- sexual exploitation and
- the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation,".

Assessment of students' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

The school takes local safeguarding issues seriously and adapts, as necessary, the curriculum to meet the needs/ concerns and demands from within our locality. This includes a focus on county lines or gangs for example.

In addition, the school relies on a busy main road for transport links, and is situated next to a major railway line and several lakes/ rivers – Kiveton Pit Top and Rother Valley Country Park pose serious risks to our

students. As such, water safety, railway safety and road safety are regular features of our assembly content, active tutorials, super learning days and PSHE programme.

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. As a school we are aware that the predominant issues associated with online safety are:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **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** – 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 students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group.

Our school recognises that today's students are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. Our Online Safety policy and day-to-day online e-safety procedures have due regard to the most recent DFE non-statutory guidance entitled 'Teaching online safety in school' (January 2023) this helps teach our students how to stay safe online (including Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, Health Education, Citizenship and Computing). We teach students about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform or app.

To address this our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe use of technology, including mobile and technology
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate
- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

At our school, we understand the responsibility to educate our students about all online safety issues; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, in and beyond the context of the classroom.

We have a separate Online Safety Policy which can be found on the school website.

As a school, we will provide information for parents and carers on online safety plus links to useful websites. Chapter 2.1.7 of the RSCP child protection online procedures:

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Filtering and Monitoring

The school will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard students from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, while ensuring that these systems do not unreasonably restrict access to educational content.

The effectiveness of the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed and checked at least annually. This will include both safeguarding and technical oversight and will involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead, relevant IT staff and senior leaders. The review and checks undertaken will be recorded, including any identified risks, actions required and subsequent improvements.

The Governing Body will maintain strategic oversight of filtering and monitoring arrangements and will receive appropriate assurance that systems remain effective and meet the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

AI-Generated Intimate Images and Digitally Manipulated Sexual Content

The school recognises that advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and image-editing technology have significantly increased the risk of children being harmed through the creation, possession and sharing of AI-generated or digitally manipulated intimate images.

These images may be created without a child's knowledge or consent by using existing photographs or videos to generate realistic sexual or nude images (commonly referred to as "deepfakes" or AI-generated intimate images). Such content can be used to humiliate, coerce, blackmail, exploit or sexually harass children and young people and may cause significant emotional, psychological and reputational harm.

The school recognises that technology-facilitated abuse may include:

- AI-generated intimate images or videos;
- digitally manipulated sexual images ("deepfakes");
- non-consensual creation or sharing of intimate images;
- threats to create or distribute AI-generated images;
- sextortion or online blackmail;
- image-based sexual abuse;
- online sexual harassment using manipulated media;
- impersonation using AI-generated images or videos.
-

Staff should understand that the absence of an original intimate photograph does not reduce the seriousness of the abuse. AI-generated or manipulated content should be treated as a safeguarding concern and responded to in the same way as any other form of image-based sexual abuse.

Where concerns arise, staff must:

- listen to and reassure the child;
- avoid viewing or forwarding images unless there is a clear safeguarding or legal reason to do so;
- report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- preserve evidence where appropriate in accordance with statutory guidance;
- work with external agencies, including the police, children's social care and other relevant professionals, where necessary;
- provide appropriate pastoral and emotional support to the child affected.

The DSL will consider each incident on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the child's age, vulnerability, the nature of the content, whether coercion or exploitation is suspected, and any ongoing risk to the child or others.

The school will respond in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance on handling incidents involving nude and semi-nude images, recognising that AI-generated and digitally manipulated content may also constitute child-on-child abuse, online sexual abuse, sexual harassment, child criminal exploitation or child sexual exploitation.

Preventative education forms an important part of the school's safeguarding curriculum. Through Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), Personal Development and online safety education, students will be taught:

- how AI technologies can be misused;
- the legal and safeguarding consequences of creating or sharing manipulated intimate images;

- the importance of consent, respect and healthy relationships;
- how to report concerns and seek help if they are affected by image-based abuse or online exploitation.

The school will continue to review emerging technologies and update its safeguarding practice to reflect new risks associated with artificial intelligence and digital media.

Mobile Phone-Free School Environment

The school recognises that mobile phones and smart devices can provide benefits but can also present safeguarding risks, including:

- cyberbullying;
- inappropriate communication;
- access to harmful content;
- online exploitation;
- disruption to learning and relationships.

To support a safe, calm and focused learning environment, the school operates a mobile phone-free approach throughout the school day in line with Department for Education guidance.

School Expectations

Unless an agreed exception applies, students are expected to:

- keep mobile phones switched off and stored 'out of sight' during the school day;
- not use mobile phones during lessons, social times, breaktimes or lunchtimes;
- not use devices to record, photograph or film other students or staff;
- follow staff instructions regarding mobile phones and other smart technology.

The school's expectations apply to mobile phones and other devices capable of communication, recording or accessing online content – this includes smart glasses.

Safeguarding Considerations

The school recognises that some students may require access to technology for:

- medical reasons;
- communication support;
- accessibility needs;
- reasonable adjustments linked to SEND.

Requests for exceptions will be considered on an individual basis and agreed through appropriate school processes.

Where concerns arise regarding misuse of mobile phones or devices, the school will respond in line with:

- the behaviour policy;
- online safety procedures;
- safeguarding procedures.

Searching and Confiscation

Where there is reasonable suspicion that a device is being used inappropriately or presents a safeguarding concern, staff may take appropriate action in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and statutory guidance. Any confiscation, search or review of a device will be undertaken proportionately, with consideration given to safeguarding, privacy and the child's wellbeing.

Working With Parents and Carers

The school will communicate expectations clearly with students, parents and carers to ensure a shared understanding of the mobile phone-free approach. Parents and carers are encouraged to support the school by reinforcing safe and responsible use of technology and discussing online safety with children.

Additional safeguarding issues

Additional guidance on other safeguarding issues such as Children missing from education, Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, Substance Misuse, Modern Slavery, Homelessness and many more is contained in Annex B of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' along with information about the indicators of abuse contained in Chapter 1.2.4 of the RSCP child protection online procedures: <https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Protocol for responding to self-harm in school

Self-harm is when someone hurts or injures themselves. It can be used to describe cutting, scratching, burning, taking overdoses, punching oneself, substance abuse, self-poisoning, unsafe sex etc. In some cases, this can be a continuum ranging from a behaviour which has strong suicidal intent to behaviour which is part of a coping mechanism.

The DSL in each school is responsible for ensuring that staff members are aware of how to recognise and respond to self-harm, and how to report and record all instances on the child's electronic safeguarding chronology. The protocol includes:

- listening to the disclosure in a calm and non-judgemental way
- reporting the self-harm to the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible
- being aware of any health and safety/first aid needs around the incident.

The Safeguarding Team will keep accurate records of the incidents, liaise with local services and contact parents at the appropriate time, including signposting if necessary.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All members of the school community have an important role to play in creating a safe environment where children are protected from harm, listened to and supported to achieve their full potential.

The school adopts a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding is embedded within the school's ethos, culture, curriculum, leadership and day-to-day practice.

8.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body has strategic responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with its statutory safeguarding duties.

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- safeguarding arrangements are effective, robust and reviewed annually;
- appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies are in place and implemented;
- safeguarding is a standing agenda item within governance arrangements;
- sufficient time, funding, training, staffing and resources are available to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities;
- a suitably qualified and trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL(s) are appointed;
- safeguarding is considered in all strategic decisions;
- safer recruitment procedures are followed;
- allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults working in school are managed appropriately;
- online safety, including filtering and monitoring systems, are effective and regularly reviewed;
- appropriate arrangements exist for students' mental health and wellbeing;
- children are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online;
- safeguarding practice is regularly monitored through governor visits, audits and reports.

The Governing Body will appoint a nominated governor with responsibility for safeguarding who will provide strategic oversight and challenge but will not become involved in operational safeguarding decisions. The Governing Body will ensure that all governors receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role on induction and at regular intervals thereafter.

8.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for safeguarding within the school and for ensuring that safeguarding remains a priority across all aspects of school life.

The Headteacher will:

- promote a strong safeguarding culture;
- ensure safeguarding policies are implemented effectively;
- ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- support the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- ensure concerns are acted upon promptly;
- ensure safer recruitment practices are followed;
- provide sufficient staffing and resources for safeguarding;
- ensure safeguarding training is completed by all staff;
- ensure safeguarding forms part of the curriculum;
- work with governors and external agencies to continually improve safeguarding practice.

The Headteacher will ensure safeguarding remains central to school improvement planning and quality assurance.

8.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection across the school.

The DSL will:

- provide advice and support to staff;
- manage referrals to Children's Social Care, the Police, Early Help and other agencies;
- liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate;
- maintain accurate, confidential safeguarding records;
- monitor safeguarding concerns and outcomes;
- contribute to child protection conferences, Child in Need meetings and other multi-agency meetings;
- support staff who make safeguarding referrals;
- ensure safeguarding information is transferred securely when students move schools;
- ensure staff receive safeguarding updates throughout the year;
- oversee the school's safeguarding training programme;
- monitor patterns and trends in safeguarding concerns;
- promote a child-centred safeguarding culture.

The DSL will ensure that safeguarding records are:

- factual;
- timely;
- accurate;
- securely stored;
- shared appropriately and lawfully.

The DSL will also oversee safeguarding relating to:

- child-on-child abuse;
- child sexual exploitation;
- child criminal exploitation;
- county lines;
- domestic abuse;
- harmful sexual behaviour;

- online safety;
- AI-generated intimate images and digitally manipulated sexual content;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- serious violence;
- children missing education;
- mental health where linked to safeguarding.

The DSL will undertake appropriate safeguarding training at least every two years and will receive regular updates to maintain professional knowledge and skills.

8.4 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are trained to the same standard as the DSL and provide safeguarding leadership in the DSL's absence. Whilst overall responsibility remains with the DSL, Deputy DSLs are authorised to carry out all safeguarding functions where necessary.

The school will ensure that an appropriately trained safeguarding lead is always available during school hours and that arrangements exist for safeguarding support outside normal operating hours where required.

8.5 All Staff

Every member of staff has a responsibility to safeguard children.

All staff must:

- read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- understand this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- know the identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs;
- maintain an attitude of *"it could happen here"*;
- identify signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- report concerns immediately;
- record concerns accurately;
- attend safeguarding training;
- contribute to creating a safe school culture;
- maintain professional curiosity.

Staff must never assume that someone else has taken action.

If a member of staff believes a child is at immediate risk of harm, they must take appropriate action to protect the child and inform the DSL immediately.

All staff are expected to understand safeguarding risks including:

- online abuse;
- child-on-child abuse;
- exploitation;
- domestic abuse;
- mental health concerns linked to safeguarding;
- serious violence;
- AI-enabled abuse;
- image-based sexual abuse;
- radicalisation.

Staff should understand that safeguarding concerns may present through changes in behaviour, attendance, appearance, emotional wellbeing or educational engagement.

8.6 Teachers

Teachers have a unique position of trust and are often best placed to identify emerging concerns.

Teachers will:

- promote students' welfare;
- establish positive relationships with students;
- monitor attendance, behaviour and wellbeing;
- contribute to safeguarding assessments;
- provide safeguarding education through the curriculum;
- report concerns without delay.

Teachers understand that safeguarding is integral to teaching and learning.

8.7 Support Staff

Support staff play a vital role in safeguarding because they often have regular contact with students throughout the school day.

Support staff are expected to remain vigilant, build trusted relationships and report any concerns immediately.

8.8 Volunteers, Contractors and Visitors

All volunteers, contractors and visitors must:

- follow school safeguarding procedures;
- report concerns immediately;
- understand how to contact the DSL;
- wear appropriate identification;
- work within agreed professional boundaries.

Appropriate safeguarding checks will be completed before individuals undertake regulated activity.

Visitors will receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role before working with students.

8.9 Parents and Carers

The school recognises that effective safeguarding relies upon strong partnerships with parents and carers.

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- work collaboratively with the school;
- share information that may affect a child's welfare;
- support attendance;
- promote online safety at home;
- reinforce respectful behaviour and healthy relationships.

Where appropriate, parents will be involved in safeguarding processes unless doing so would place a child at greater risk of harm.

8.10 Students

Students play an important role in creating a safe and respectful school community.

Students are encouraged to:

- speak to a trusted adult if they are worried;
- report concerns about themselves or others;
- respect one another;
- behave responsibly online;
- challenge inappropriate behaviour safely;
- understand healthy relationships and consent;
- seek support when needed.

Students are taught through the curriculum how to recognise abuse, exploitation, bullying, discrimination and online risks, including the misuse of artificial intelligence and image-based sexual abuse.

8.11 Multi-Agency Working

The school recognises that safeguarding is most effective when agencies work together.

The school will work proactively with:

- Children's Social Care;
- Early Help Services;
- Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership;

- South Yorkshire Police;
- Health Services;
- the Virtual School;
- Education Welfare Services;
- alternative providers;
- youth justice services;
- mental health services;
- voluntary and community organisations.

Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and in a timely manner to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The school is committed to constructive challenge, professional respect and effective communication with partner agencies to ensure that every child receives the right help at the right time.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility, and every member of the school community has a vital role in protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare.

8.12 Working with Family Help, Early Help and Local Authority Children's Social Care

The school recognises that safeguarding children requires effective partnership working with families, community services, early help providers and local authority children's social care. All staff should understand the pathways available to support children and families and know when concerns should be escalated to ensure children receive the right support at the right time.

The school works in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, local safeguarding partnership procedures and local authority arrangements for Family Help and children's social care.

Community-Based Family Help and Early Support

All staff should be aware of the process for accessing community-based Family Help and the support available to children and families at different levels of need.

Family Help may be provided through:

- Targeted Early Help support under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004, where a child and family require additional support to prevent needs from escalating.
- Statutory Children in Need services under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, where a child requires support due to additional needs, including where a child is disabled or requires specific assistance to achieve positive outcomes.

Staff should understand the local criteria for referral, including the level of need required, and should seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where there is uncertainty about the appropriate pathway.

Escalation to Children's Social Care

Where concerns indicate that a child may require statutory intervention, staff must follow safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Referrals to local authority children's social care may be required where:

- a child's needs cannot be met through early help support;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm;
- concerns relate to abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Where there are concerns about significant harm, the local authority may undertake enquiries under

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Staff should be aware that children may also become subject to statutory intervention through:

- Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 – where the court makes care or supervision orders due to concerns about a child's welfare.

- Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 – where the local authority has a duty to accommodate a child who requires care and protection.

Specific Safeguarding Pathways

The school maintains clear procedures for responding to concerns relating to:

- Abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, including concerns involving online harm, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse.
- Children involved with or managed within the youth secure estate, ensuring safeguarding concerns are shared appropriately, and support is coordinated with relevant agencies.
- Disabled children, recognising that disabled children may face additional barriers to communication, increased vulnerability to abuse or neglect, and may require tailored safeguarding responses.

Professional Responsibility

All staff must:

- understand how to identify children and families who may benefit from additional support;
- follow the school's safeguarding reporting procedures;
- share concerns promptly with the DSL or deputy DSL;
- provide accurate information to support referrals and assessments;
- work collaboratively with external agencies to support children's welfare.

The school will ensure staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and updates so they understand local referral pathways, thresholds of need and their responsibilities in protecting children.

9. Attendance, Children Missing or Absent from Education and First Day Calling Procedures

Regular attendance at school is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Wales High School recognises that children who are persistently absent, severely absent or missing from education may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), mental health difficulties, domestic abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), radicalisation or other forms of harm.

The school is committed to promoting excellent attendance and will work proactively with students, parents, carers and partner agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity. Safeguarding concerns relating to attendance will always be considered alongside the individual circumstances of the child.

9.1 Whole School Approach to Attendance

Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

All staff contribute to promoting good attendance by:

- building positive relationships with students;
- creating a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment;
- recognising early signs that attendance may be deteriorating;
- sharing concerns promptly with pastoral staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- working collaboratively with families and external agencies where appropriate.

The school recognises that poor attendance is often a symptom rather than the cause of wider safeguarding concerns. Staff will therefore adopt a child-centred and trauma-informed approach when responding to attendance concerns.

9.2 First Day Calling Procedures

The safety and welfare of every child is paramount.

Parents and carers are expected to notify the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence, explaining the reason for the absence and, where possible, the expected date of return.

Where no reason for absence has been received, the school will:

- contact the parent or carer by telephone, text message, email or other agreed communication methods on the first day of absence;
- continue to make reasonable attempts to establish the child's whereabouts where contact is not made;
- record all attempts to contact parents or carers;
- notify the Attendance Team and DSL where concerns arise.

If the school is unable to establish the child's whereabouts and there are safeguarding concerns, the DSL will determine whether further action is required, including:

- carrying out a home visit where appropriate;
- requesting a welfare check from the Police;
- consulting Children's Social Care;
- making a referral to relevant safeguarding agencies.

The school will always act proportionately, taking account of the child's known vulnerabilities and any previous safeguarding concerns.

9.3 Persistent and Severe Absence

The school recognises that children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance) or severely absent are at significantly greater risk of poor educational outcomes and safeguarding concerns.

Where attendance becomes a concern, the school will:

- identify patterns of absence;
- explore underlying causes;
- meet with parents or carers;
- involve the Attendance Team;
- offer appropriate pastoral or Early Help support;
- consider whether safeguarding concerns exist;
- work alongside external agencies where necessary.

The school recognises that attendance concerns may be linked to:

- abuse or neglect;
- anxiety or emotional wellbeing difficulties;
- bullying, including online bullying;
- child-on-child abuse;
- exploitation;
- domestic abuse;
- caring responsibilities;
- unmet special educational needs;
- family difficulties;
- homelessness;
- substance misuse;
- criminal exploitation.

Attendance interventions will always seek to support the child and family whilst ensuring statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.

9.4 Children Missing or Absent from Education

The school recognises that children missing or absent from education are at increased risk of:

- abuse and neglect;
- child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- county lines involvement;
- trafficking;
- modern slavery;

- forced marriage;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- radicalisation;
- serious violence;
- mental health difficulties.

All unexplained absences will be investigated promptly. The school will notify the Local Authority where required by law and will follow local authority procedures for children missing education.

Where a child has been absent for a prolonged period without explanation, leaders will consider whether the absence may indicate a safeguarding concern requiring referral to Children's Social Care or other agencies.

9.5 Children Missing from School During the Day

If a student leaves the school site without permission or cannot be located during the school day, staff will implement the school's Missing Student Procedure.

This will include:

- checking registers and signing-out records;
- searching the school site where appropriate;
- informing senior leaders;
- contacting parents or carers;
- assessing immediate risk;
- contacting the Police without delay where appropriate.

All incidents will be recorded and reviewed to identify any safeguarding learning.

9.6 Attendance and Safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with attendance staff to identify safeguarding risks associated with poor attendance.

Safeguarding indicators may include:

- repeated Monday or Friday absences;
- frequent illness without medical evidence;
- repeated late arrival or early collection;
- unexplained patterns of absence;
- absence linked to known safeguarding concerns;
- children who regularly disappear during the school day;
- sudden deterioration in attendance.

Where attendance concerns are linked to abuse, neglect or exploitation, safeguarding procedures will take priority.

9.7 Vulnerable students

The school will pay particular attention to attendance for students who:

- have a Child Protection Plan;
- are Children in Need;
- have a social worker;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- have SEND;
- receive alternative provision;
- are young carers;
- are known to mental health services;
- have experienced domestic abuse;

- are at risk of exploitation;
- are subject to multi-agency safeguarding plans;
- are pregnant and/or a parent
- have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- are studying on a part-time timetable

Attendance for these students will be monitored closely and discussed regularly through safeguarding and pastoral meetings.

9.8 Working with Parents and External Agencies

The school recognises that promoting attendance is most effective when families and professionals work together.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school may work with:

- parents and carers;
- the Local Authority Attendance Service;
- Children's Social Care;
- Early Help Services;
- health professionals;
- educational psychologists;
- CAMHS and other mental health services;
- the Police;
- alternative providers;
- voluntary sector organisations.

Support will always seek to identify the underlying cause of absence and remove barriers to education wherever possible.

9.9 Recording and Monitoring

Attendance information is monitored daily and analysed regularly by school leaders.

The school will use attendance data to:

- identify emerging safeguarding concerns;
- monitor vulnerable groups;
- identify patterns and trends;
- evaluate interventions;
- inform safeguarding and pastoral support.

Attendance records form part of the school's safeguarding systems and may contribute to safeguarding assessments, Early Help plans and referrals to Children's Social Care.

The school is committed to ensuring that every child attends school regularly, feels safe in education and receives the support they need to thrive. Concerns relating to attendance will always be considered within the wider context of safeguarding and the child's lived experience.

10. Children who are Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After

Wales High School recognises that children who are looked after (CLA) and children who were previously looked after (Post-LAC) are among the most vulnerable members of our school community and may have experienced significant trauma, abuse, neglect, loss or disruption to their education.

The school is committed to promoting their educational achievement, emotional wellbeing and safeguarding by providing a supportive, nurturing and inclusive environment where they are able to thrive.

The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after and previously looked after children.

10.1 Designated Teacher

In accordance with statutory guidance, the Headteacher has appointed a suitably qualified **Designated Teacher** to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and previously looked after.

The Designated Teacher will work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), SENCO, pastoral staff, Virtual School and other professionals to ensure students receive appropriate educational and emotional support.

The responsibilities of the Designated Teacher include:

- promoting high aspirations and educational achievement;
- advocating for the needs of looked after and previously looked after children;
- ensuring staff understand the impact of trauma, attachment and adverse childhood experiences;
- supporting smooth transitions into and between schools;
- contributing to Personal Education Plans (PEPs);
- monitoring attendance, behaviour, progress and wellbeing;
- ensuring appropriate interventions are in place where concerns arise;
- working collaboratively with parents, carers, social workers and the Virtual School.

Our Designated Teacher is Miss Fiona Duncan, FD@waleshigh.com

10.2 Working with the Virtual School

The school recognises the important role of the Virtual School in promoting the educational outcomes of:

- children who are looked after;
- previously looked after children;
- children with a social worker.

The Designated Teacher and DSL will work collaboratively with the Virtual School to:

- improve attendance;
- raise educational achievement;
- remove barriers to learning;
- support transitions;
- coordinate appropriate interventions;
- share information to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

The school will actively participate in Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings and implement agreed actions.

10.3 Supporting Educational Achievement

The school recognises that looked after and previously looked after children may experience interrupted education, attachment difficulties and emotional barriers that impact learning.

Support may include:

- high-quality teaching;
- targeted academic intervention;
- pastoral mentoring;
- emotional wellbeing support;
- counselling where appropriate;
- access to extracurricular opportunities;
- careers education and guidance;
- transition support;
- reasonable adjustments where required.

The school will maintain high expectations whilst ensuring support is tailored to each child's individual needs.

10.4 Trauma-Informed Practice

Many looked after and previously looked after children have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or developmental trauma.

Staff will seek to understand the impact of these experiences and adopt a trauma-informed approach by:

- building trusting relationships;
- maintaining consistent routines;
- responding calmly to behaviour;
- avoiding punitive approaches where safeguarding or trauma may be underlying factors;
- promoting emotional regulation;
- recognising that behaviour may communicate unmet need.

This approach supports positive relationships whilst maintaining high expectations for behaviour and learning.

10.5 Safeguarding Considerations

The school recognises that looked after and previously looked after children may be at increased risk of:

- abuse and neglect;
- child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- county lines involvement;
- missing education;
- mental health difficulties;
- self-harm;
- online abuse;
- bullying;
- child-on-child abuse;
- substance misuse.

Staff will remain professionally curious and respond promptly to any safeguarding concerns. The school recognises that changes in behaviour, attendance, presentation or emotional wellbeing may indicate that additional support or intervention is required.

10.6 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to a child's care status will be shared only with staff who require the information to fulfil their professional responsibilities.

All information will be managed in accordance with:

- the Data Protection Act 2018;
- UK GDPR;
- statutory safeguarding guidance;
- the school's Confidentiality and Information Sharing procedures.

Staff understand that looked after status should never become a source of stigma or discrimination.

10.7 Multi-Agency Working

Effective safeguarding relies upon strong partnership working.

The school will work collaboratively with:

- Children's Social Care;
- foster carers;
- residential care providers;
- parents where appropriate;
- Virtual School staff;
- health professionals;
- educational psychologists;

- CAMHS and other mental health services;
- youth justice services where appropriate;
- Early Help Services;
- other relevant professionals.

The school will attend statutory meetings, contribute reports and ensure agreed actions are implemented promptly.

10.8 Promoting Positive Outcomes

Wales High School is committed to ensuring that looked after and previously looked after children can achieve the very best educational, social and emotional outcomes.

Through high-quality teaching, strong pastoral support, effective safeguarding and collaborative partnership working, the school aims to remove barriers to learning, promote stability and provide every child with the opportunity to feel safe, valued and successful.

All decisions relating to looked after and previously looked after children will be guided by the principle that **the welfare of the child is paramount**.

11. Children Missing Education (CME)

The Governing Body recognises that all children have a right to an education and that being absent from education, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Children Missing Education (CME) are at significantly greater risk of poor educational outcomes and may be vulnerable to safeguarding concerns including abuse, neglect, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines involvement, trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), radicalisation and mental health difficulties.

Wales High School is committed to identifying children who are at risk of becoming missing from education at the earliest opportunity and will work proactively with families, the Local Authority and partner agencies to ensure children receive the support and protection they need.

11.1 Definition

For the purposes of this policy, a Child Missing Education is a compulsory school-aged child who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school (for example, through elective home education that meets legal requirements).

The school recognises the distinction between:

- children who are persistently or severely absent;
- children who are absent from school;
- children who have been removed from roll;
- children who are genuinely missing education.

Each situation requires an appropriate and proportionate response.

11.2 Identifying Children at Risk

Staff should be alert to children whose attendance or engagement changes suddenly or who disappear from education without explanation.

Possible indicators include:

- repeated unexplained absences;
- prolonged periods of absence;
- failure to return following holidays;

- parents withdrawing a child unexpectedly;
- repeated school moves;
- children who cannot be contacted;
- sudden disengagement from education;
- unexplained requests for records to be transferred;
- concerns raised by partner agencies.

Staff should not assume that poor attendance is solely an attendance issue and must always consider whether safeguarding concerns may exist.

11.3 School Responsibilities

The school will:

- monitor attendance daily;
- investigate unexplained absences promptly;
- maintain accurate admission and attendance registers;
- follow first-day absence procedures;
- work closely with parents and carers to establish reasons for absence;
- involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where safeguarding concerns are identified;
- make timely referrals to Children's Social Care or other agencies where appropriate;
- notify the Local Authority when legally required;
- retain accurate records of actions taken.

The school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of any child who has stopped attending before considering removal from roll.

11.4 Removing a Child from Roll

The school will only remove a student from roll in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations and current statutory guidance.

Before removing a child from roll, the school will ensure that:

- all reasonable enquiries have been made;
- safeguarding concerns have been fully considered;
- the Local Authority has been informed where required;
- records are accurate and complete;
- appropriate documentation has been retained.

Where a child leaves the school, the destination school or educational provision will be confirmed wherever possible. Where the destination is unknown, the school will work with the Local Authority to establish the child's whereabouts.

11.5 Children at Increased Risk

The school recognises that some children are more likely to become missing from education and may require enhanced monitoring.

This includes children who:

- have a Child Protection Plan;
- are Children in Need;
- have a social worker;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- have SEND;
- attend alternative provision;
- are experiencing domestic abuse;
- have mental health needs;
- are at risk of exploitation;

- are young carers;
- have experienced trauma or adverse childhood experiences;
- are subject to youth justice involvement.

Additional safeguarding oversight will be provided for these students.

11.6 Information Sharing

Where safeguarding concerns exist, information will be shared promptly and lawfully with relevant agencies.

The school will work collaboratively with:

- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council;
- Children's Social Care;
- Early Help Services;
- South Yorkshire Police;
- Health Services;
- neighbouring schools and academies;
- the Virtual School where appropriate;
- other relevant safeguarding partners.

Information sharing will always be undertaken in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and statutory safeguarding guidance.

11.7 Preventing Children Missing Education

Wales High School believes that prevention is the most effective strategy.

The school will seek to reduce the risk of children becoming missing from education through:

- maintaining positive relationships with students and families;
- promoting excellent attendance;
- identifying concerns early;
- providing timely pastoral support;
- offering Early Help where appropriate;
- working collaboratively with partner agencies;
- ensuring effective transition arrangements;
- monitoring vulnerable students closely.

Staff are encouraged to maintain professional curiosity where patterns of absence, parental behaviour or changes in circumstances appear unusual or inconsistent.

11.8 Record Keeping

Accurate records are essential in safeguarding children.

The school will maintain clear records of:

- attendance concerns;
- contact with parents and carers;
- home visits where undertaken;
- referrals to external agencies;
- decisions relating to removal from roll;
- communication with the Local Authority;
- safeguarding actions taken.

Safeguarding records relating to attendance or children missing education will be securely stored in accordance with the school's record management procedures.

11.9 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- oversee safeguarding concerns relating to attendance and CME;
- support staff in identifying safeguarding risks;
- coordinate referrals where appropriate;
- liaise with external agencies;
- monitor vulnerable students;
- ensure safeguarding records are maintained;
- review patterns and trends to identify emerging risks.

Where a child missing education is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, the DSL will ensure that appropriate safeguarding action is taken without delay, including referrals to Children's Social Care and/or the Police where necessary.

11.10 Review and Quality Assurance

The Governing Body will receive regular reports relating to attendance, children missing education and safeguarding trends.

School leaders will routinely monitor attendance data, safeguarding records and referral patterns to evaluate the effectiveness of attendance and safeguarding procedures.

The school recognises that children rarely become missing from education without reason. By maintaining effective systems, working collaboratively with families and partner agencies and responding swiftly to concerns, Wales High School aims to ensure that every child remains visible, safe and able to access their right to education.

12. Elective Home Education

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, our school will liaise with **key professionals to work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible**. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

When a parent(s) has expressed their intention to home educate it is recommended that school has the agreement of BOTH parents (if they share parental responsibility) where possible.

Children who are home educated can be less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and provide support in line with their needs. From September 2016 (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended so that schools must inform their LA of all deletions from their admissions register when a child is taken off role.

Where a child is:

- subject to a Child Protection Plan;
- a Child in Need;
- looked after by the Local Authority;
- previously looked after;
- known to Children's Social Care;
- receiving support through Early Help;
- identified as being at risk of exploitation or significant harm;

the school will notify the Local Authority immediately if a parent expresses an intention to home educate.

The school will continue to work with Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies to ensure that the child's welfare remains the primary consideration.

The school recognises that parents cannot automatically remove a child from roll if they are subject to a School Attendance Order or where other legal restrictions apply.

Where a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the school will advise parents that they should discuss their intentions with the Local Authority SEND Team before Elective Home Education arrangements are agreed.

The Local Authority remains responsible for reviewing the EHCP and determining whether the educational provision remains suitable. The school will work collaboratively with the SEND Team and other professionals throughout this process.

The school recognises that safeguarding responsibilities do not end when a child leaves roll. Where appropriate, the school will share relevant safeguarding information with relevant agencies.

The Governing Body will ensure that procedures relating to Elective Home Education are reviewed annually as part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Leaders will monitor Elective Home Education requests to identify any emerging patterns or safeguarding themes and will work with the Local Authority where concerns arise.

Wales High School is committed to working in partnership with families and external agencies to ensure that every child receives a suitable education in a safe environment and that safeguarding remains at the centre of all decisions relating to Elective Home Education.

13. Safer Recruitment

Wales High School is committed to attracting, recruiting and retaining staff who share our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The school recognises that safer recruitment is a vital part of creating a safe culture and preventing unsuitable individuals from working with children.

The Governing Body will ensure that all recruitment processes are conducted fairly, consistently and in accordance with statutory guidance, employment legislation and safer recruitment principles.

The school adopts a culture of vigilance where safeguarding is considered throughout every stage of the recruitment process.

13.1 Recruitment Principles

The school will ensure that all recruitment processes:

- promote safeguarding and child welfare;
- deter unsuitable applicants from applying;
- identify and reject applicants who may pose a risk to children;
- comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026;
- comply with the Equality Act 2010 and employment legislation;
- are transparent, robust and consistently applied.

Safeguarding responsibilities will be included within job descriptions and person specifications where appropriate.

All recruitment information will clearly state that Wales High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and that all appointments are subject to satisfactory safeguarding checks.

13.2 Recruitment Process

The school will ensure that recruitment procedures include:

- a completed application form (CVs will not be accepted as the sole application document);
- a full employment history with explanations for any gaps;
- a declaration regarding criminal convictions and disqualifications where applicable;
- references obtained before interview wherever possible;
- verification of the applicant's identity;
- verification of qualifications where required;
- verification of the right to work in the United Kingdom;
- verification of professional status where appropriate;
- an interview exploring safeguarding knowledge, values and suitability to work with children.

Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps identified during the recruitment process will be explored and satisfactorily resolved before an appointment is confirmed.

13.3 Interviews

Interviews will assess both professional competence and suitability to work with children.

Candidates will be asked questions that explore:

- safeguarding knowledge;
- professional boundaries;
- attitudes towards child protection;
- motivation for working with children;
- responses to safeguarding scenarios;
- values and behaviours consistent with the school's safeguarding culture.

At least one member of every recruitment panel will have successfully completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

13.4 Pre-Employment Checks

Before any individual begins work, the school will complete all appropriate pre-employment checks, which may include:

- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check;
- a children's barred list check where required;
- identity verification;
- verification of professional qualifications;
- verification of employment history;
- satisfactory references;
- right to work checks;
- prohibition from teaching checks;
- prohibition from management checks (where applicable);
- overseas criminal record checks where appropriate;
- checks relating to Section 128 directions for management positions;
- online searches as part of the recruitment process.

Online searches will only consider publicly available information and will be undertaken fairly and consistently to identify information that may be relevant to an applicant's suitability to work with children.

Any concerns arising from pre-employment checks will be risk assessed and discussed with the applicant before any appointment decision is made.

13.5 Single Central Record (SCR)

The school maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) in accordance with statutory requirements.

The SCR contains the required information for:

- teaching staff;
- support staff;

- agency workers;
- supply staff;
- governors;
- trainee teachers;
- contractors where appropriate.

The record includes evidence of all statutory safeguarding checks.

The Headteacher and Governing Body will ensure that the SCR is maintained accurately and reviewed regularly to confirm compliance.

13.6 Volunteers

The school values the contribution made by volunteers and recognises the importance of ensuring they are suitable to work with children.

The level of safeguarding checks undertaken will depend upon:

- the nature of the volunteer role;
- whether the role constitutes regulated activity;
- the level of supervision provided.

All volunteers will:

- receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role;
- understand how to report concerns;
- work within professional boundaries;
- be appropriately supervised where required.

13.7 Contractors and Visitors

Contractors and visitors will be subject to appropriate safeguarding arrangements based on the nature of their work and the level of contact they may have with students.

The school will ensure that:

- identity is verified on arrival;
- safeguarding expectations are communicated;
- visitors wear appropriate identification;
- contractors are supervised where appropriate;
- safeguarding concerns are reported immediately.

No visitor should have unsupervised access to children unless appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed.

13.9 Induction

All newly appointed staff, volunteers and regular visitors will receive safeguarding induction before commencing their role or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Induction will include:

- the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, as determined by the school for the role;
- the Staff Code of Conduct;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Acceptable Use of Technology Policy;
- identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs;
- safeguarding reporting procedures;
- child-on-child abuse procedures;
- online safety, including AI-enabled safeguarding risks and image-based sexual abuse;

- filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- low-level concerns procedures.

Staff will confirm that they have read and understood the safeguarding documentation provided.

13.10 Ongoing Vigilance

Safer recruitment does not end once an appointment has been made.

The school promotes a culture of ongoing vigilance by:

- providing regular safeguarding training and updates;
- encouraging professional curiosity;
- maintaining clear reporting procedures;
- responding appropriately to low-level concerns and allegations;
- monitoring professional conduct;
- undertaking regular safeguarding audits;
- reviewing recruitment practices in light of statutory guidance.

All staff are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and to report any concerns regarding the behaviour or suitability of adults working with children.

13.11 Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the recruitment process.

Recruitment decisions will be based solely on an applicant's suitability, qualifications, experience and ability to fulfil the requirements of the role.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

13.12 Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of safer recruitment arrangements through:

- safeguarding audits;
- review of the Single Central Record;
- governor safeguarding visits;
- recruitment file sampling;
- policy review;
- internal quality assurance.

Any learning arising from recruitment activity, safeguarding incidents or changes to statutory guidance will be incorporated into future recruitment practices.

Wales High School is committed to ensuring that every adult working within the school has been recruited safely and shares the school's unwavering commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child.

14. Staff Conduct and the use of 'Reasonable Force'

All adults working at Wales High School have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and to act in a manner that safeguards and promotes the welfare of all students.

The school recognises that positive, respectful relationships between staff and students are fundamental to creating a safe learning environment. Staff are expected to exercise sound professional judgement, maintain appropriate boundaries at all times and act as positive role models.

This section should be read alongside the school's:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy (where applicable)
- Online Safety Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

14.1 Professional Conduct

All staff, volunteers, governors, agency staff and contractors are expected to:

- place the welfare of children at the centre of their practice;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- treat students with dignity, kindness and respect;
- promote equality, diversity and inclusion;
- model respectful behaviour at all times;
- act with honesty, integrity and professionalism;
- safeguard students from discrimination, harassment and abuse;
- report safeguarding concerns immediately;
- challenge poor practice where necessary.

Staff should recognise that they are in positions of trust and that inappropriate behaviour, even outside of school, may undermine confidence in their suitability to work with children.

14.2 Professional Boundaries

Staff must always maintain clear professional boundaries.

Staff must not:

- develop inappropriate personal relationships with students;
- exchange personal contact details with students;
- communicate with students using personal social media accounts or private messaging services;
- accept or request students as friends or followers on personal social media platforms;
- meet students socially without the knowledge and approval of school leaders;
- show favouritism towards individual students;
- engage in inappropriate humour, banter or conversations of a sexual nature;
- use language that could humiliate, intimidate or discriminate.

Communication with students should only take place using approved school systems unless exceptional circumstances have been authorised by senior leaders.

14.3 Technology and Artificial Intelligence

Staff are expected to use technology responsibly and professionally.

They must not:

- create, possess or share inappropriate images of students;
- use artificial intelligence tools to create, manipulate or alter images of students in an inappropriate manner;
- use AI-generated content in a way that could compromise safeguarding, confidentiality or professional standards;
- store safeguarding information on personal devices unless specifically authorised and adequately protected.

Staff should remain vigilant to emerging safeguarding risks associated with artificial intelligence, including AI-generated intimate images, digitally manipulated content and impersonation.

14.4 Physical Contact

Appropriate physical contact is sometimes necessary and entirely appropriate in educational settings.

Examples include:

- providing first aid;
- comforting a distressed student;
- supporting students with medical or physical needs;
- demonstrating practical activities;
- preventing immediate harm.

Any physical contact should:

- be proportionate;
- be appropriate to the child's age and individual needs;
- be the least intrusive option available;
- never be intended as punishment.

Staff should always consider the child's wishes, feelings, communication needs and any known trauma or safeguarding history before initiating physical contact wherever practicable.

14.5 The Use of Reasonable Force

The school is committed to managing behaviour through positive relationships, restorative approaches and de-escalation strategies wherever possible.

However, there may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to use reasonable force to prevent a student from causing harm.

Reasonable force refers to the minimum force necessary to achieve a legitimate outcome.

The use of force should always be:

- lawful;
- reasonable;
- proportionate;
- necessary;
- used for the shortest possible time.

Reasonable force may be used to:

- prevent a student from injuring themselves;
- prevent injury to another person;
- prevent serious damage to property;
- prevent behaviour that seriously disrupts the good order of the school;
- remove a student from a classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction and their behaviour is seriously disrupting learning;
- prevent a criminal offence from being committed.

The degree of force used should always reflect the individual circumstances of the incident.

14.6 De-escalation

Before using reasonable force, staff should, wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so, consider alternative strategies, including:

- verbal reassurance;
- active listening;
- distraction techniques;
- offering choices;
- allowing time and space;
- support from another member of staff;
- restorative approaches;
- behaviour regulation strategies.

The school recognises that many students who display distressed behaviour may have experienced trauma, adverse childhood experiences or unmet additional needs.

Staff will therefore seek to understand the underlying cause of behaviour and adopt trauma-informed approaches wherever possible.

14.7 Restrictive Physical Intervention

Restrictive physical intervention should only be used where absolutely necessary and when no less restrictive option is available.

Staff should never use force:

- as a punishment;
- to deliberately cause pain;
- because they are angry or frustrated;
- in a manner that humiliates or degrades a child.

The school does not support the use of techniques that deliberately restrict a child's breathing or are likely to place them at increased risk of harm.

Where restrictive intervention is used, staff should continually assess whether the intervention remains necessary and cease as soon as it is safe to do so.

14.8 Recording Incidents

Any incident involving the use of reasonable force or restrictive physical intervention must be recorded as soon as possible.

The record should include:

- the date and time;
- those involved;
- the reason force was necessary;
- the de-escalation strategies attempted;
- the type of intervention used;
- the duration of the intervention;
- any injuries sustained;
- witnesses;
- actions taken following the incident.

The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and parents or carers will be informed in accordance with school procedures.

Records will be reviewed to identify patterns, learning opportunities and any additional support required.

14.9 Students with Additional Needs

The school recognises that students with SEND, communication difficulties, autism, ADHD or social, emotional and mental health needs may require different approaches to behaviour support.

Staff will:

- understand individual behaviour support plans;
- follow agreed risk assessments;
- use personalised de-escalation strategies;
- involve specialist staff where appropriate;
- ensure interventions remain proportionate and child-centred.

The use of reasonable force should never replace effective behaviour support planning.

14.10 Allegations and Concerns

Where concerns arise regarding the conduct of a member of staff, including the inappropriate use of physical intervention, these will be managed in accordance with the school's procedures for managing allegations and low-level concerns.

Where necessary, referrals will be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) or the Police.

14.11 Training

All staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Staff who may be required to use restrictive physical intervention will receive appropriate training in approved de-escalation and intervention techniques.

Training will emphasise:

- prevention;
- de-escalation;
- proportionality;
- safeguarding;
- recording;
- reflection following incidents.

14.12 Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Governing Body will monitor incidents involving the use of reasonable force to ensure practice remains lawful, proportionate and in the best interests of students.

Incident records will be analysed to identify trends, inform staff training and support continuous improvement in behaviour management and safeguarding practice.

The school is committed to creating a calm, respectful and inclusive environment where positive relationships reduce the need for physical intervention. Where reasonable force is necessary, it will always be used as a last resort, in accordance with the law and with the welfare, dignity and safety of the child as the overriding consideration.

15. Managing Allegations against Staff (including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff)

Wales High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and recognises that it is essential that any concerns about the behaviour of adults working with children are managed fairly, consistently and without delay.

The school promotes a culture of openness, transparency and accountability in which all staff feel confident to report concerns about the behaviour of adults working within the school, regardless of their position or seniority.

This section applies to all adults working on behalf of the school, including:

- teachers;
- support staff;
- agency and supply staff;
- volunteers;
- governors;
- contractors;
- trainees;
- visitors undertaking regulated activity.

The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions relating to allegations and concerns.

15.1 Purpose

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that:

- students are protected from harm;
- concerns are identified and managed promptly;
- adults are treated fairly and consistently;
- unsuitable individuals are prevented from working with children;
- statutory guidance is followed at all times;
- public confidence in safeguarding arrangements is maintained.

The school will manage concerns in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026);

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures;
- South Yorkshire safeguarding arrangements.

15.2 Allegations That Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation should be reported immediately if an adult working in or on behalf of the school 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This includes concerns arising both inside and outside the workplace.

Where an allegation meets the harm threshold, it must be reported immediately to the Headteacher.

If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, it must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors.

If the allegation concerns the Chair of Governors, it should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the relevant governance body.

No member of staff should investigate an allegation before seeking advice from the LADO where appropriate.

15.3 Immediate Action

The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors where appropriate) will:

- ensure the child is safe;
- consider whether immediate medical attention is required;
- seek advice from the LADO without delay;
- preserve evidence where appropriate;
- consider whether the Police or Children's Social Care should be informed;
- make appropriate decisions regarding the adult concerned whilst enquiries are undertaken.

The school recognises that suspension is a neutral act and will only be considered where necessary to protect children or ensure the integrity of the investigation.

Alternatives to suspension will be considered wherever appropriate.

15.4 Low-Level Concerns

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

- is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct;
- falls below the expected professional standards;
- may create a sense of unease regarding professional boundaries, even if the behaviour does not meet the harm threshold.

Examples may include:

- being over-familiar with students;
- using inappropriate language or humour;
- communicating with students outside approved systems;
- failing to maintain professional boundaries;
- favouritism towards individual students;
- inappropriate use of social media;
- sharing personal contact details;
- unnecessary one-to-one situations without transparency.

Low-level concerns should never be ignored, as a pattern of behaviour may emerge over time.

15.5 Reporting Low-Level Concerns

All staff are encouraged to report low-level concerns promptly.

Reports should normally be made to the Headteacher.

Concerns regarding the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.
Staff should never worry about reporting concerns in good faith.

Creating a culture where concerns are shared openly helps safeguard children and protects staff from misunderstandings.

The school will ensure that staff understand the difference between:

- a low-level concern;
- conduct issues;
- safeguarding allegations meeting the harm threshold.

Where there is uncertainty, advice will be sought from the Headteacher or LADO.

15.6 Recording Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns will be:

- recorded appropriately;
- reviewed objectively;
- stored securely;
- monitored to identify patterns of behaviour.

Records will include:

- the nature of the concern;
- the date;
- actions taken;
- any advice received;
- the outcome.

Information will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance and data protection legislation.
Where several low-level concerns relate to the same individual, leaders will consider whether the cumulative information indicates behaviour that now meets the harm threshold.

15.7 Confidentiality

The school will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality throughout the management of allegations and low-level concerns.

Information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to know.

All parties will be reminded of the importance of maintaining confidentiality during investigations.

The school recognises that confidentiality supports both effective safeguarding and fairness for all individuals involved.

15.8 Support for Those Involved

The school recognises that safeguarding investigations can be distressing for everyone involved.

Appropriate support will be offered to:

- the child or young person;
- parents or carers where appropriate;
- the member of staff concerned;
- witnesses;
- staff involved in managing the process.

Support may include welfare meetings, occupational health, counselling services or other appropriate professional support.

15.9 Resignations and Settlement Agreements

The school will not allow a member of staff to resign solely to avoid an investigation.

Where safeguarding concerns exist, these will be fully investigated regardless of whether the individual remains employed by the school.

The school will not use settlement agreements to avoid fulfilling safeguarding responsibilities or statutory referral duties.

15.10 Referrals to External Agencies

Where appropriate, referrals will be made to:

- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- Children's Social Care;
- South Yorkshire Police;
- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA);
- other professional regulatory bodies.

The school will fulfil its statutory duty to make referrals where legal thresholds are met.

15.11 Learning Lessons

Following the conclusion of any allegation or low-level concern, leaders will consider whether improvements to policy, practice, supervision or training are required.

Learning may include:

- reviewing risk assessments;
- updating procedures;
- providing additional safeguarding training;
- strengthening supervision arrangements;
- improving reporting systems.

The Governing Body will receive anonymised safeguarding information, where appropriate, to support effective oversight and continuous improvement.

15.12 Whistleblowing

All staff have a professional duty to raise concerns where they believe the behaviour of another adult may place a child at risk.

The school promotes a culture where safeguarding concerns can be raised without fear of reprisal.

Staff who are unable to raise concerns internally, or who believe appropriate action has not been taken, should follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy and may contact external agencies, including the Local Authority Designated Officer, the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line or other relevant safeguarding authorities.

15.13 Monitoring and Review

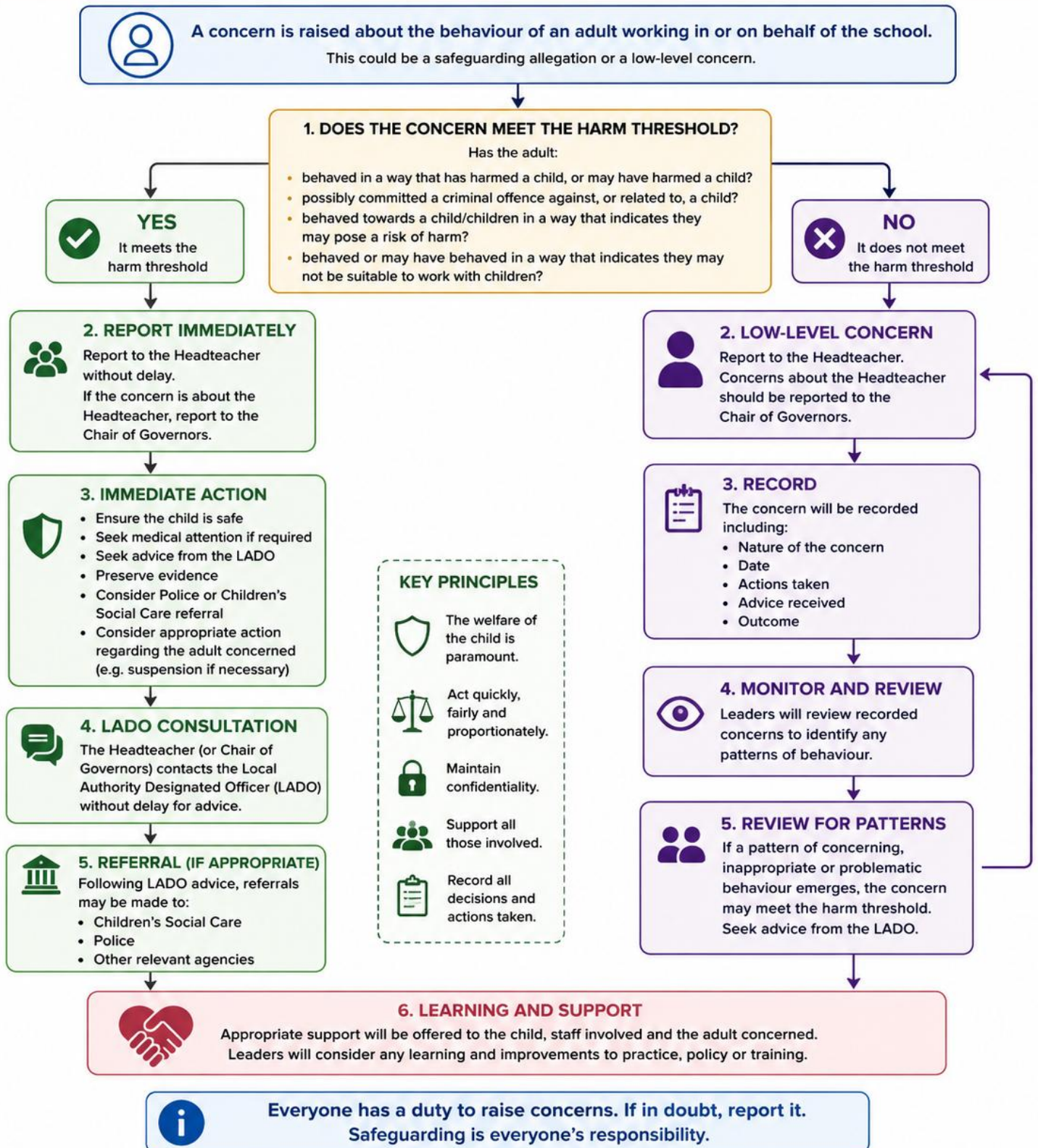
The Headteacher and Governing Body will regularly review allegations, low-level concerns and safeguarding trends to ensure procedures remain effective, transparent and compliant with statutory guidance.

The school is committed to maintaining a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, where concerns are acted upon promptly and fairly, and where children remain safe from harm.

All adults working at Wales High School are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct and to recognise that safeguarding extends beyond avoiding harm to actively promoting a culture of trust, accountability and vigilance.

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

Flowchart for Staff Wales High School



16. Child on Child Abuse (including sexual violence/assault and sexual harassment)

Wales High School recognises that children can abuse other children and that child-on-child abuse can occur both inside and outside of school, including online. Such abuse can take place between students of any age or gender and may occur between friends, intimate partners, classmates, siblings or children who do not know one another.

Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "horseplay" or "just having a laugh". The school recognises that these attitudes can prevent children from reporting abuse and may allow harmful behaviours to become normalised.

All concerns relating to child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and managed in accordance with this policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and local safeguarding procedures. The welfare of all children involved will remain the school's paramount consideration.

Forms of Child-on-Child Abuse

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying);
- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- initiation or hazing-type violence;
- image-based sexual abuse;
- sharing or threatening to share nude or semi-nude images;
- AI-generated intimate images or digitally manipulated sexual content ("deepfakes");
- online sexual abuse;
- upskirting;
- stalking;
- exploitation, including child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- abuse within intimate personal relationships;
- discriminatory behaviour relating to race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

School Ethos

Wales High School maintains a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence, sexual harassment and other forms of child-on-child abuse and will never dismiss harmful behaviour as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'.

We are committed to creating a culture where:

- students feel safe to report concerns;
- disclosures are taken seriously;
- victims are listened to, believed and supported;
- allegations are investigated fairly;
- appropriate action is taken to safeguard all students;
- behaviour is challenged and addressed through education, intervention and, where appropriate, sanctions.

The school recognises that both the child who has experienced harm and the child whose behaviour has caused harm may require safeguarding support.

Recognising Child-on-Child Abuse

Staff should remain alert to indicators that may suggest child-on-child abuse, including:

- unexplained injuries;
- changes in behaviour or presentation;

- anxiety or withdrawal;
- deterioration in attendance;
- reluctance to attend school;
- self-harm;
- mental health concerns;
- sexually inappropriate language or behaviour;
- repeated conflict between students;
- rumours or reports shared online;
- sudden friendship changes;
- possession or sharing of inappropriate images.

Staff should always maintain professional curiosity and avoid making assumptions.

Responding to Concerns

Where child-on-child abuse is suspected or disclosed, staff must:

- remain calm and listen carefully;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking out;
- never promise confidentiality;
- avoid asking leading questions;
- make an accurate factual record as soon as possible;
- report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff must never investigate incidents themselves.

The DSL will assess each incident individually, taking account of:

- the wishes and feelings of the child;
- the ages and developmental stages of those involved;
- the nature and seriousness of the behaviour;
- whether there is a power imbalance;
- any previous incidents or patterns;
- any additional vulnerabilities;
- ongoing risks to students.

Supporting the Child Who Has Experienced Harm

The safety and wellbeing of the child who has experienced harm will always be the school's priority.

Support may include:

- an identified trusted adult;
- pastoral support;
- counselling or therapeutic intervention;
- adjustments to timetables or seating plans;
- safety planning;
- risk assessments;
- support from external agencies where appropriate.

The school will take all reasonable steps to prevent further harm or victimisation.

Children will never be expected to resolve incidents of abuse through mediation where sexual violence, sexual harassment or other serious safeguarding concerns are involved.

Responding to the Child Whose Behaviour Has Caused Harm

The school recognises that a child displaying harmful behaviour may also have unmet safeguarding needs.

The child will receive appropriate support whilst also being held accountable for their behaviour.

Support may include:

- safeguarding assessment;
- behaviour intervention;

- education around healthy relationships;
- pastoral mentoring;
- Early Help;
- referral to external agencies where appropriate.

Where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence, the Police will be consulted.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

The school recognises that these behaviours can occur:

- face-to-face;
- online;
- inside or outside school;
- between students of any age or gender.

Examples include:

- unwanted sexual comments;
- sexualised language;
- unwanted touching;
- sexual assault;
- rape;
- sharing sexual images without consent;
- sexual coercion;
- sexist or misogynistic behaviour.

The school will respond in accordance with statutory guidance and will undertake an immediate risk assessment where appropriate.

Nude and Semi-Nude Images

The school recognises that incidents involving nude or semi-nude images require careful safeguarding consideration.

Staff must not:

- copy images;
- print images;
- forward images;
- save images to personal devices.

Any incident must be referred immediately to the DSL. The DSL will manage incidents in accordance with Department for Education guidance, considering the age of those involved, whether coercion or exploitation is suspected and whether Police involvement is required.

AI-Generated Intimate Images and Digitally Manipulated Sexual Content

The school recognises the growing safeguarding risks associated with artificial intelligence and digitally manipulated sexual content.

Children may experience significant harm through the creation or sharing of:

- AI-generated nude or sexual images;
- "deepfake" intimate images or videos;
- digitally manipulated sexual content;
- AI-enabled sextortion;
- image-based sexual abuse.

The creation, possession, sharing or threatening to share AI-generated intimate images without consent will be treated as a serious safeguarding concern.

The school recognises that these incidents may amount to:

- sexual harassment;

- child-on-child abuse;
- online sexual abuse;
- criminal behaviour.

Staff must report concerns immediately to the DSL, who will consider referrals to Children's Social Care, the Police and other agencies where appropriate. Preventative education about artificial intelligence, consent, respectful relationships and responsible online behaviour forms part of the school's Personal Development and RSHE curriculum.

Online Safety

Child-on-child abuse increasingly takes place online.

The school will educate students about:

- respectful online behaviour;
- consent;
- digital footprints;
- online exploitation;
- reporting concerns;
- safe use of social media;
- recognising manipulated or AI-generated content.

Filtering and monitoring systems support, but do not replace, staff vigilance.

Risk Assessments

Following serious incidents, the DSL will complete an individual risk assessment to determine:

- immediate safeguarding actions;
- ongoing supervision requirements;
- support required for all students involved;
- arrangements to prevent further incidents;
- any curriculum or pastoral interventions required.

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly.

Record Keeping

All concerns relating to child-on-child abuse will be:

- recorded promptly on Bromcom;
- factual and objective;
- stored securely;
- reviewed by the CPO/DSL.

Records will include actions taken, decisions made, outcomes and any referrals to external agencies.

Prevention

Preventing child-on-child abuse is a whole-school responsibility.

The school promotes healthy, respectful relationships through:

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE);
- Personal Development;
- assemblies;
- tutor programmes;
- online safety education;
- safeguarding awareness campaigns;
- student voice activities.

Students are taught about:

- consent;
- healthy relationships;
- recognising abusive behaviour;
- bystander intervention;

- reporting concerns;
- the legal and emotional consequences of sharing intimate images, including AI-generated and digitally manipulated sexual content.

The DSL will monitor child-on-child abuse incidents to identify patterns, emerging risks and areas for further education or intervention. Safeguarding data will be reviewed regularly by senior leaders and reported to the Governing Body in an anonymised format to support strategic oversight.

Wales High School is committed to fostering a culture where every student feels safe, respected and confident that concerns will be acted upon. Child-on-child abuse in any form is unacceptable, and all allegations will be managed fairly, proportionately and with the welfare of every child at the centre of decision-making.

17. Communication and confidentiality

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with school data protection policies.

If a current or former student makes an allegation directly to the police, the police may approach school for access to personal data relating to the victim, the alleged perpetrator and/or other witnesses. Again, data protection law supports such sharing where the police require that personal data for the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

The updated Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) guidance clarifies that the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) **do not** prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Consent is not required when sharing information for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of a child. It is also stated that, while encouraged, the agreement of the child and parents is not required to share information, though it is important to explain the reasons for this.

School must be proactive with sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of a child. Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for its progression and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis.

During disclosure of a concern by a student, staff members will not promise the student confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why. Depending on the nature of a concern, the DSL will discuss the concern with the parents of the students involved, unless such a discussion could potentially put a student at risk of harm.

Transfer of Child Protection Files

Where a student transfers to another school or educational setting, the DSL will ensure that safeguarding records are transferred securely and without delay.

The receiving school will be contacted to confirm receipt of the records.

Where appropriate:

- the DSL will speak directly with the receiving DSL;
- records will be transferred separately from the main student file;
- a record of the transfer will be retained by the school.

Where a child leaves the school without a confirmed destination, the school will continue to work with the Local Authority and other agencies to safeguard the child.

18. Training and Induction

Every new member of staff or volunteer should have an induction programme which includes basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record this information and discuss issues of confidentiality. The induction will also remind

staff and volunteers of their responsibility to safeguard all children at our school and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. At induction, all staff will also be provided with a copy of Part One of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* and will be expected to read this.

In addition to the safeguarding induction, all members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training on a regular basis in accordance with *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (2026) and advice from Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The DSL and deputy DSL will attend training courses organised by RSCP at least once every two years. They will also receive regular safeguarding updates throughout the school year in order to keep up with and developments relevant to their role.

In accordance with Part Three of KCSIE 2026 all school governors will also undertake training, appropriate to their role, to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children in our school.

The Governing Body will review IT standards and discuss IT with staff and service providers to decide what more needs to be done to support the school in meeting the required standard.

19. Whistleblowing Policy

Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy.

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

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

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government, the number is 0808 800 5000.

Further information is also available in Chapter 5.4 of the RSCP online child protection procedures:

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

20. Procedures for Managing Concerns

Wales High School adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through Rotherham Safeguarding Partnership. The three local safeguarding partners that have established arrangements to work together with all appropriate agencies are:

1. Local Authority
2. Clinical Commissioning Group/Local Integrated Care System
3. The Chief Police Officer

We will ensure that all school staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection and the importance of reporting their concerns expeditiously and in line with this policy. However, it is *not* the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the Deputy DSL. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

If a child is in **immediate danger or risk of harm**, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately. Anyone can make a referral but in situations where referrals are not made by the

DSL, they should be informed as soon as possible afterwards that a referral has been made by someone else.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions are recorded in writing using Bromcom.

Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children's Social Care - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

All referrals will be made in line with RSCP online child protection procedures – <https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, we will consider following the RSCP escalation procedures to ensure our concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with MASH, or the police, if the situation is an emergency and the DSL, their deputy and the Headteacher are all unavailable and they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point should contact the MASH directly with their concerns.

If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the headteacher or DSL. Where there are concerns about the headteacher or DSL this should be referred to the chair of governors.

21. Use of the school premises for non-school activities/extra-curricular activities

Where the school hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep students safe.

Where the school provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed.

The school will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in the lease or hire agreement/contract, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard students and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements. Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs need to be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of students. Paid and volunteer staff need to understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to social care or the police, if necessary.

If the school receives 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, as with any safeguarding allegation, the school will follow all safeguarding policies and procedures and contact with LADO will be made.

22. Working with Parents and Carers

Wales High School is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

When new students join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to MASH.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have consent or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place that child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to MASH in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details – at least two in order to be able to make contact with a responsible adult should a concern arise ie, illness, not being collected at the end of the school day, a child going missing or a safeguarding concern.
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).

The school will retain this information on the student file. The school will only share information about students with adults who have parental responsibility for a student or where a parent has given permission and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

23. When to call the police

When to call the police addresses criminal activity, not safeguarding issues. Safeguarding issues are addressed using the referral process and procedures. Contact with police should ideally be made by a single point of contact from the school. This may be the Headteacher or the DSL to ensure all the relevant information is shared and improve consistency of referrals.

When an incident occurs in which a crime has or may have been committed, the school needs to consider whether to involve the police. The school behaviour policy and codes of conduct will give further guidance on how to deal with and record such incidents.

24.Relevant Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that students are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour for Learning
- Safer Recruitment and selection
- Whistle-blowing
- Attendance and Children Missing in Education

- Online Safety
- Health and Safety including site security
- Harassment and discrimination including racial abuse
- Meeting the needs of students with medical conditions
- Intimate Care
- First aid
- Educational visits including overnight stays

25. Alternative Provision

The school will remain responsible for a student's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a student with an alternative provider, the school will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff. The school will keep a record and visit students each term – retaining a written record of the visit. All AP safeguarding policies will be checked in line with KCSIE. The school will conduct due diligence on all providers to ensure they are appropriate in meeting a student's needs and to carry out safeguarding checks.

26. Policy consultation and Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2027**.

APPENDIX 1

Useful Contact numbers and e-mail addresses/websites:

Local Authority Children's Social Care – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for all referrals, advice and support including referral to Early Help and Family Engagement services: 01709 336080

Duty LADO – 01709 336491

LADO email (not for referrals) – LADO@rotherham.gov.uk

South Yorkshire Police non-emergency number – 101
In an emergency ring 999

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP): www.rscp.org.uk

<https://rotherhamscp.trixonline.co.uk/>
www.rotherhampower.co.uk

National Helplines/Websites:

NSPCC Confidential helpline – 0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline – 0800 1111

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

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org>

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>

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

[Information, Advice and Support to Keep Children Safe Online \(internetmatters.org\)](#)
educateagainsthate.com

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation>

Acronyms

This policy contains a number of acronyms used in the Education sector. 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.
CSCS	Children's social care services	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.
EEA	European Economic Area	The Member States of the European Union (EU) and three countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; excluding Switzerland).
EHC plan	Education, health and care plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs for students 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 student.
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	An agency sponsored by the Department for Education with accountability for funding education and skills training for children, young people and adults.
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.

HMCTS	HM Courts and Tribunals Service	HM Courts and Tribunals Service is responsible for the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales. HMCTS is an executive agency, sponsored by the Ministry of Justice.
IICSA	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse	The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is analysing case files from the Disclosure and Barring Service to learn more about the behaviours of perpetrators who have sexually abused children in institutions, and to understand institutional responses to these behaviours.
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	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.
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	Previously looked-after children	PLAC generally refers to children who ceased to be looked after because they became subject to adoption, special guardianship or certain child arrangements orders.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which students learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all students. 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 students 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.
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.

Child on Child Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment Flowchart

