



ALDERLEY EDGE
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY WHOLE SCHOOL & EYFS

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1. Introduction

The purpose of our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. The school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Character Education](#) (November 2019)
- Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership ([CESCP](#)) procedures and [Right Help, Right Time](#) document
- [Cheshire East Multi-Agency Toolkit](#)
- [Children Missing in Education](#) – Statutory guidance for local authorities (September 2016)
- [Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future](#) (February 2016)
- [COVID-19; safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#) (May 2020)
- [Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006](#) (September 2018)
- Guidance for safer working practice for staff working in education settings (May 2019)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSiE) – Statutory Guidance (September 2023)*
- [Mental Health and behaviour in schools: Department Advice](#) (November 2018)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#) (July 2017)
- [Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing](#) (March 2015)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#) (DfE Sept 2020)
- School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 (Safer Recruitment)
- [Searching, Screening and Confiscation](#) – Advice for Headteachers (July 2022)
- [Statutory Framework for EYFS](#) (September 2023)
- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Children Act 2004](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#) (Section 175)
- [The Prevent Duty](#) (June 2015), updated April 2021
- [The use of social media for online radicalisation](#) (July 2015)
- [Use of Reasonable Force](#) – Advice for Headteachers (July 2013)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#) (2015)
- [When to call the Police](#) (National Police Chiefs’ Council)
- [Working together – non-statutory guidance on Information Sharing](#) (2018)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (May 2022)
- [Working together to Safeguard Children](#) (Feb 2019), last update July 2022

**All staff are expected to confirm that they have read and understood the KCSIE documentation. This is completed via the School's staff training hub, in line with government training guidance.*

Staff are recommended to read the following policies in conjunction with safeguarding. All our policies are available to staff via our Intranet.

- Alcohol and Drugs Policy
- Behaviour Policies
- Cyber & Online Safety Policy (*covering internet safety and the filters and usage monitoring*)
- EYFS Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use for Staff
- Missing Child Policy
- Peer on peer abuse Policy (will be renamed Child-on-child Policy)
- Positive Handling Policy
- PSHE Schemes of work
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Search and Confiscation Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Key Personnel	
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs C Wood
Deputy DSLs	Mrs C Clark Mr T Marchington Miss E Scott Mrs N Smillie
EYFS Key Person	Mr T Marchington
Designated person for cared for children and Mental Health Lead	Mrs C Wood
Governor responsible for Safeguarding	Mrs J Rostron
Reporting an allegation against the Head	Mr K Lowe

Definitions

Safeguarding can be defined as:

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

Child Protection: refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children (everyone under the age of 18) who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. At Alderley Edge School for Girls we aim to proactively safeguard and

promote the welfare of all children, regardless of race, religion and cultural differences so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced. The safeguarding lead (and deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

2. Rationale

Alderley Edge School for Girls fully recognises the important role that schools play in the wider safeguarding system.

Our policy applies to all members of the school community: staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and all staff should at all times consider what is in the best interests of the child. We maintain an attitude of 'this could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. We have an ethos which recognises that every member of staff/volunteer has a key role in the prevention of harm, early identification, intervention and support for children at risk of harm. Emphasis is on the importance of sharing information and working together with other agencies to ensure that a full picture is gained in order that the right help can be given promptly. Advice from Cheshire East SCiES team will be sought and the CESC guidelines followed. KCSIE 2023 uses the terms 'victim', 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator'. Staff at AESG are conscious of using language with which the individual child is most comfortable. The use of such terminology will be for AESG to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

All school staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. **Early help** means providing support as soon as the problem emerges at any point in the child's life, from the foundation years through to the age of 18. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected. They may not recognise their experience as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. A school can manage internal support as well as seeking early help for both the victim and perpetrator(s) when an incident is identified.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/ or can occur between children outside these environments. All staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extrafamilial harms take a variety of forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

All staff understand the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) 'Continuum of Need' and Child Protection procedures; to ensure that the needs of our children are effectively assessed; decisions are based on a child's development needs, parenting capacity and family & environmental factors. We ensure that the most appropriate referrals are made. We actively support multi agency planning for these children and, in doing so, provide information from the child's point of view; bringing their lived experience

to life as evidenced by observations or information provided. Staff know how to pass on any concerns no matter how trivial they seem.

As a listening school staff would pick up on these issues and would know how to identify and respond to:

Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Abuse
Neglect	Criminal Exploitation including county lines and serious violence	Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both Child sexual exploitation / pupil and parent) trafficked children
Extremism and Radicalisation	Children who are absent from education (children missing education)	Domestic abuse
Risky behaviours	Child-on-child relationship abuse/Teenage Relationship Abuse	Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
Sexual health needs	Obesity/malnutrition	On line grooming
Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children	Bullying, including homophobic, racist, gender and disability	Self-Harm
Breaches of the Equality Act 2010	Honour based violence including -Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing, Forced Marriage	Child Trafficking
Modern Day Slavery	Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	Mental health needs
Those affected by parent offending or has a family member in prison	Those persistently absent from education, including those who are absent for part of the school day	

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger. We recognise the increased vulnerability of children with SEND, including to peer-on-peer abuse. Staff are trained so that they can address any associated issues with confidence.

In the first instance staff should discuss early help with the DSL who will help to identify whether neglect or abuse has occurred. In some cases, if appropriate, with the support of the DSL, the reporting member of staff may act as the lead professional in undertaking an inter-agency early help assessment. If a member of staff considers a child to be in immediate danger or at risk of harm, children's social care and/or the police will be informed.

Anyone can make a referral to children's social care (contact numbers at end of policy) and should review the progress of the referral. The DSL should be informed as soon as possible and ensure that all the paperwork/forms are submitted promptly. Following a referral, the

DSL (and reporting member of staff) will constantly review and communicate with children's social care if the child's welfare is still of concern.

A failure to report internally by staff must be investigated by the school and, if justified, appropriate action taken. A failure to report externally by the school must be investigated by the local authority and, if justified, appropriate action taken.

There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff (including those employed by another agency working in school) and volunteers to work with children as well as reporting any person deemed unsuitable to work with children according to DBS regulations
2. Raising awareness of safeguarding/child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
3. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
4. Supporting pupils who have been abused
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn, develop and achieve.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The children feel secure in a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. We also encourage an 'early help' system to try and promote, where possible, a proactive approach to safeguarding. We achieve this by:

- Having a positive policy of promoting good behaviour as well as having sanctions for misbehaviour (as detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy)
- Establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. The voice of the child is paramount. We consult, listen and respond to pupils e.g. the Student Committees in both Prep and Senior School.
- Include opportunities in the PHSE and Relationships and Sex Education curriculum for children to understand safeguarding and develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, including online.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. Children develop realistic attitudes to their responsibilities in adult life and are equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe; including understanding and recognition of healthy/unhealthy relationships and support available.
- Children are supported in recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet, being able to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable, recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being and supporting them in developing effective ways of resisting pressure.
- Children should understand the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, reducing alarm and distress that may come about when this is explained
- All staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

- We increasingly work online so it is essential that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard the children whilst ensuring that over blocking does not lead to unreasonable restrictions. Alongside the introduction of iPads across the whole Senior School there has been considerable training for the pupils to ensure they are kept safe by adhering to the Acceptable Use Policy as well as the Cyber and Online Safety Policy.
- All adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Head Teacher and/or DSL and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children.
- Emerging themes are proactively addressed and fed back to the local authority and CESCOP to ensure a coherent approach so that multi-agency awareness and strategies are developed.
- There is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded and there is a standalone policy which is robustly delivered throughout the school and curriculum.
- Ensuring that when off site, staff know that information, both in paper or electric form is sensitive and protected under data protection and GDPR and should be safe and securely stored off the premises and during transport.

In **EYFS** there is an effective key person system which provides children with the time and opportunity to speak and share their thoughts and feelings during Circle Time activities, in small groups, and at snack times. Staff know the children well and are always alert to changes in behaviour. Mr T Marchington is the key person overseeing EYFS, with support from Mrs C Wood. In the **Prep School** class teachers develop a strong relationship with each pupil and are therefore in a good position to notice any changes. In the **Senior** School, Form Tutors have immediate responsibility for the pastoral welfare of the pupils. They are supported by the Heads of Year and the Deputy Heads.

We also use a **digital Wellbeing Hub**, providing instant access to resources and advice as well as a report page that students can send directly to the DSL. Sixth Form Peer Mentors are available to younger pupils for individual chats and advice. Times can be arranged to suit both individuals and an email address is available for the lead Peer Mentor. This is supported through our Wellbeing Room which is a facility for counselling, small group work etc.

To benefit all girls, the School Nurse, Claire Clark is also available for pupils to talk to regarding any health or safeguarding concerns. She is experienced in child protection cases and has trained as a DSL (June 2018). The Student Wellbeing Counsellor, Rachel Vora is available twice a week. She works with the DSL to provide individual support for those who need it. We offer a ‘drop in’ session during lunch to enable all pupils to access this service, if necessary.

We recognise that any child-on-child abuse is most likely to take the form of bullying – please refer to our **Anti-Bullying Policy**. The harm caused to children by the harmful and bullying behaviour of other children can be significant. This may involve single incidents or ongoing physical, cyberbullying, sexual or emotional (including verbal) harm perpetrated by a single child or by groups of children. Any bullying which appears to be beyond situations dealt with in the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy would be referred to the local SCiES team for further action/ advice.

3. Use of mobile phones and cameras in EYFS department

For further information please see EYFS Policy

Personal mobiles and electronic devices:

All staff or parent helpers working directly with children in EYFS, must ensure that their mobile phone is stored safely in their bag away from the children and does not distract them from paying full attention to the children in their care. In cases of personal emergencies or similar where it is necessary for a member of staff to keep their mobile phone to hand, prior permission must be sought from the EYFS DSL.

Dedicated setting mobile phone:

To protect children we will ensure that the dedicated setting mobile phone:

- is stored securely when not in use
- is protected with a password, is clearly labelled and its use is open to scrutiny. All staff are vigilant and alert to any potential misuse
- is only used by allocated people who have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse and know how to minimise the risk. These staff are responsible for their own behaviour regarding the use of the phone and avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to potential allegations
- is not used in areas such as toilets, changing rooms, nappy changing areas and sleep areas.
- does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children

Mobiles belonging to visitors: We request that mobiles belonging to visitors are either switched off and/or stored securely on entering the setting.

Mobiles belonging to older children: Have signed consent from their parents giving permission for the child to have a mobile and agreeing that they will be stored securely and be switched off or on silent whilst in the setting.

Cameras photography and images:

It is the responsibility of Head of EY to:

- Obtain parents' and carers' consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- Ensure the setting's designated camera is only used in the setting and any images taken will not be emailed as it may not be secure. (In some instances, it may be required to seek parental permission to email images, but the potential risks must be made clear to parents)
- Ensure that children are appropriately dressed, and do not use the child's name with an image on a photograph
- Ensure that parents personal cameras are not used to take photographs, video or audio recordings in our setting without prior explicit written consent from the setting, for example, for a special event, such as Christmas plays
- Ensure that all images are stored securely and password protected
- Ensure where professional photographers are used they follow our Child Protection processes and a member of staff is with them at all times
- Ensure 'acceptable use' rules regarding the use of cameras by children are embedded in practice
- Ensure the use of cameras, webcams and CCTV is closely monitored and open to scrutiny
- All visitors must be under the supervision of a member of staff at all times

Secure school premises

The school will take all practicable steps to ensure that School premises are as secure as circumstances permit. A Visitors log in system is kept at Reception. All visitors must sign in on arrival and sign out on departure. Visitors will be requested to provide identification. They will be given a name badge with the title 'Visitor' (bright red) which must be clearly displayed and worn at all times whilst on school premises. They will receive a summary information booklet with key staff, safeguarding and health and safety information. If necessary, they can request to speak to the relevant member of staff named on this document. We encourage all staff to stop lone visitors and return them to Reception immediately. Pupils are asked to alert the nearest member of staff if they see someone on site with a 'visitor' badge on their own.

4. The Role of Leadership and Management in Safeguarding Children

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The name of our DSL for the whole school is Mrs Caroline Wood, Senior School Deputy Headmistress. She has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL along with four other designated persons has been appropriately trained to support this role. The deputy DSLs are the Headmistress, Mrs N Smillie and School Nurse, Mrs Claire Clark, Deputy Head Prep, Mr T Marchington and Asst Head Prep (Pastoral), Miss E Scott. The Designated person for the Prep School and EYFS is Mr T Marchington.

The DSL or a trained deputy will always be available during school hours. The above staff are aware of the range of statutory school requirements and good practice guidance documents that are in place to support the setting in meeting the welfare and safeguarding needs of children. They will be fully conversant with the latest KCSIE documentation

including Annex A. The school will support these designated leads in attending appropriate training to maintain their own knowledge and make other staff aware of their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of the children in our care.

The DSL and designated persons should provide support, advice and guidance to other staff on an ongoing basis and in particular if any safeguarding issues arise. If necessary they should contact the local safeguarding board for advice about correct procedures. The DSL and deputies keep up to date with local assessment procedures and are alert to the specific needs of children (Cheshire East's One Minute Guide – see Appendix 2). We comply with procedures and advice contained in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2022) to ensure full inter-agency cooperation.

We support the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) Timely Support for Children and Families in Cheshire East, this document supports professionals to access the **right help and support** for children and their families at the **right time**. In addition, the guidance from the [NSPCC – when to call the police](#) is also useful.

Locally, the three safeguarding partners (the local authority, a clinical commissioning group for an area within a LA and the chief officer of police for an area) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. It is our job (DSL, governing body and leadership team) to ensure that we are aware of and follow our local arrangements. It is expected that, locally, the three safeguarding partners will name schools and colleges as relevant agencies and will engage in a meaningful way.

We follow the procedures set out by CESCP and take account of guidance issued by the DfE to:

- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure that every member of staff and volunteer have had a comprehensive induction process enabling them to receive safeguarding training from CESCP as well as meeting the DSL, being shown how to complete disclosure forms, how to access external help and 'what to do if' scenarios. This is in line with the recommendations set out in KCSIE Sept 2023.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection or directly to children's social care whose contact details are displayed on staffroom noticeboards and in administration offices.
- Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in all school material.
- Proactively develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and strategy meetings as appropriate as well as sharing information.
- We are an Operation Encompass school (i.e. share information with the Police) which means that we can give support in case where domestic abuse is identified.
- Keep written records of concerns about children and advice given by local authority agencies, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Any concerns about a pupil, will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records will provide a factual, evidence-based account. Timely, accurate recording of every episode/

incident/ concern/ action/ activity including telephone calls including to other professionals. Records will be signed, dated and where appropriate witnessed.

- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file. Basic safeguarding information is logged on CPOMS and follow up documentation within the separate pupil file. This is stored in a locked cabinet; accessed only by the DSL or Deputies. This is in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. This information is stored in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR ensuring the information is:
 - used fairly and lawfully
 - for limited, specifically stated purposes
 - used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
 - kept for no longer than is necessary
 - handled according to people’s data protection rights
 - kept safe and secure

- Understand that this allows practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that sharing information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonable expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained in GDPR and DPA including golden rules for information sharing to ensure information is shared effectively. **Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguarding and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children’s welfare, including their educational outcomes. We are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

- The new data protection tool kit has been added as guidance to support schools and can be accessed [here](#).
- Any safeguarding records will be transferred when a pupil leaves the school. This is within 5 days for an in-year transfer and within the first 5 days of the start of the new term. We also ensure that Key Workers or Social Workers are notified when a child leaves the school.
- Follow the new guidance on retention of data relating to allegations of child sexual abuse.
- Develop and then follow procedures when an allegation is made against a member of staff, the Head, designated persons or volunteer. **There is a section later in this policy to cover alleged abuse by a member of staff.**
- Follow the duty to refer staff who are suspended or redeployed because of concerns that they pose a risk of harm to the DBS.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices give applicants the right message about AESG’s commitment to recruit suitable people and are in line with DBS and DfE guidelines ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ and with reference to the ‘Position of Trust’

offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). **There is a separate policy for Recruitment of Staff.** There is an accurate and up to date Single Central Record.

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

The Headmistress, Mrs Nicola Smillie, must ensure all staff are recruited safely (according to Safer recruitment regulations), trained appropriately and that new staff, volunteers and students working both in the school and in any situation relevant to the school, receive guidance about Safeguarding procedures and the Staff Code of Conduct during their induction process.

Existing staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via email and staff meetings, as well as an annual update at the INSET sessions at the beginning of every academic year to keep their skills and knowledge up to date and ensure the effective safeguarding of children.

All staff must also sign annually to say they have read and understood the latest Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. As evidence of understanding safeguarding all staff are required to successfully complete the online learning modules prepared by the School. A digital list of completion is stored by the IT team and HR Officer. All staff volunteers and any person who comes into contact with pupils have been issued with copies of Part One of the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance document and Annex A, the School's Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, ICT Acceptable Use Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy. The full set of policies are accessed via our Intranet site. In addition, all staff have the following Safeguarding reminders attached to the back of their staff passes:

Safeguarding Reminders:

- Be sensitive and listen
- Never promise confidentiality
- Follow the TED question structure
- Record notes immediately
- Tell the DSL Mrs C Wood (or deputies)
- Do not share with parents if there is a risk of sexual abuse, fictitious illness suspected, FGM, HBV or radicalisation
- Allegation against adult in school to NS, against her to Chair of Governors
- Do not discuss with others

During **school visits** the continuing theme of safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance and the staff of other organisations will have been checked for suitability if they are supervising pupils on a site other than school. On school visits there are always school staff accompanying children, for the duration of the outing, in the recommended ratio.

All staff, visitors running activities during or after school, parent helpers and students on placement in the Prep School, sign a Disqualification Declaration form. The School

completes an annual check asking staff to sign the relevant paperwork to confirm circumstances have not changed. Staff are aware that they need to alert the Head should there be any change in their circumstances which might impact on the disqualification. If a person is found to be disqualified, or if there is doubt over that issue then, pending resolution, they must be removed from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. Ofsted is then informed although staff in such situations may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification, unless they are barred from working with children.

Ofsted would also be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

Referrals to other local authorities

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

Governor Responsibilities

The Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding is Mrs Joanna Rostron. She carries out an annual review of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures and of their efficiency. The annual review is made the more rigorous through the Governor's involvement in safeguarding procedures in school. Each term she meets with the DSL, Mrs C Wood and Deputies Mrs Smillie, Mrs C Clark, Mr T Marchington and Miss E Scott. A formal agenda is tabled and this is enhanced by such activities as lesson observations, interviews with pupils, staff and parents, review of training as well as discussions regarding the application of policies. Feedback is given at the Governor Curriculum Committee and discussed with the Headmistress, ensuring that any deficiencies or concerns are remedied without delay. Governing bodies and proprietors have strategic leadership responsibility for their school's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure they comply with their duties under legislation. They should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. The Governing Body is aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

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

The Governing Body fully recognises its responsibilities about Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Government guidance. The Governing Body have agreed processes which allow them to monitor and ensure that the school:

- Has robust Safeguarding procedures in place
- That all governors are appropriately trained for safeguarding and child protection (including online filtering and monitoring) at induction and is regularly updated
- Operates safe recruitment procedures and appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and adults working on the school site

- Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against any member of staff or adult on site
- Has a member of the Leadership Team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Safeguarding and Child Protection issues
- Reviews the IT systems with relevant leaders, to ensure AESG meets the standards set out by the DfE. (See separate policy)
- Takes steps to remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses with regard to Safeguarding arrangements
- Is supported by the Governing Body nominating a member responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse against the Headteacher; this is the Chair
- Reviews with the DSL an annual Safeguarding Audit in consultation with the Governing body, sharing this with the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) (the S175 Audit).

Human Rights Act

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them. Under the HRA, it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, 25 and
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education. 85. Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information can be found at equalityhumanrights.com

Equality Act 2010

Schools and colleges have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act). According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). Whilst all the above protections are important, in the context of safeguarding, this guidance, and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race.

Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need, this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people, including those with long term conditions. A school or college, could, for example, consider

taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment. Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act2010-advice-for-schools>, it may also be useful for colleges. For further information [Equality Act guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#).

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is found in the Equality Act. Compliance with the PSED is a legal requirement for state-funded schools and colleges, advice on this – including on specific duties, is set out in the advice linked in paragraph 90. The PSED places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics (see para 87) and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, specific consideration must be given to the equality implications of these such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism. This is one reason why good record-keeping and monitoring of all forms of abuse and harassment is essential.

The PSED helps schools and colleges (which are subject to it) to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil and student outcomes. Some pupils or students may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. Such concerns will differ between education settings, but it is important schools and colleges are conscious of disproportionate vulnerabilities and integrate this into their safeguarding policies and procedures. For further information please see [Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#)

5. Safeguarding and Child Protection / Teaching Children How to Keep Safe

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. The School will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- This is delivered via PSHE lessons (see PSHE/ RSE Schemes of Work) as well as Form Time materials including Anti Bullying Week, Time to Change alongside assemblies and one off lessons by outside speakers including online safety (Karl Hopwood and our local Police Liaison Officer). This includes the compulsory Relationships and Sex Education (from Sept 2020). Further details can be found in the separate policies for the Prep and Seniors.
- Keeping Children Safe themes (e.g. sexting and cyberbullying, safety online) are also delivered via ICT and Computing lessons, School Nurse lessons and health checks.

Specific themes covered include:

- boundaries and consent
- stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- the concepts of, and laws relating to - sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support, and what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupils such as social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS/ Healthy Young Minds) education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
- Where there is an intention to have a pupil removed from school with a view to education at home, we would together to coordinate meetings to ensure the parents and carers have considered the best interests of the child.

Attention is paid to pupil behaviour in school, out of school and that on any form of social media. Adults understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse. We aim to build resilience and reduce risks. This is delivered at an age appropriate level. Pupils are able to understand the risks posed by adults and young people, who use the internet and social media to groom, abuse or radicalise other people. All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

In the case of one-to-one teaching or lessons in which specialist provision is given e.g. performing arts and sport, staff are recommended to (where possible):

- Have minimal physical contact with pupils
- Work with classroom doors/ workspaces open
- Work in close proximity to another member of staff
- Set clear guidelines with pupils at the beginning of term/ unit of work
- Share concerns with their line manager
- Report any issues to the DSL immediately

For pupils we expect them to:

- Follow the guidelines given to them by their teacher at the beginning of term/ unit of work
- Follow the behaviour guidelines set out for the whole school
- Report any concerns to the Head of Department, Head of Year or DSL immediately

We believe that safeguarding and child protection should aim:

- To promote the protection of children from harm or ill treatment
- To support the development of children to their full potential - intellectual, physical, social, emotional and behavioural

- To foster self-esteem, security, confidence and independence
- To ensure that the child's wishes and feelings (in the light of age and understanding) have been ascertained and considered to ensure that the welfare of the child is paramount and every effort is made to consider the wishes and feeling of the child in the light of the agreed understanding
- To enable staff to identify child abuse and to understand how it should be dealt with within the context of school. The school does not constitute an investigation or intervention agency but has an important role to play in the recognition and referral stage
- To establish a curricular base for raising pupils' awareness of Child Protection issues
- To identify any training needs and meet them

Children with SEND or physical health issues

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include assumptions that injuries or behaviour are related to a child's condition without further exploration, these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (online and offline), a disproportionate impact of behaviour such as bullying on these children without showing signs and communication challenges when reporting these challenges. We must ensure that extra pastoral support and attention is provided along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. The Pastoral Team work alongside the SENDCO for training and support in this area.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory [Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education](#) curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

6. Useful definitions from the Government's KCSiE document

These can also be found in greater detail in Cheshire East's publication giving guidelines for identifying abuse. This information is found in Appendix 6.

Definition of a child in need: Children who are defined as being 'in need' under the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services.

Definition of significant harm: Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This concept was introduced in The Children Act 1989 as a threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

7. What is abuse and neglect?

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. Any member of staff at AESG who is concerned that any abuse or neglect has taken place should inform the DSL immediately.

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

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

Emotional abuse; 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 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 a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. 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 facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is specifically referred to in the Sexual violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (May 2018).

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 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.

When abuse is identified by one or more pupils against another pupil, including sexting and any other relevant issues named in KCSIE, all pupils will be supported. The school follows the procedures outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy, for example. Additional support can be accessed via the School Nurse, Student Wellbeing Counsellor, our local Police Liaison Officer as well as ChECS or the relevant local authority. The delivery of the individual support is the responsibility of the DSL and those who she contacts for the tailored care each pupil is to receive. If any of the pupils have educational needs/ disability due care is taken to ensure that they can access all that is on offer. Amendments will be made to meet their needs. In the event of disclosures about pupil-on-pupil abuse, all children involved are treated as being 'at risk'. This does not differ in the treatment of the perpetrator or the victim. Any such abuse will be reported to local agencies.

8. Other types of Abuse (from Cheshire East's Safeguarding Children document)

Child-on-child abuse

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is not tolerated at AESG and will not be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". Peer abuse can take place in the form of; bullying, online bullying, sexual violence and harassment, physical abuse (e.g. hitting and kicking), upskirting, sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. We recognise that there is an increased vulnerability of those with SEND and work closely with our Learning Enhancement Coordinator as well as the relevant Head of Year and School Nurse to recognise signs of abuse and act quickly. All staff are to refer to/ complete the following policies/ documentation when dealing with an incidence:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Peer or Peer Abuse Policy (will be renamed as Child-on-child Abuse Policy)
- Behaviour Expectations Guidelines
- Search and Confiscation Policy
- Cyber and Online Safety Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Bullying Log
- Serious Incident Log
- Positive Handling Policy
- Student Wellbeing Counsellor Referral Form

Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation:

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

for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including,

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

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

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

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education. In addition, the school will review the needs of siblings following any incident to ensure support is offered.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children

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

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

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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

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

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

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

County Lines

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

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

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

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

Domestic abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse;

- Psychological; Physical; Sexual; Emotional; Financial
- *“Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.”*
- *“Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm punish or frighten their victim.”*

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 abuse relationships). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development and ability to learn.

AESG believes that all our pupils have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that some children may be living in situations where they are directly or indirectly affected by incidents of domestic abuse or violence. We are linked to Cheshire Police and others where our pupils are resident, as members of Operation Encompass and are alert to indicators of abuse and are ready to support the child where appropriate.

Honour Based Violence (HBV) including Forced Marriage (FM)

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

young men and women. As a school we would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would not speak to the parents before sharing our concerns with ChECS or other relevant local authority.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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

Sources of FGM advice –

- [Female Genital Mutilation Risk and Safeguarding: Guidance for Professionals \(May 2016\)](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - Procedural Information. \(December 2016\)](#)

In addition, we also have support materials from the Department of Health – safeguarding quick guide and risk assessment templates. These can be found in the Pastoral Team's Safeguarding area in Staff Share.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is most common in the western, eastern and north-eastern regions of Africa, in some countries in Asia and the Middle East, and among migrants from these areas. The following list should be used to raise any concerns regarding FGM:

- Talk of a special procedure vaccination /absence from school/ceremony
- More at risk FGM during summer holidays
- Prolonged absence from school
- Noticeable change in behaviour
- Difficult to sit still/discomfort/pain
- Frequent toilet breaks, asking to be excused from PE or swimming

At AESG if a teacher (or any member of staff), in the course of their work in the profession discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the Police (section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015). The DSL should be informed and support both the member of staff and the girl.

Breast Ironing

Staff are aware of an act of abuse performed on young girls (from around the age of 9 years old) in which their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded, burned with heated objects or covered with an elastic belt to prevent or delay the development of their breasts. Staff are clear that they would follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting this abuse where it is suspected.

Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems, can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are well placed to observe and identify those whose behaviours suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, **immediate action should be taken**, following this policy and should speak to the DSL or deputy.

We have a clear system in place (via the Form Tutor, HoY, School Nurse and Counsellor – see Appendix 12) to enable the staff to report concerns appropriately and thus information can be gathered to inform appropriate outside agencies so that support can be provided to the pupil in question. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact. It is key that staff are aware of how these experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. Further guidance is signposted in KCSIE and at the start of this policy (additional documents).

Extremism and Radicalisation

Guidelines in the governments **Prevent Duty** (2015) are followed and all staff at AESG have undertaken an online training programme to consolidate their understanding. Alderley Edge School for Girls seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or Far Right/ Neo Nazi/ White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights Movements. Within Cheshire East we are aware of the greatest risk being posed from the Far-Right movement and act on advice and materials shared by Cheshire East and the Police to ensure we educate the girls in our care.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. At AESG it is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Prevention work and reductions of risk will be included in: The R&P curriculum, PSHE curriculum, assemblies, Anti Bullying Policy and other issues specific to the school's ethos. The DSL has been accredited with the Home Office training. Staff are updated with websites and other sources of useful information to keep them up to date in these matters.

Private Fostering

We recognise that our school has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when we become aware of, or suspect that, a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. To aid our awareness we ensure that we establish parental responsibility for every child; we take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child when we register them.

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 stepparents (by marriage or where a legal

order has been made, such as a Child Arrangement Order); it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins. 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.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, we recognise that they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of private fostering arrangements, they are aware that they need to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform Cheshire East. The school would also inform Cheshire East of the private fostering arrangements.

9. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. Staff recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others (both on and offline). This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), 'banter', gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Any alleged child-on-child abuse should be reported immediately to the Deputy Head and Head of Year. Support will be given to both the 'perpetrator' and 'victim' in these circumstances through discussions and referral to the Head of Year, School Nurse and Student Wellbeing Counsellor. Such situations will be thoroughly investigated and parents will be involved in discussions regarding support (See Anti-Bullying Policy). However, if it is felt that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, then this abuse **will** be referred to local agencies.

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up to date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information can be found on the TES, MindEd, CEOP and NSPCC websites. There are also several government websites including GOV.UK for guidance on such issues as: bullying and cyber bullying, CSE, domestic violence, drugs, fabricated or induced illness, hate, sexting, mental health etc. We have a detailed Online Safety Policy that ensures the School has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place, that does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding. Additional information can also be found in KCSIE Annex B with regards to keeping children safe online, including when they are online at home. We are in regular contact with parents and carers and reinforce the importance of children being safe online. Our policy and communication with parents ensure that they understand what their daughter is being asked to do online, who they are interacting with and how the school monitors this. We have appropriate filtering and monitoring of school devices and school networks. The governing body reviews the number of and age range of children along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

The school recognises that 3G, 4G and 5G technology does not go through our web filtering system. We recognise that some children may be able to harass, bully and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Our Online Safety Policy considers how to manage this. In addition, we educate the pupils via PSHE lessons and assemblies about the importance of staying safe online. With the mobile 'phone policy, we aim to minimise the risks to our pupils, as much as we can, whilst in loco parentis. With iPads, we can monitor the usage of apps and respond appropriately. We use a filtering system for the internet and communication via Microsoft Teams to identify issues and address them promptly. The DSL receives daily updates and cascades this information to the Heads of Year, as appropriate.

10. Children who are absent from education and Children Missing Education

Under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 we have a duty to investigate any unexplained absences. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

We follow Cheshire East's procedures for dealing with children that are absent or who go missing from lessons and/or school, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. Our response to this issue is to support the child and prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. Children missing in education are reported to the relevant local authority, both being Cheshire East and also the local authority of which the child is resident. (See school attendance government advice)

We also ensure that we are rigorous in our attendance procedures; these are outlined in our attendance policy. Where a child's destination is unknown when they have left our school, we ensure we carry out all necessary checks and refer them as CME (Child Missing Education) using the appropriate form so that they can be followed up on. Staff are aware of the trafficking of children and the importance of rigour around our attendance procedures to reduce this as a threat to our children's safety.

Where a child has an ECHP and a parent or carer expresses their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will work with the LA, parents and child to coordinate a meeting period to the decision being made.

11. School practice management in cases of suspected or disclosed abuse

The school will designate a member of staff who will have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with the appropriate agencies. This member of staff will be referred to as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is the Deputy Headmistress of the senior school, Mrs Caroline Wood. The Headmistress, Mrs Nicola Smillie, Mrs Claire

Clark (School Nurse) and Deputy Head of Prep, Mr T Marchington and Miss Emma Stone (Asst Head of Prep) are Designated Persons and are also trained to fulfil this role in her absence, or if there is an allegation of abuse brought against the DSL.

In all cases where teachers or other members of staff consider that they have good cause **to suspect abuse** (including neglect and emotional mistreatment), the following action must be taken:

In the Senior School: The member of staff must report their suspicions/share their concerns directly to the DSL. **In the Prep School:** The member of staff must report their suspicions/share their concerns with the Deputy Head Prep / Assistant Head of Prep.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage: Mr T Marchington is the designated person to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS and liaise as appropriate with other professional bodies. Staff members observe the children and know their normal behaviour patterns; any significant change to previous patterns of behaviour and development will be noted and brought to the prompt attention of the DSL in the Prep School (TM). Written documentation of conversations and observations will be made, in the event of suspected abuse. This information will be stored in a locked cabinet and will only be available to as few people as need to know. The DSL or other designated person will have a case conference with appropriate staff to determine a future course of action.

12. Recording and reporting concerns about a child

In our school we ensure that we follow Cheshire East's Multi-agency Practice Standards to ensure that our work, on behalf of our children, is of a consistently good standard. We use these standards to challenge other workers on behalf of children where the standards are not being met. Our recording procedures are in line with those outlined in Cheshire East's "Recording and Reporting Guidance." 2023; the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Leads are aware of this document.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy, without delay to facilitate immediate intervention if necessary. The Local Children's Service will be contacted. A written record should be made of these concerns as soon as possible following the disclosure/concern being raised; this must be on the same working day. Subject to local advice, the DSL will aid early help support, inter-agency assessment and intervention using the early Help Assessment and 'Team Around the Child' (TAC) approaches.

After consultation with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) a EHA ([Early Help Assessment](#)) will usually be submitted. If a pupil is found to be a 'Child in Need' the DSL will attend all relevant meetings in order to put the correct levels of support in place until the child is removed from that register. After removal from a formal external support scheme the child will be monitored closely in school to identify whether their situation deteriorates. Where staff have conversations with a child who discloses abuse they follow the basic principles:

- listen rather than directly question, remain calm
- never stop a child who is recalling significant events
- never ask a child if they are being abused
- make a record of discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (child language – do not substitute words)

- advise you will have to pass the information on
- avoid coaching/prompting
- never take photographs of any injury
- never undress a child to physically examine them
- allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support meetings
- at no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult
- reassure all victims; they are being taken seriously regardless of how long it has taken for them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe
- where abuse has occurred online or outside of the school, it will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously.

Staff are aware that they should not question the child; other than to respond with **TED** - **T**ell me what you mean by that, **E**xplain what you mean by that, **D**escribe that. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.

The DSL will obtain the relevant information and agree relevant actions after making a timely assessment of the information. We recognise that parents may hold key information about incidents/allegations therefore, in the majority of situations; the DSL will speak to the parents and gain their consent to discussing the situation with others. Parents do not need to be contacted if there is a risk of radicalisation. Staff are aware that there will be very few instances where, to speak to the parents, could further endanger the child. In those situations, they would still consult/refer, but would have clearly recorded reasons as to why they had not gained parental consent. They are also aware that, even in situations where the parent does not give consent, the best interests of the child are paramount therefore they would share their concerns. We will fulfil the mandatory reporting of FGM (as identified in October 2015) by contacting the Police.

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

Phone – Immediate Safeguarding concerns:

0300 123 5012

Option 3 – Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

Choose Option 2 – ChECS / Immediate Safeguarding concerns

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

A consultation will take place with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and/or the police immediately. Where a child lives in a different authority the Designated Lead follows the procedures for that authority. **This should take place within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.** A note should be made of the name of the person taking the referral and the time it was made. A record should be kept of the action taken, the interview and the telephone conversation.

If the child declines to speak any further because confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the child could be informed of the possibility of making a private and confidential call to **ChildLine**. In such cases the member of staff should still record and report the information

gathered up to that point to the DSL, having shared concerns via the appropriate Junior or Senior School referral route. The DSL at this point will annotate that child's personal file to indicate that concerns are recorded and held elsewhere.

Where possible we ensure that contacts with outside agencies are through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy; however, staff are aware that anyone can make this contact. Where a member of staff makes contact they ensure that they make the Designated Safeguarding Lead aware as soon as possible.

HOWEVER, THERE SHOULD BE NO CONTACT MADE WITH THE PARENTS OR GUARDIANS OF THE CHILD WHERE:

- Discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry
- Sexual abuse in the home is suspected
- Organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Fabrication of an illness is suspected
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is suspected
- Forced marriage is suspected
- Honour Based Abuse
- Extremism or radicalisation is suspected
- County Lines activities are suspected

If, after wider discussion, it is decided that the probability of abuse can be ruled out, these suspicions should be recorded in a confidential file. Confidential material on suspected abuse will remain in school and not be available to outsiders. The teacher to whom the abuse was disclosed, or who had grounds for suspicion, should, where possible, be present at any relevant Child Protection Conference.

If a referral is made to the Children's Assessment Team (Children's Social Care) this will be confirmed in writing within 48 hours by completing Safeguarding Children in Education Referral Form available online. The responsibility for completing this form lies with the designated person dealing with the case.

The DSL will maintain a confidential file including notes of interviews, official letters, summaries of telephone conversation, minutes of case conferences and any other relevant documents. A child's personal file will be annotated to indicate that additional information is in the DSL's confidential file. Access to this confidential file will normally be on a 'need to know' basis. This will usually be limited to the DSL and the child's Head of Year, or Head of the Prep School. The DSL will ensure that relevant information is passed on at appropriate transfer times. The school should not pass on this information to anyone, including the child's parents without advice from the designated officer (LADO) or school's solicitors.

It is possible that a school's co-operation might be sought in relation to a child abuse investigation, which was initiated outside the school. If a case conference is convened two members of staff should represent the school. In the event of the child being placed upon the Child Protection Register the school may be asked to contribute to the Child Protection Plan and attend subsequent review case conference. Priority will be given to attendance at these case conferences and strategy discussions.

N.B. It remains the legal responsibility of the member of staff who initiated the investigation (to whom the abuse is disclosed, or who has grounds for suspected abuse) to ensure it is carried through to a satisfactory conclusion.

At every stage of a suspected or disclosed abuse case, staff will follow the Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures of Cheshire East (or the relevant local authority's Children's Services – details at end of this policy). It is important to note that the wishes and feelings of the child(ren) involved will be considered when determining the actions and what services provide. We ensure that they know that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

Early Help, Child in Need, Cared for Children and Child Protection

In our school we ensure that we follow Cheshire East's Multi-agency Practice Standards [CE multiagency practice standards 2016](#) to ensure that our work, on behalf of our children, is of a consistently good standard. We use these standards to challenge other workers on behalf of children and young people where the standards are not being met. We use the Right Help, Right Time documentation to ensure the needs of our children are effectively assessed.

The multi-agency threshold framework is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. This support can be provided on a single agency basis or a multi-agency basis. The stepped approach aims to reduce risk and vulnerability and meet needs at the appropriate level of support and/or intervention. Access to effective early intervention and prevention services is essential to achieving this.

The pyramid of support will help us to identify what advice and guidance is available and who to contact at each different level on the continuum of need. The Family Hub model that is being implemented across Cheshire East will strengthen existing partnerships in each locality making it easier for practitioners to get support for families.

As staff may be required to support other agencies and practitioners and parents /carers and children in an extra help plan or targeted help plan, all staff are aware of the relevant assessments and appropriate support is given to them when they undertake an early help assessment. We have a suite of screening tools which may also help to identify the level of need, the best pathway of support, and the interventions you can be provided for children, young people and families. cescp.org.uk/docs/multi-agency-toolkit/ce-scp-multi-agency-toolkit-final-oct-2021.docx

Concerns assessed as being at lower tier Targeted Help level for complex early help concerns will be triaged and managed by the Family Help front door.

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

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local Authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. Further information and support can be accessed from KCSIE.

The Headmistress will ensure that all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching are aware of the provisions of this Policy. Details for the Escalation Procedure are [here](#).

In all cases of safeguarding, the victim may find it difficult to interact in school. AESG will ensure that we work with the victim to enable them to receive a full education. Any

amendments will be made to meet their needs, not because it makes the situation easier to manage.

13. Training

The DSL and deputies attend 'designated person' training every two years in order to keep up with current safeguarding practices. These three members of staff will share up to date practices and information and support each other in dealing with any Safeguarding issues. All DSLs at AESG are trained to the same standard. All DSLs are required to read KCSIE and Annex A, confirming they have understood it via the School's assessment module.

All staff including support and maintenance staff attend the Safeguarding Children Basic Awareness Course held by the CЕСP and are certificated. This is updated every two years. New staff receive the safeguarding training before they start teaching, if they start 31 August. For new staff outside of this time, we send them on the course as quickly as possible, should they not be certificated with Cheshire East. All new staff must attend a checkpoint discussion with the DSL to ensure that they have read the policies (including Online Safety, Behaviour Policies, Staff Code of Conduct and Missing Child Policy), know who to go to and where to access disclosure forms etc. In addition to this the annual INSET at the beginning of each year will contain a safeguarding update from the DSL. During the year email and staff meeting updates will ensure that all staff are equipped to deal with safeguarding and child protection issues and to manage a report of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment. The DSL and other designated persons attend regular update meetings with the East Cheshire SCiES (Safeguarding Children in Educational Settings) team and readily consult with them for support with any safeguarding issues. The DSL and other designated persons attend Cheshire East and can be reviewed via their Appraisal documentation/ Safeguarding documentation stored with the DSL.

Staff Induction Training

All staff should be aware of systems within AESG which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of Staff Induction. This is what we include in our training linked to Child Protection:

- Child Protection Policy (including risks off and online, online safety expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring)
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)
- Safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- Role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part One of KCSIE are provided to staff at induction. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates (staff meetings and INSET), as required. Annually they are provided with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively with the amendments to the policy clearly explained.

AESG recognise that early intervention is key and that any member of staff can make a referral to children's services. They must record and refer all suspicions of abuse/significant harm to children to the DSL as soon as concerns arise. Our appendices provide Cheshire East's guidelines to help identify abuse. All staff are aware of the process for making referrals to

children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments. Staff have contributed to feedback that we have had to gather in previous cases and understand the importance of timely and accurate record keeping via our digital system CPOMS.

The DSLs will support staff to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect, including:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour;
- Deterioration in children's general well-being;
- Doing uncharacteristically poorly in schoolwork
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- An unexplained or unusual kind or location of injury
- Children's comments which give cause for concern;
- Reluctance to be alone with parent/teacher/carer
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or dirty/ hungry appearance
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images

The use of 'reasonable force' (see separate policy)

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. Where it has been necessary to use physical intervention, we ensure the following:

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

14. Alleged abuse by a member of staff (including supply staff and contractors) (See Appendix 9 for quick guide details)

Our aims in dealing with alleged abuse will be

1. To deal with the allegations with an open and enquiring mind.
2. To deal with the child's complaint sensitively.
3. To deal fairly with the rights and reputation of staff involved in such action.

Definition of abuse by a teacher

Abuse by a teacher can take the form of:

1. Emotional abuse or victimisation e.g. constant picking on a child
2. Physical abuse e.g. restraint, assault
3. Sexual abuse

New to KCSIE in 2021 is the requirement that governing bodies and proprietors should have policies and processes in place to deal with concerns (including allegations) that do not meet the harm threshold for Section one allegations. These may arise from a variety of sources, including suspicion, complaint, a disclosure (by child or adult) or during vetting checks. KCSIE describes it as critical that a culture is created in which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. This should enable an open and transparent culture, enable the early identification of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, minimise the risk of abuse, ensure that adults working in schools are clear about and act within professional boundaries in accordance with the values and ethos of the institution, and protect those working in or on behalf of schools from potential false allegations or misunderstandings. Staff are encouraged to feel that they can self-refer if their behaviour could be misinterpreted and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standard.

A low-level concern is ‘any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate contact outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO

These behaviours can exist on a wide spectrum, from inadvertent to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. They include, for example:

- being over friendly with children,
- having favourites;
- taking photos of children on their own mobile devices;
- engaging with children on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language
- humiliating pupils

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

We have high regard to the importance of sharing low-level concerns, and the purpose of the policy is to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school’s values and expected behaviour as set out in the staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. Staff must report concerns to the Head

immediately. The concerns should also be recorded if they are about staff from a supply agency or contractor and the employer notified so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If in any doubt about whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff is a low-level concern or not, we will always consult with the LADO.

Relating to Organisations or Individuals using School Premises

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

Where a third party has raised the concern, the Head will collect evidence by speaking directly to the person who has raised the concern (if known) and the individual involved and any witnesses. All of this will be recorded in writing to include:

- details of the concern
- the context in which they arose
- the evidence collected by the DSL
- the decision categorising the type of behaviour
- action taken and rationale for decisions and action
- the name of the individual sharing the concern (respecting the wish for anonymity where possible)

These records will be kept confidential and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Records will be reviewed so that patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. The school will take action through the disciplinary procedures or refer to the LADO. The school will retain this information in personnel files.

Emotional Abuse:

- This is usually termed victimisation and takes the form of a child claiming you are "picking" on her. It is wise to reprimand children in a professional manner and never to use slang or colloquialism or get involved in a heated verbal exchange. If the student makes a serious charge of victimisation it is wise to inform your Head of Department or Year Head.
- By adhering to good practice, you can protect yourselves against such charges, move gradually up a scale of sanctions, keep the Form Tutor, Head of Department, Year Head and Deputy Head informed and ask for their help.
- If you recognise that you are finding a child's behaviour so irritating that you are in danger of not being able to keep a professional detachment discuss this with your Head of Department or a member of the Senior Leadership team.
- Be alert to suggestions from other people that you are not being fair to a particular child.

Physical Abuse:

This tends to focus on two areas: - physical assault and restraint.

- Corporal punishment is forbidden at Alderley Edge School for Girls and would result in disciplinary procedure. If you feel you are losing your temper you are advised to send the pupil with a companion to the Deputy Headmistress or the Headmistress.
- In the event of a fight or a child acting in a manner likely to cause risk to others it is obviously necessary to act quickly in order to avert danger to other pupils and if necessary to prevent escalation of the incident. In this situation the teacher should firstly try to speak with pupils in an effort to calm the situation.
- Where violence has begun a sole teacher would be wise not to intervene but to calm the situation verbally and if this fails try to get assistance.
- Once another teacher is in the vicinity, then they can attempt to separate the pupils and calm the situation.

The presence of two teachers is essential as a witness in case of allegations of assault and secondly to reduce the risk of bodily harm. Once the incident has been dealt with it should be reported to the Headmistress and a report produced immediately.

Sexual Abuse:

- Allegations of sexual abuse apply to both men and women. As a rule, it would be provident not to instigate any physical contact. It would be extremely unwise to hug or kiss a child. Displays of affection or distress should be met with a response appropriate to the age of the child.
- Sports, Drama and Music staff should exercise caution when giving demonstrations, which involve physical contact with children. The hands should be placed in a supportive position on the body giving preference to arms or legs. Care should be taken when dealing with children who are reluctant to do certain activities. Persistently putting a child in this situation could lead to emotional abuse.
- The school requires a female member of staff to accompany a male colleague on trips for his safety and for the comfort of the children.
- If a lesson or discussion on a one to one basis because you concern you should arrange to conduct them in a busy area of the school or to leave the door open or to inform a colleague asking them to call into the lesson. Male staff would be wise always to leave the classroom door open.
- It could be unwise to offer a lift to a lone pupil. It would be sensible for male staff to avoid this circumstance all together.
- Staff should not become too involved with a pupil's personal problems outside the educational area. If a child has problems of a physical, emotional or sexual nature they should be referred for professional advice.
- Staff should ensure that they do not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil.

It is crucial that any concern regarding a member of staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are shared responsibly, with the right person and dealt with promptly and appropriately. A 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out in KCSIE. It is still a concern and could include behaviours such as being over friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, for example. Ensuring that these concerns are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

15. Internal Management in Cases of Suspected or Disclosed Abuse of teachers (including supply staff, other staff, volunteers and contractors)

All procedural decisions will be taken in conjunction with the advice found in Part Four of the KCSIE statutory guidance. If an allegation is made against a teacher it must be dealt with immediately. Any allegation against a teacher or any member of staff including supply staff and volunteers should be treated seriously and in a fair way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. Cheshire East LADO will be contacted immediately (and within one working day at the latest) if an allegation has been made, to seek advice and ensure that the correct procedures are followed. Discussions with the LADO must be recorded in writing with any communication with both the individual and parents of the child agreed. The Police should be informed at the outset if a criminal offence is suspected, especially in cases of serious harm. If we receive an allegation from an individual or organisation when they were using the premises for their activity e.g. extra-curricular club, we will follow the same safeguarding policies outlined above and inform the LADO.

A Definitions

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate attempt to deceive;
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegations being made.

B Dealing with allegations

If an allegation has been made the Headmistress will contact the LADO prior to any internal investigations in order to consider the nature, content, and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. This will be within one working day of the allegation being made. The LADO will advise whether the police involvement is necessary and ensure that statutory investigations are not compromised. In many cases the LADO will give informal advice without naming the school or the individual. Any discussions with the LADO, as referenced below, will be recorded in writing.

- 1) If staff or volunteers are accused directly of any form of abuse they should:
 - a) Inform the Headmistress and together, with the DSL they should seek advice from Cheshire East LADO.
 - b) Contact their Union (it is worthwhile to ascertain whether Unions provide free representation in such cases) or at least bring a colleague with them to meetings.
 - c) Ensure they have legal representation (this can be very costly).

- 2)** If such an allegation is made to a member of staff about a colleague:
 - a) Do not promise confidentiality.
 - b) Inform the Headmistress only (or the Deputy Headmistress if she is not contactable)
 - c) Inform the Chair of Governors if the allegation concerns the Headmistress. The Headmistress must not be informed if the allegation is about her. Mr Keith Lowe who can be contacted via email – klowe@aesg.co.uk
 - d) Staff may also consider discussing any concerns with the DSL and may make a referral via them.

- 3)** If an allegation is made by a child at school about staff or volunteers:
 - a) Inform the Headmistress. She should contact the LADO for advice in the first instance and the recommended advice followed.
 - b) The Headmistress will usually inform the member of staff (or volunteer) concerned of the nature of the allegation and will conduct a preliminary investigation to establish whether the abuse could have taken place.
 - c) She will usually interview the child to clarify the facts of the situation. A witness should be present to observe and keep notes of the meeting.
 - d) The Headmistress will consult the Governors and School solicitors.

- 4)** If an allegation is made by a parent after the event:
 - a) The Headmistress should contact the LADO for advice
 - b) Typically, the Headmistress will interview the parents to ascertain the nature of the allegations. A witness will be present to observe and take notes.
 - c) The Headmistress will usually interview the member of staff concerned to inform them of the allegations. The Deputy Headmistress should be present and another observer chosen by the member of staff concerned e.g. Union Rep., Colleague.

- 5)** If the allegations seem to rest on a misinterpretation: e.g. a gesture of comfort
 - a) Advice should be taken from the LADO
 - b) Typically, the Headmistress will again, interview the parents to discuss the accusation and try to resolve the matter.
 - c) If the parents accept the view, the Headmistress will counsel the member of staff on future conduct.
 - d) If the parent refuses this view, the parent may report the incident to the Cheshire East SCiES team.

- 6)** If it is impossible to establish that the abuse could not have taken place:
 - a) Advice will be taken from the LADO
 - b) The Headmistress will report the matter to the Cheshire East SCiES manager.
 - c) A decision will be made whether or not to suspend the member of staff pending investigation.
 - d) Suspension on full pay in a case of this kind does not imply any guilt. Rather it is a neutral action which allows evidence to be collected quickly and efficiently in

order to determine whether or not to instigate disciplinary procedures. Suspended staff must be given a named contact at school and they should be informed of both the progress of their case and current work-related issues.

- e) Staff will have the right of appeal to the Governing Body, in particular the designated Safeguarding Governor (Mrs J Rostron).
- f) It may be appropriate for a school to arrange counselling for those who have suffered abuse and for those who have been involved including teachers who are wrongly accused. The Headmistress is mindful that as an employer there is a duty of care to their employees and should act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegation process.

7) Confidentiality

- a) The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. (See Education Act 2011 and subsequent amendments from October 2012 regarding reporting restrictions.)
- b) Parents and carers will also be made aware of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers in section 141F of Education Act 2002. They must apply to have reporting restrictions removed and should be advised to seek legal advice.
- c) The school will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services to agree the following: who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared; how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip; what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and how to manage press interest if and when it should arise

8) Timescales

- a) It is in everyone's interests to resolve cases as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. Guidelines from the KCSiE document will be followed.
- b) For those cases where it is clear that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious, they should be resolved within one week.

9) Return to work

- a) Following a case decision that the member of staff suspended should return to work the Headmistress should consider how best to facilitate this. Support should be given and a phased return allowed if appropriate.
- b) In the case of a malicious or unsubstantiated allegation the LADO should consider whether to refer the case to the children's social care services. The Headmistress should consider whether disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil who made it.
- c) The Headmistress should discuss with the LADO whether the dealings of the case have been carried out in the best way so that improvements can be made to the procedures if necessary.

- d) Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references.

Advice to staff

The Children's Act strengthens not only the rights of children but also the criminal law jurisdiction to deal with children's' complaints. Teachers on the other hand have no such paralleled powers to protect themselves from malicious accusations. We all want to maintain the very good relationships which exist between staff and students in this school. There are however certain situations which could allow allegations of abuse to be made. It is for the member of staff to ensure that they conduct themselves within the guidelines set out in the Staff Code of Conduct. Breaches will be addressed by the Headmistress.

16. Detention

Where detention is used it is important to use the school detention procedure wherever possible. Staff should be aware that a blanket detention of a whole class could result in a charge of false imprisonment. Staff should only detain the guilty party giving at least 24 hours' notice in writing. It is inadvisable for a teacher to be alone in a classroom after school with a child. If a teacher is constantly experiencing problems with the behaviour of a pupil requiring repeated disciplining, staff should seek advice since the situation could become the subject of a complaint.

17. Early Years Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 Education

Early Years Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 staff may often be placed in a situation where children have become soiled and require washing and changing. This must be done in the interest of health and welfare of the child but it is advisable if this is a frequent occurrence with the same child to remove clothing and bathe the child in the presence of a trained assistant. If children sustain an injury, it must be recorded in the accident book at the time of the incident; a report produced and a report made to the Headmistress.

18. Requirement to report any person who is considered unsuitable to work with children

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS if the DBS criteria are met (the individual has caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child). This will be done promptly, and certainly within one month.

The Headmistress and Chair of Governors will report to the Secretary of State, via the DBS, within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. This includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation, and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering.

The Headmistress and Chair of Governors will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible in their report. This is in accordance with the Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003. In the case of a member of teaching staff the Headmistress should discuss with the LADO whether to refer the matter to the National College for Teaching and Learning to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching if the teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned). Any case should be considered for referral to the Secretary of State (via the TRA). It may also be appropriate to ask the TRA to consider a prohibition order for reasons such as “unacceptable professional conduct”, “conduct that would bring the profession into disrepute” or a “conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence”.

19. Key Principles Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

The statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, as stated in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*

2015, sets out the safeguarding and welfare requirements that focus on the safety and well-being of children. This is used in conjunction with the *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022*. These principles have been adopted by the Whole School. In summary the school recognises the responsibility to:

- Safeguard children and promote their welfare;
- Promote good health;
- Manage children’s behaviour
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children;
- Ensure that adults looking after children have appropriate qualifications, skills and knowledge;
- Ensure that staffing arrangements keep children safe;
- Ensure that organisational arrangements enable all children to have a positive learning and development experience;
- Ensure facilities are safe and suitable;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures.

20. Early Years Foundation Stage and Infants – guidance on intimate personal care and physical contact

With our youngest children, there will be occasions when the staff need to have some form of physical contact with the children in their care. The school recognises that close, physical contact is vital in order to help them develop into well-balanced secure and happy individuals. The contact should be appropriate to the age of the child and not be gratuitous. There may be occasions where a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance, possibly due to an accident or disagreement, or a child struggling to separate from a parent or carer, which may include physical comforting such as a parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same child over a period of time.

Staff should use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of emotional support and should reflect the child's needs, age and level of maturity.

The guidance on the intimate care required for the youngest children in our Early Years setting is contained within the Intimate Care Policy. Parents are asked to authorise the provision of intimate care as part of the admission procedures when their daughter starts attending Nursery or Pre-School.

However, there are occasions when older children may need support with personal care due to a toileting accident or sickness, when staff will need to have some form of physical contact, particularly if a child needs washing or changing. Staff are advised to alert another member of staff that they are needing to provide support to a child. Physical contact must be supportive and not intrusive, taking account of the child's needs, age and level of maturity.

21. Inspection

Ofsted inspectors will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children are effective. In addition, they publish guidance to inspectors on inspecting safeguarding. ISI is approved to inspect certain Independent schools and will also report on safeguarding. Further details can be found on the links in KCSIE.

Evaluation of AESG Safeguarding policy

Any member of staff should raise concerns about poor practice or potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime, such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team at AESG.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the SLT or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them: General guidance can be found at – Advice on Whistleblowing. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel that they are able to raise child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8.00 AM to 8.00 PM Monday to Friday or Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Staff at AESG take the safeguarding of each and every child very seriously. This means that, should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected. This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly. They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.

STAYING SAFE AT ALDERLEY EDGE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



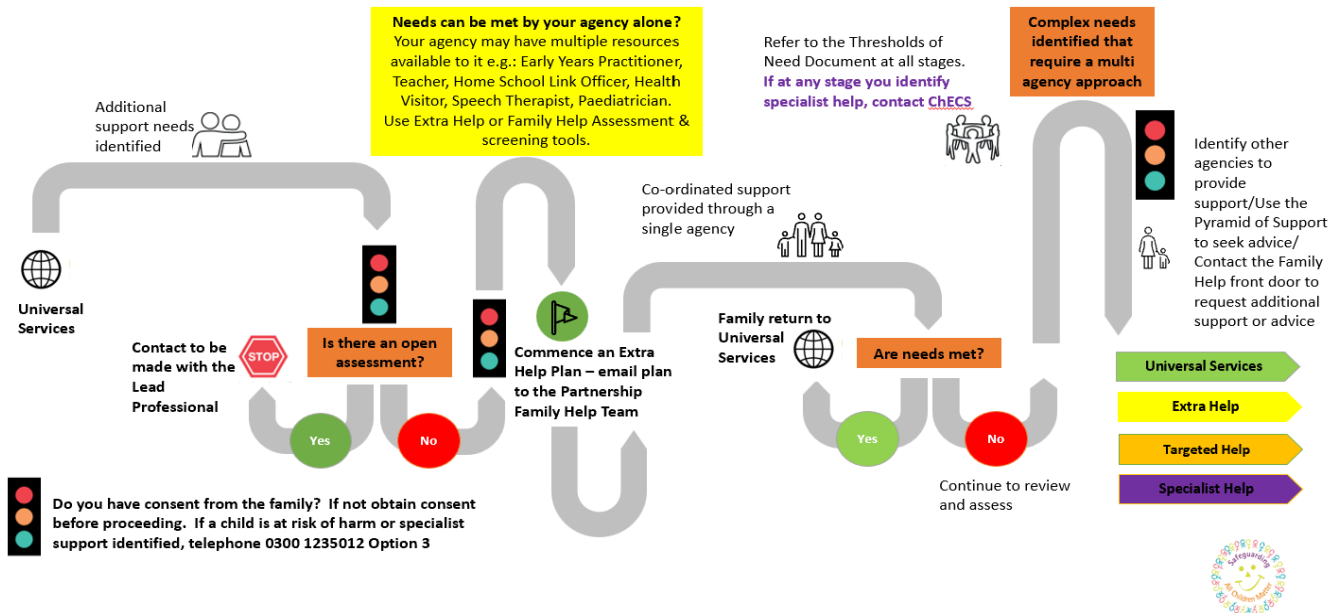
KEY CONTACTS IN OUR SCHOOL:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Mental Health Lead: Caroline Wood
- Deputy DSL: Claire Clark, Tris Marchington, Emma Scott, Nicola Smillie
- Chair of Governors: Keith Lowe (keithlowe@aesg.co.uk)

OUR LOCAL CONTACT NUMBERS ARE:

- Cheshire East Consultation Service (CHECS): 0300 123 5012, Option 3
- Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours): 0300 123 5012
- Safeguarding Children in other authorities:
 - Stockport 0161 217 6028
 - Trafford 0161 912 5125
 - Manchester 0161 234 5001
 - Warrington 01925 443322
 - Derbyshire 01629 533190
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01270 685 904 / 01606 288931
- Prevent referrals: [Prevent Referral Process](#)
- Cyber Prevent referrals (concern with online activity): cyber.prevent@nwrocu.police.uk
- Police: emergency 999 and non-emergency 101
- Mental Health Helpline: 0300 303 3972
- Adult Safeguarding 0300 123 5010

Early Help Pathway to Support Families



Children and Families Integrated Front Door

All agencies have their own safeguarding procedures which will detail how to identify and assess safeguarding concerns.

In the pyramid of support, there are several layers in place to seek advice and guidance without the need to contact the Integrated front door (Family Help front door and Cheshire East Consultation Service) for cases assessed as being at Universal Services or Extra Help level.

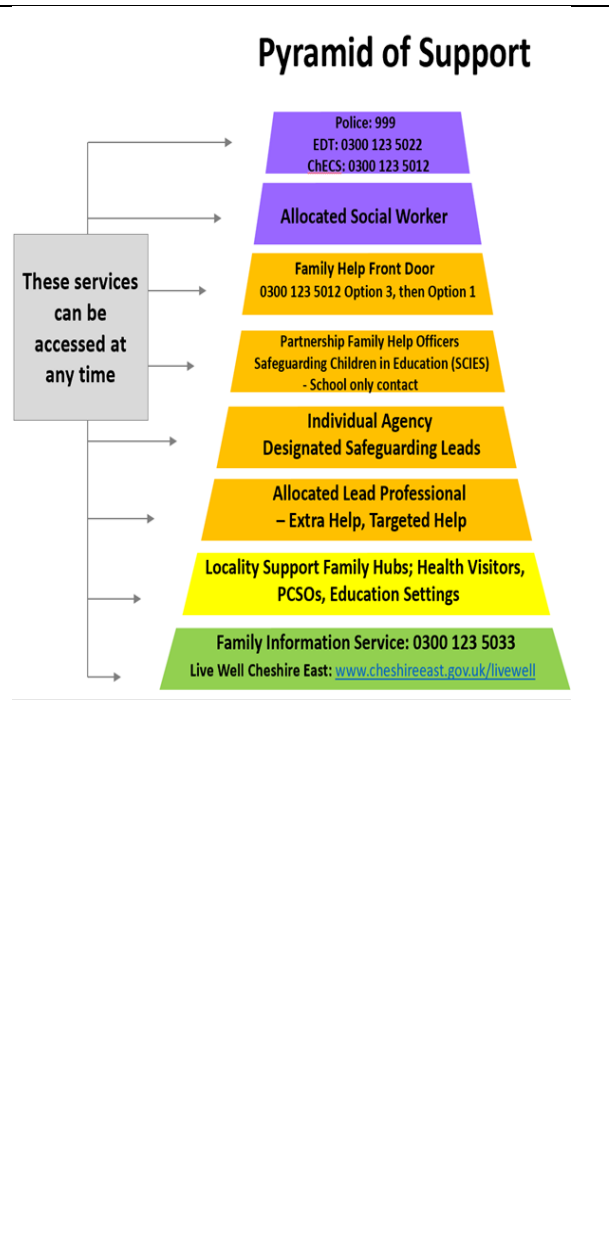
This means the Integrated front door can prioritise the requests that do need their support and have more time to make safe risk-assessed decisions in a timely way.

If you do require advice at this stage though and the locality partnership hasn't been able to support you, you can contact the Family Help front door team, formally known as the Early Help Brokerage team, who can offer advice and guidance.

Who to contact:

Concerns assessed as being at lower tier Targeted Help level for complex early help concerns will be triaged and managed by the Family Help front door.

Upper tier Targeted Help as well as immediate and significant risk of harm will be triaged and managed by the Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS).



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Appendix 2 Signs of Abuse (KCSIE)

Remember that children will respond to the trauma of abuse and neglect in their own individual ways, its about knowing the children well and knowing what is normal for them. Some children may show no signs or indicators

Neglect

- **Child cold/ inappropriately dressed**
- **Undernourished/always hungry**
- **Untreated medical problems, e.g. dental decay, headlice, etc**
- **Lethargy, tiredness or aggressive tendencies**

Sexual

- **Genital discomfort, pain, itching, bruising, injuries**
- **Public/compulsive masturbation**
- **Eating disorders**
- **Sexually explicit behaviour or language not appropriate for their age**
- **Sexually Transmitted Infection**
- **Sexually explicit drawings**
- **Pregnancy**

Emotional

- **Physical, mental and emotional development lags**
- **Talks of excessive punishment**
- **Fear of parents being contacted**
- **Sudden speech disorders**
- **Running away**
- **Self-deprecation/ low self esteem**

Physical

- **Bruises, black eyes and broken bones**
- **Unexplained or untreated injuries**
- **Injuries to unusual body parts e.g. thighs, back, abdomen**
- **Bruising that resembles hand/finger marks**
- **Burns/scalds**
- **Human bites/cigarette burns**
- **Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly**
- **Injuries in babies and non-mobile children**

Receiving Disclosures

Receive

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

Reassure

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

Report and Record

- Make a Brief, accurate, timely and factual record
- Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy, without delay
- The DSL will assess the situation and decide on the next steps
- **Things to include:**
- Time and full date of disclosure/incident and the time and full date the record was made
- An accurate record of what was said or seen, using the child's words as appropriate
- Whether it is 1st or 2nd hand information
- Whether the child was seen/spoken to
- Whether information is fact/ professional judgement
- Full names and roles/status of anyone identified in the report
- Sign the record with a legible signature.
- Record actions agreed with/by the Designated Lead (SMART)
- Avoid acronyms/jargon/abbreviations

*Review records regularly; add any new concerns respond to these immediately.
DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH INJURIES OR MARKS EVEN IF REQUESTED TO DO SO*

Appendix 6 - Further Forms of Abuse

Breast ironing also known as Breast Flattening

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

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Children Missing from Home or Care

Children who run away from home or from care can provide a clear behavioural indication that they are either unhappy or do not feel safe in the place that they are living. Research shows that children run away from conflict or problems at home or school, neglect or abuse, or because children are being groomed by predatory individuals who seek to exploit them. Many run away on numerous occasions. Our school are aware of the Pan-Cheshire Joint Protocol on Children and Young People Who run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care 2023 to 2024. The association of chief police officers has provided the following definitions a missing person is: 'Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed'. Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors need to be considered.

Push factors include:

- Conflict with parents/carers

- Feeling powerless
- Being bullied/abused
- Being unhappy/not being listened to
- The Toxic Trio

Pull factors include:

- Wanting to be with family/friends
- Drugs, money and any exchangeable item
- Peer pressure

For those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children there will be pressure to contact their trafficker. As a school we will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us). If the parent is also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them, or we will take the relevant action.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child 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. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability. Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess.

As staff we are aware that the indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for ‘normal adolescent behaviours’. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given. Indicators a child may be at risk of CSE include:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other children involved in exploitation;

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- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse; and
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

CSE can happen to a child of any age, gender, ability or social status. Often the victim of CSE is not aware that they are being exploited and do not see themselves as a victim. As a school we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. We use the Cheshire East Child Exploitation Screening form to identify pupils who are at risk and the DSL will share this information as appropriate with ChECS. Staff have been made aware of the Pan-Cheshire CSE policy, procedures and Screening tool. [Child Exploitation](#). In addition, the SCiES team are recommending this website for additional support - <https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/> , SWGfL and The Marie Collins Foundation Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service , and [CSA Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse](#).

All staff are alert to possible indicators and will raise concerns as appropriate. They are aware of the pan-Cheshire CSE policy and procedures and of the screening tool including where to find it, how to complete it and what happens next. We take a proactive approach to preventative work via PSHE lessons, assemblies and parent information sharing.

Criminal Exploitation

Criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs; in such cases a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation: can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;

- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

[County Lines Toolkit for Professionals](#)

Cyberbullying

Central to our School's anti-bullying policy is the principle that *'bullying is always unacceptable'* and that *'all pupils have a right not to be bullied'*. The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any cyber-bullying we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site. Cyber-

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

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

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

Domestic abuse/violence

AESG believes that all our pupils have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that some children may be living in situations where they are directly or indirectly affected by incidents of domestic abuse or violence. As an Operation Encompass school we are alert to the indicators of abuse and we have a planned approach to supporting children in a proactive way. We do this by providing preventative/awareness raising work with parents, staff and pupils as well as intervention work to support children affected by domestic abuse.

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

Domestic abuse can affect anybody; it occurs across all of society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth or geography. Domestic abuse affects significant numbers of children and their families causing immediate harm as well as damaging future life chances. Domestic abuse negatively affects children. We know that they are often more aware of what is happening than parents think. How they respond depends on their age, personality and support network; but they recover best when they are helped to understand and to process what is happening/has happened to them. Their experiences will shape their self-worth, identity, and ability to relate to others in childhood and adulthood; making it much more difficult to succeed at school and develop friendships.

To support our children we:

- Have an ethos which puts children’s wellbeing at the heart of all that we do
- Create a predictable school life with set routines
- Ensure that rules and expectations are clearly stated and understood by all
Understand that oppositional and manipulative behaviours are not attempts to ‘provoke us’, but may be attempts by these children to control their world when so much feels out of control for them

-
- Model respectful and caring behaviour, positive conflict resolution and respectful interactions. Helping children learn not only what not to do, but what to do instead
- Use the language of choice, making clear the benefits and negative consequences of their choices. Ensuring that we follow through with any consequences or sanctions
- Support children to put feelings into words. We build up a vocabulary of emotional words with them so that they can begin to express their feelings more appropriately/accurately (A child exposed to domestic abuse may have seen a lot of behaviours that express strong feelings, but may not have heard words to appropriately express/ describe these feelings)
- Understand that the child may experience conflicting and confusing emotions when thinking of or talking about their parents
- Create opportunities for children to feel successful. We let the child know that they matter; taking an active interest in them
- Accept that they may not be willing or able to talk about it right away (if ever)
- Provide effective, non-verbal, systems for children to access support
- Provide reassurance that only people who need to know about the incident will know
- Allow the child, where necessary, to safely store work in school or shred it after completion when providing interventions
- Have visible and accessible worry boxes/internal support systems /information regarding external sources of support e.g. Childline etc.

Children, Young People and Domestic Abuse / Emotional abuse

Staff are all aware that emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. We understand that it may involve the following:

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

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

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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

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

Indications that FGM may be about to take place:

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

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet possibly with bladder or menstrual problems
- Unusual/a noticeable change in behaviour after a lengthy absence
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- Prolonged absences/ persistent unexplained absence from school/college
- Seek to be excused from physical exercise without the support of their GP
- Child not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Close supervision of child by family/carers

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

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

Forced Marriage

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

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

- Appearing anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem
- Self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia
- Criminal activity e.g. shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol
- Declining performance, aspirations or motivation
- Not allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities
- Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college
- Attending school but absenting themselves from lessons
- Stopping attendance at school/college
- A family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

[The Right to Choose: government guidance on forced marriage](#)

Honour Based Violence

Staff are aware of "Honour-based' Violence (HBV) which encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and staff will handle and escalate as such. Practitioners in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV." *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Awareness raising has taken place around HBV and forced marriage; staff are alert to possible indicators. They are aware that forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; that it is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence and that HBV and FM can affect both young men and women. As a school we would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would not speak to the parents before sharing our concerns with ChECS.

Actions our school takes in relation to Honour Based violence:

When managing requests for absence, we use an absence request form which requests information on all siblings who attend other schools. Sometimes younger siblings tell teachers information that has a bearing on older members of the family so it is important that we liaise with the other schools.

The head teacher requires a meeting with parents to discuss applications for extended leave of absence during term time, as we feel this can provide an opportunity to gather important information. We ask for the precise location of where the child is going; the purpose of the visit; the return date and whether it is estimated or fixed. We check in with the child/children to see if they know and corroborate the purpose of the visit. If a return date has been specified and a child has not returned to school, we would contact our Education Welfare Officer. We would never remove the child from the roll without first making enquiries about their disappearance in line with Cheshire East Children Missing Education Procedures and referring the case to the police and Children's Services as appropriate.

Modern Day Slavery including trafficking

The Modern Slavery Act came into Force in 2015. Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Staff are aware that:

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

Trafficked Children

Human trafficking is defined by the United Nations, in respect of children, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation." Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim. As a school we are alert to the signs both for our children and for their families and are aware that this may be if they:

- Show signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy
- Have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- Are required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
- Work in various locations
- Have limited freedom of movement
- Appear to be missing for periods
- Are known to beg for money
- Are being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
- Are one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- Have not been registered with or attended a GP practice
- Are excessively afraid of being deported
- Look malnourished or unkempt
- Are withdrawn, anxious and unwilling to interact
- Are under the control and influence of others

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- Live in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation
- Have no access or control of their passport or identity documents
- Appear scared, avoid eye contact, and can be untrusting • Show signs of abuse and/or has health issues

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

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

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case. If staff believe that a child is being trafficked, this will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be reported as potential abuse.

Neglect

Staff are aware that neglect:

- is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development
may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse
- once a child is born, may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs • may potentially be fatal
- causes great distress to children and leads to poor outcomes in the short and long-term
- has possible consequences which may include an array of health and mental health problems, difficulties in forming attachment and relationships, lower educational

achievements, an increased risk of substance misuse, higher risk of experiencing abuse as well as difficulties in assuming parenting responsibilities later on in life.

The degree to which children are affected during their childhood and later in adulthood depends on the type, severity and frequency of the maltreatment and on what support mechanisms and coping strategies were available to the child. We are also mindful of the effects of adolescent neglect as this is as damaging as other forms of maltreatment - increasing the risk of arrest, offending and violent crime in late adolescence, and the risk of arrest and drug use in early adulthood.

If we suspect neglect we will use the Neglect Screening Tool

[http://www.cheshireeast\(CESCP\).org.uk/docs/neglectscreeningtool.doc](http://www.cheshireeast(CESCP).org.uk/docs/neglectscreeningtool.doc)

Online Safety

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

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

Sexting 'Sexting' often refers to the sharing of naked or 'nude' pictures or video through mobile phones and the internet. It also includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging. The new title for this is **Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes**.

While it often takes place in a consensual relationship between two children under the age of 18 years, the use of explicit images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more commonplace. Sharing nudes can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers. As the average age of first smartphone or camera enabled tablet is 6 years old, sharing nudes and semi-nudes is an issue that requires awareness raising across all ages. The school will use age appropriate educational material to raise awareness, to promote safety and deal with pressure. Parents are made aware that they can come to the school for advice.

UK Online Safety Helpline Number – 0344 381 4772 and email – helpline@saferinternet.org. As a School, we have robust systems in place to support, educate and protect our pupils.

A recent update from UK Safer Internet Centre can be accessed [here](#). These are linked via our school website. Additional information is shared with all staff and pupils, as appropriate. An

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additional resource that is used in school is [Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes](#). This plus other resources can be found in Annex B of KCSIE.

Cyber-crime: Preventing young people from getting involved

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

Gaming

Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in. The school raise awareness by:

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

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

- Acceptable use agreements for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
- Curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online including topics such as cyber crime
- Information included in letters, newsletters, web site
- Parents evenings / sessions
- High profile events / campaigns e.g. Safer Internet Day
- Building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications
 - Social media policy

Child-on-child abuse

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse, peer relationship abuse and teenage relationship abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

upskirting, typically this involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

We have a 'zero-tolerance' approach to all child-on-child sexual violence and harassment should be implemented. Staff are clear on our procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and do not take it any less serious than adult abuse; they are aware that it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

We ensure that we apply the same thresholds as any other incident. All staff working at AESG are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged then the school follows the guidance issued by the DfE in Part 5 on KCSIE 2023. [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children guidance](#). Where youth produced sexual images are part of the abuse then schools should consult the Sexting guidance. [Sexting in Schools and Colleges](#). Where sharing nudes or semi nudes (youth produced sexual images) are part of the abuse then the school follows the UK Council for Child Internet Safety

(UKCCIS) [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings](#)

When considering confidentiality and anonymity, the victim may ask the school or college not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies. For example, the public task basis may apply, where the overall purpose is to perform a public interest task or exercise official authority, and the task or authority has a clear basis in law.

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, AESG is aware of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately. Relevant information can be found in: CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, schools and colleges should do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.

We will also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities. The unique challenges regarding social media are discussed in KCSIE, along with potential support. In addition, the principles described in Childnet's cyberbullying guidance could be helpful.

We recognise that there is an additional requirement to risk assess the location of an incident – risk assessments now need to include the time and location of the incident and action needed to make the location safer. These will be completed by the DSL and any other relevant staff supporting the DSL and Head with the incident.

Physical abuse

Staff are aware of the signs of potential physical abuse and that it might involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. They are also aware that physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

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

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

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

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

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

Our taught curriculum includes educating children of how people with extreme views share these with others; we are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

In our school community we are aware of these specific issues, relevant to our school's profile and work across all key stages to education our pupils. All staff have received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism. This training is reinforced by *staff meetings, presentations from external speakers as well as external training that is shared back in school.*

AESG is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern; therefore concerns need to be recorded and discussed with the DSL; with timely, appropriate action then being taken. The Prevent Duty requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child maybe susceptible to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for political; environmental; animal rights; or faith-based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

In Cheshire East if we suspect a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, including being radicalised we would contact: Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS): 0300 123 5012 and complete a [Prevent Referral](#) on the stopadultabuse.org.uk website, for an adult and/ or a child. Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis: the pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
 - Personal Crisis: they may be experiencing: family tensions/ a sense of isolation/ low self-esteem. They may have dissociated from their existing friendship group/ become involved with a new and different group of friends/ may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
 - Personal Circumstances: migration/local community tensions/ events affecting the pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism/ discrimination/ aspects of Government policy
 - Unmet Aspiration: the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
 - Experiences of Criminality: which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration
- Special Educational Needs: pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
 - Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
 - Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
 - Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
 - Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
 - Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
 - Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour
 - Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis

Where necessary individuals may be discussed at Channel:

Staff are aware of Channel being a partnership approach to support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists. This was updated in 2020. In Cheshire East the Channel Co-ordinator is Sandra Murphy – Head of Adult Safeguarding. The CE Channel Panel meets monthly. Attendees sign a Confidentiality Agreement and share case information. Discussion covers the vulnerabilities of individuals and their families, current support, and risks for the individual and community. Attendees agree if the case is appropriate for Channel and the support plan which is needed. Consent is then sought from the adult / parent with parental responsibility. For those already open to Panel support plans are tailored, building on existing support, and may consist of

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help with family problems, mental health support, religious education, mentoring etc. For those who are not Channel appropriate: a safe exit from Channel or a referral elsewhere is discussed.

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

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

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

Sexual abuse

Staff are aware of sexual abuse and that:

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

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

Acronyms

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

Acronym	Long form	Description
CCE	Child criminal exploitation	A form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
CSC	Children's Social Care	The branch of the local authority that deals with children's social care.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	A form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
DBS	Disclosure and barring service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body with responsibility for children's services, policy and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DPO	Data protection officer	The appointed person in school with responsibility for overseeing data protection strategy and implementation to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act.
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	A member of the senior leadership team who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the school.
EHC plan	Education, Health and Care Plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs for pupils who have significant needs that impact on their learning and access to education. The plan identifies any additional support needs or interventions and the intended impact they will have for the pupil.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	All procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
UK GDPR	UK General Data	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation and ensure

	Protection Regulation	that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.
HBA	‘Honour-based’ abuse	So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community.
KCSIE	Keeping children safe in education	Statutory guidance setting out schools and colleges’ duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LA	Local authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.
LAC in CE Cared For Children	Looked-after children	Children who have been placed in local authority care or where children’s services have looked after children for more than a period of 24 hours.
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus	Term relating to a community of people, protected by the Equality Act 2010, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or other protected sexual or gender identities.
MAT	Multi-academy trust	A trust established to undertake strategic collaboration and provide education across a number of schools
NPCC	The National Police Chiefs’ Council	The National Police Chiefs’ Council is a national coordination body for law enforcement in the United Kingdom and the representative body for British police chief officers.
PLAC/PC4C	Previously looked-after children / cared for	Children who were previously in local authority care or were looked after by children’s services for more than a period of 24 hours. PLAC are also known as care leavers.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which pupils learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
PHE	Public Health England	An executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care which aims to protect and improve the nation’s health and wellbeing.
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all pupils. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction and sexuality, as well as promoting positive relationships.
SCR	Single central record	A statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches and instructors, and volunteers who attend the school in a non-visitor capacity.
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	A statutory role within all schools maintaining oversight and coordinating the implementation of the school’s special educational needs policy and provision of education to pupils with special educational needs.

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

Appendix 7 – Prevent Duty Risk Assessment

The following risk assessment reflects the due regard of Alderley Edge School for Girls to the need to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism / extremism. The risk assessment refers, in part, to *The Prevent Duty (Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers)* document, published June 2015. It forms part of the School’s wider safeguarding duties. The Risk Priority below is set before the consideration of control measures put in place by the School.

Foreseeable Hazard/what could happen?	Who is at risk?	Severity of harm ABC	Risk factors	Probability 123	Risk Priority A1 ..C3
Student falls victim to radicalisation / extremist ideology	All students	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students’ ability to access the internet in school time. • Students influencing each other through discussion. • External speakers visiting school to talk to girls. • Vulnerability as a result of age / mental health etc. • Staff not reporting concerns relating to an individual student. 	1	A1

Controls:

- Actively promote Fundamental British Values through PSHE / PAL and the wider curriculum (see Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy and FBV mapping document which forms an appendix to the SMSC Policy).
- Encourage girls to challenge argument through the teaching of debate / argument skills. This can build students’ resilience to radicalization by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making.
- Characteristics such as resilience, determination, self-esteem and confidence are developed through PSHE and assemblies.
- All staff to monitor the attendance of girls in their tutor group and alert the Designated Person/s if it is suspected that a student has travelled to, or is planning to, travel to areas associated with extremism (e.g. Syria).
- Designated Person/s to record any concerns noted by individual staff and use professional judgment in identifying students who might be at risk of extremism. Such records are kept, monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to assess risk.
- Senior Designated Person/s / Designated Persons to receive *Advanced Prevent* training

- Staff trained on the dangers of extremism through regular safeguarding updates in staff meetings and through the distribution of this Prevent Duty risk assessment.
- Staff trained by DSL (qualified) for WRAP Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent.
- Staff and Governors complete DfE approved basic training on the Prevent Strategy and the work of Channel.
- (http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness/01/index.html)
- Liaise closely with parents / family who raise concerns about signs of radicalization in their daughter. However, consent for a referral is not required from parent/s if a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm.
- All girls to receive lessons on internet safety and encouraged to report any extremist ideology that they may experience online (#seeitreportit / www.seeitreportit.org).
- IT filtering systems in place to enable information on extremism related search items to be gathered. Data goes to the DSL who actions interviews / further response based on the information received.
- Usual safeguarding measures in place regarding DBS checks of all staff in regulated activity with students.
- All members of staff to inform DSL in writing, of visiting speaker/s who will be supervised but not subject to a DBS check (e.g. subject related speakers).
- Close monitoring by Heads of Year of charities being supported by form / year groups.
- Trip leaders to keep passports of all students when abroad.
- All policies to ensure adherence to the equality of all students.
- Director of Finance and Operations to monitor the nature of any community groups who may use the school premises.
- Staff provided with clear instructions as to how to record any concerns about an individual student.
- Designated Person/s to liaise with external services if student is considered to be at risk of radicalization. (This must include contact with the Police and Children's Social Care). (Non-emergency contacts are also available. A designated telephone helpline – 020 7340 7264 – is available for extremist concerns to be raised directly. Concerns can also be raised to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk).
- Designated Person/s to liaise with Channel programme as and if appropriate. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary and provides a mechanism for an early stage intervention.

Guidance

Severity of harm: The level of harm, damage or loss from the effects of the hazard/s may be rated from A = Death or Major Injury; B = Serious injury or: C = Minor injury.

Probability: The measure of probability that harm will occur: 1 = Extremely likely; 2 = Likely or: 3 = Extremely unlikely.

Risk Priority: This is the combination of the severity of the hazard effect with the probability of its occurrence.

Where, RISK = (Severity of harm) X (Probability) then an A1 risk priority is the most serious, whilst C3 is the least serious.

Appendix 8 - DSL Job Description

Areas of Responsibility:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Duties:

- Act as champion of the School's safeguarding policy and procedures by ensuring all staff have access to and understand them.
- Induct new members of staff with regard to the School and Cheshire East safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ensure the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is updated and reviewed annually.
- Ensure the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is made available to all parents via the School website.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to challenge behaviour which breaches the Code of Conduct.
- Ensure that all measures linked to Online Safety are implemented and monitored to keep children safe online
- Meet with the Safeguarding Governor on, at least, a termly basis and update the Governing body on matters relating to safeguarding.

Reporting Concerns:

- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when to make a referral.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures or concerns relating to the wellbeing of a child.
- Refer allegations or cases of suspected abuse to the relevant investigating agencies, ensuring they have access to the most relevant up to date information.
- Liaise with the Headmistress to inform her of any issues and ongoing investigations.
- Ensure that relevant, detailed and accurate written records of referrals/concerns are kept and that these are stored securely.
- When pupils move school, ensure their safeguarding file is sent to the new establishment immediately and securely.

Multi Agency Working:

- Ensure that pupils who are victims of abuse are supported appropriately and sensitively and that all actions from planning and intervention meetings are carried out and monitored.
- Attend and contribute effectively to Child in Need meetings, Child Protection conferences, Team around the Child / Family meetings, Strategy Meetings, planning and review meetings; including those taking place outside of normal working hours.
- Liaise and coordinate with colleagues and outside organisation regarding the Common Assessment Framework; acting as Lead Professional (including senior mental health leads) as appropriate.
- Ensure that actions resulting from meetings are SMART and that they are carried out in a co-ordinated way; making the difference that was anticipated.
- To be the named person in charge of Cared for Children.
- Liaise with the Headmistress with police investigations ([PACE Code C 2019](#))

Training:

- Ensure all staff have safeguarding induction and frequent updates so that they are able to recognise and report and concerns immediately.
- Attend relevant training on an annual basis to reinforce and enhance Safeguarding knowledge and practice.
- Represent the School at Designated Leads' meetings and disseminate the information to colleagues.

Appendix 9 – Alleged Abuse Quick Guide

Quick Guide - Allegations of abuse with regards to staff at AESG

- 1) If staff or volunteers are accused directly of any form of abuse they should:
 - a. Inform the Headmistress and together, with the DSL they should seek advice from Cheshire East LADO.
 - b. Contact their Union (it is worthwhile to ascertain whether Unions provide free representation in such cases) or at least bring a colleague with them to meetings.
 - c. Ensure they have legal representation (this can be very costly).

- 2) If such an allegation is made to a member of staff about a colleague:
 - a. Do not promise confidentiality.
 - b. Inform the Headmistress only (or the Deputy Headmistress if she is not contactable)
 - c. Inform the Chair of Governors if the allegation concerns the Headmistress. The Headmistress must not be informed if the allegation is about her. Mr Keith Lowe who can be contacted via email – klowe@aesg.co.uk
 - d. Staff may also consider discussing any concerns with the DSL and may make a referral via them.

- 3) If an allegation is made by a child at school about staff or volunteers:
 - a. Inform the Headmistress. She should contact the LADO for advice in the first instance and the recommended advice followed.
 - b. The Headmistress will usually inform the member of staff (or volunteer) concerned of the nature of the allegation and will conduct a preliminary investigation to establish whether the abuse could have taken place.
 - c. She will usually interview the child to clarify the facts of the situation. A witness should be present to observe and keep notes of the meeting.
 - d. The Headmistress will consult the Governors and School solicitors.

- 4) If an allegation is made by a parent after the event:
 - a. The Headmistress should contact the LADO for advice
 - b. Typically, the Headmistress will interview the parents to ascertain the nature of the allegations. A witness will be present to observe and take notes.
 - c. The Headmistress will usually interview the member of staff concerned to inform them of the allegations. The Deputy Headmistress should be present and another observer chosen by the member of staff concerned e.g. Union Rep., Colleague.

Appendix 10 – Looked After Children / Cared for Children Statement

Definition: The term ‘looked after’ or ‘cared for’ refers to a child who is either accommodated (whereby the local authority provides for the child on an agreed basis with the person who has parental responsibility) or is subject to a care order (whereby a court order grants shared parental responsibility to the local authority in order to protect and promote a child’s welfare).

Children in both instances could be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with relatives or with parent/s on a part or full time basis. A Looked After Child is considered a vulnerable child who may suffer from low self-esteem, delayed cognitive and emotional development, isolation and poor educational standards. Pupils attending AESG reside in a number of local authorities and therefore the School will work closely with the relevant parties to ensure that all actions comply with the requirements for the specific authority.

Aims of the care of a Looked After Child at AESG

All staff must:

- Know and comply with the School’s procedures relating to a Looked After Child
- Have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep a Looked After Child safe
- Where appropriate, have the information they need in relation to a child’s looked after and legal status to ensure that the School complies with the interim or full care order
- Contribute to the Designated Person’s requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a Looked After Child to achieve stability within the school setting
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of a Looked After Child

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Designated Persons for LAC is Mrs Caroline Wood for the whole school. She will:

- Closely monitor the progress and attendance of a Looked After Child.
- Ensure that a Looked After Child has a PEP (Personal Educational Plan) that reflects her achievements and targets
- Keep the PEP up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
- Work in partnership with all professionals, parents and carers (where relevant) of a Looked After Child. This includes attending and contributing to review meetings
- Have the information needed to ensure that contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility comply with the interim or full court order
- Have the information needed relating to the care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after her
- Have the details of the child’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child
- Identify one member of staff who will, in compliance with the Welfare Call (LAC) Ltd, take the daily call to confirm the attendance of the Looked After Child

- Ensure confidentiality for the Looked After Child and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers
- Keep the Head and Safeguarding Governor informed about concerns relating to a Looked After Child

The School Nurse:

- Provide information relating to the medical care of the Looked After Child to external services as requested, particularly in preparation for review meetings
- Contribute, as appropriate, to the medical and pastoral support of the Looked After Child
- Attend review meetings
- The Head:
 - Ensure that the Designated Person has the time and resources needed to fulfil her duties in line with the procedures relating to a Looked After Child
 - Oversee the academic progress and pastoral support of a Looked After Child

The Role of the Governors:

- Identify a nominated Governor for Looked After Children. This is Mrs Jo Rostron, Safeguarding Governor.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children
- Be aware of whether the School has Looked After Children
- Ensure that the School's policies and procedures support the needs of a Looked After Child
- Ensure that there is a designated person appointed to monitor the academic and pastoral support of a Looked After Child
- Liaise with the Head to ensure that the Designated Person is able to carry out her responsibilities in relation to a Looked After Child

Training:

The Designated Person(s) will be responsible for ensuring that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this statement.

Appendix 11 – Young People who have mental health/wellbeing concerns, under 18 years

