

White Trees
independent school



Safeguarding Policy

Based on guidance issued by the Secretary of State, the latest of which is *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, Department for Education (DfE), September 2023
This policy includes our school's procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff.

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life and become positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:






- Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful
- Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another
- We have high expectations in everything we do

Wonderful
Excellent
Lovely
Clever
Outstanding
Magnificent
Enthusiastic

(Acronym created by White Trees pupils)

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KEY CONTACTS

<p>Head of Safeguarding Lukas Bradon, Head of Operations & Safeguarding 01279 658518 Lukas.bradon@whitetrees-school.com</p>		<p>Designated Safeguarding Lead Laura Bull Executive Head Teacher 01279658518 Laura.Bull@whitetrees-school.com</p>	
<p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Georgia Rossides Assistant Operations Lead - Woodlands 01279 723 798 georgia.rossides@whitetrees-school.com</p>		<p>Designated Safeguarding Lead Aaron Shead The Mill Operations Lead 01279 658518 aaron.shead@whitetrees-school.com</p>	
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<p>Hertfordshire Children's Services & MASH: 03001234043 protectedreferrals.cs@hertfordshire.gov.uk</p>			
<p>Local Authority Designated Officer (Hertfordshire's safeguarding children board): Community Safety Lead: Bill Jephson, 03001234043 Head of CP: Roger Carruthers, 01992556937 Consultation Hub: 01438737511</p>			
<p>Essex Children's Services: 0345 603 7627 or out of hours 0345 606 1212 Request support from us: Finding the right level of support for children and young people - Essex County Council</p>			
<p>The Essex Education Safeguarding Team consists of: Jo Barclay, Head of Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Matthew Lewis, Education Safeguarding Adviser Hayley Speed, Education Safeguarding Officer / MARAC</p>			

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INTRODUCTION

White Trees School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our especially vulnerable pupils and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment.

- Our philosophy is to always 'think the unthinkable'.
- 'You should be professionally curious and always share any concerns about a child with your DSL/DDSL' (KCSIE, 2023)
- Any visitor to the school will always be accompanied by a member of staff to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils.
- If you have a safeguarding or child protection concern, please report what has been disclosed to one of our designated safeguarding leads below as soon as possible, who will record and act, if appropriate, on the information.
- Remember that if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral can and should be made to children's social care services immediately and that anybody can make a referral.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors working at White Trees Independent School and considers statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and local guidance issued by both Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils.

We will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities regarding child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through the publication of this White Trees child protection policy.

These duties and responsibilities, as set out within the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021, DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 are incorporated into this policy.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

Safeguarding children is defined as:

- The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. This includes 'contextual safeguarding which recognises the impact of a young persons public and social context on their life and consequently their safety', in particular child on child and relationships abuse, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is 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.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (page 6).

NB. Definition: Children includes everyone under the age of 18 years of age

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It also relates to the broader aspects of care and education including:

- Pupils' health and safety and emotional well-being, and their mental and physical health or development.
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The use of reasonable force.
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions.
- Providing first aid.
- Educational visits and off- site education.
- Intimate care and emotional wellbeing.
- On-line safety and associated issues.
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, taking into account the local context.
- Keeping children safe from risks, harm and exploitation: KCSIE 2021 Annex A.

Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as:

- Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.
- Bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and prejudice-based bullying).
- Child-on-child abuse, including non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nude's images and/or videos
- Cybercrime
- Racist, disability- based, homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic abuse.
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls.
- Extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation.
- Child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery, or exploitation.
- The impact of new technologies, including 'sexting' and accessing pornography.
- Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment (defined in KCSIE 2023 Part Five pages 103 to 133).
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity, knife crime, youth violence, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) and County Lines. (Contextualised safeguarding)
- Is in family circumstances which present challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and/or domestic abuse
- Is at risk of or from serious violence and violent crime (KCSiE 2021 paragraphs 51 and 52).
- Particular issues affecting children including female genital mutilation, honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
- 'Upskirting'- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as Upskirting Act, came into force on 12th April 2019. Upskirting is a criminal offence and reportable by all teachers (KCSiE 2021, Annex A page 139).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element.
- Other areas of support may include supporting children within the court system and family members in prison, homelessness and those missing from education.

Note: the DSL & staff will support children with mental health problems, all staff will eventually undergo Mental Health First Aid training to further support the pupils, as identified in the schools School

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Improvement Plan. All staff will undergo level 2 Safeguarding training from an external provider where they will be trained in identifying the indicators that a child has suffered or is suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

The White Trees ethos demonstrates that the effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of a system where we listen and hear what they say. Every individual within White Trees will play their part, including working with professionals from other agencies, to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and keep them safe. We will take opportunities to teach children about important safeguarding issues in a way that is age appropriate.

White Trees School is led by senior members of staff and Governors. Our aims are to provide a safe environment and vigilant culture where children and young people can learn safely and productively and be safeguarded. If there are safeguarding concerns, we will respond with appropriate action in a timely manner for those children who may need help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Where staff members have concerns about a child or young person (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they will decide what action to take in conjunction with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Although we advocate that any staff can make a referral to children's social care or MASH, especially where a child is identified as being in immediate danger, they should however ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a member of the senior leadership team is informed as soon as possible, via CPOMS.

We also ensure that all our staff are clear that whilst they should discuss and agree with the DSL any actions to be taken, they are able to escalate their concerns and contact MASH, or social care to seek support for the child if despite the discussion with the DSL their concerns remain. Staff are also informed of White Trees whistle blowing procedures and the contact details for the Local Authority LADO and NSPCC helpline. Staff are aware of the process if they have concerns about another member of staff, and who to report this to.

All new staff must complete Induction training, where safeguarding policies and procedures are thoroughly explained – including a presentation on the CPOMS reporting system at White Trees. Any concerns are logged on CPOMS are then alerted immediately to the DSL & DDSLs where it is then decided up what action is to then take place, whether that be a referral, liaising with relevant external agencies. CPOMS allows us to alert Directors, and the Safeguarding Governor to keep them updated and process any actions they might add.

The procedures for dealing with allegations:

- 1.) The recipient of an allegation must report it to the DSL as soon as possible and never try to investigate it themselves. If a member of the leadership team is implicated, it must be reported to the head. If the head is implicated, it must be reported to the director of operations, and if the director of operations is implicated, it must be reported to the LADO.
- 2.) A record of the report must be made by the relevant member of staff (depending on point which must be timed, dated and include a clearly written name and signature
- 3.) If the allegation is serious and credible and alleges that a member of staff has a) behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child, b) possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or c) behaved towards children in a way that indicated he/she is unsuitable to work with children, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be informed on the same day
- 4.) If unsure, call the LADO in any case to discuss the allegation
- 5.) Such consultation in point 3/4 will enable the LADO and the school leader to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action
- 6.) If this leads to a decision that no further action is to be taken this decision and the reasons for it should be recorded by both the school's senior leader and the LADO. They should agree between them the information that should be put in writing to the individual about whom the allegation was

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made. Both should then consider the action that should follow in respect of that individual and the person (or persons) who made the allegation

- 7.) If it is decided that the allegation warrants further action the LADO will take this forward
- 8.) The DSL, head or director of operations should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible, but only after consulting the LADO about whether this is appropriate at this stage and what information can be given to the person
- 9.) Consideration must be given as to whether it is necessary to remove the subject of the allegations from contact with children at the schools, pending investigations and procedures arising from the allegation. Suspension should not be automatic, but should be considered if: a) there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, b) the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or c) the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal
- 10.) Any decision to suspend shall be taken only after consultation with the LADO. It will consider the safety of the child or children involved and the impact on any enquiry
- 11.) Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation should be dispatched within 24 hours, giving the reasons for the suspension. The person should be informed at that point who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details
- 12.) The subject of the allegations (whether suspended or not) shall be: a) advised to contact her/his trade union or professional association, b) treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed, processes involved and possible outcomes, c) kept informed of the progress of the case and of the investigation, d) clearly informed of the outcome of any investigation and the implications for disciplinary or related processes and e) provided with appropriate support as appropriate
- 13.) A school leader, usually the DSL or the Head (or the schools' director of operations should the head be the subject of the investigation), shall be responsible for continuing liaison with Hertfordshire's LADO and all communication between the schools and other agencies that may be involved in processes following an allegation
- 14.) Confidentiality is essential and information about an allegation must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to: a) protect children, b) facilitate enquiries, c) avoid victimisation, d) safeguard the rights of the person about whom the allegation has been made and others who might be affected and e) manage disciplinary/complaints aspects
- 15.) If, following the conclusion of child protection processes, further enquiries are pursued for the purpose of disciplinary, regulatory or complaint investigation, they should be arranged in a way that avoids the repeated interviewing of children or other vulnerable witnesses.
- 16.) If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, White Trees will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per our behaviour policy.

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WHO WILL LEAD AN INVESTIGATION IN THE FIRST PLACE?	
Concern about...	Who will investigate?
About any member or members of staff below the senior leadership team	Operations Lead
About a head teacher or member of the senior leadership team	Executive Head Teacher
About the Executive Head Teacher	Emma Barr, proprietor
About the proprietor	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Hertfordshire Children's Services & MASH: Local Authority Designated Officer (Hertfordshire's safeguarding children board)	03001234043 protectedreferrals.cs@hertfordshire.gov.uk Community Safety Lead: Bill Jephson, 03001234043 Head of CP: Roger Carruthers, 01992556937 Consultation Hub: 01438737511
Essex Children's Services: Local Authority Designated Officer (Essex safeguarding children board)	Children & Families Hub on 0345 603 7627 and ask for the 'Priority Line' During out of hours (Monday to Thursday 5pm to 9am, Friday and Bank Holidays 4:30pm to 9am), please call: 0345 606 1212 or email: Emergency.DutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk Essex duty LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Telephone: 03330 139 797 . Emergency Duty Service (Immediate Out of Hours Response) No: 0345 606 1212 (Mon - Thurs 5.00pm – 8.45am, Fri 4.30pm – Mon 8.45am Inc. Bank holidays

For further information on the management of allegations against staff, please see our whistleblowing policy.

CONCERNS THAT DO NOT MEET THE HARM THRESHOLD

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, which do not meet the harm threshold.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

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Definition of low-level concerns

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

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Buying items, (e.g. food, drinks, gifts) for pupils out of own money
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff school handbook and code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the Executive Head.

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OUR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

There are six main elements to our policy:

- Providing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused or harmed in accordance with his/her child protection plan.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children, child protection processes and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Working in partnership with agencies and safeguarding partners in the 'best interest of the child'.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, White Trees staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.

White Trees School will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to and heard.
- Ensure children know that there are trusted adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies.
- Include opportunities in the RSE curriculum (*see RSE policy and curriculum policy*) for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse by:
 - Recognising and managing risks including online, sexual exploitation, sexting and running away, as well as radicalisation.
 - Developing healthy relationships and awareness of domestic violence, and abuse which is linked to 'honour' such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage, bullying and peer on peer abuse.
 - Recognising how pressure from others can affect their behaviour.
 - Knowing that at White Trees we will act swiftly to address any concerns related to serious violence, gang and knife crime or child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment incidents.
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure any risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised.
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with agencies.
- Ensure robust child protection arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school.
- Promote pupil well-being, health and safety.
- Promote safe practice, and challenge unsafe practice amongst colleagues.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff including volunteers (KCSIE 2023 Part Four Pages 85 to 102), and the NSCP local multi-agency procedures.
- Provide first aid and meet the health needs of children with medical conditions
- Ensure school site security.
- Address drugs and substance misuse issues.
- Support and plan for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community.
- Work with all agencies regarding missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity and violence in the community/knife crime and children at risk of sexual exploitation.
- Everyone has a duty to safeguard children inside/outside the school environment including school trips, extended school activities, vocational placements, and alternative education packages.

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All trips and off-site learning are risk assessed with logistics and plans put in place to fully meet the social, emotional, academic needs for each pupil – ensuring that their safety is paramount (see pupils individual risk assessments).

We will follow the procedures set out by Hertfordshire & Essex and take account of guidance issued by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 to:

- Ensure we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a member of the school/college leadership team, and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead for child protection/safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead role is written into their job description and clarifies the role and responsibilities included (as defined in KCSiE 2023 Annex C, p.164 - 170).
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection/safeguarding.
- Ensure that we have a Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (CLA).
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputies responsible for child protection, and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or to children's social care/police if a child is in immediate danger.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the early help process and understand their role in making referrals or contributing to early help offers and arrangements.
- Ensure that there is a whistleblowing policy and culture where staff can raise concerns about unsafe practice, and that these concerns will be taken seriously.
- Ensure that there is a complaints system in place for children and families.
- Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection and safeguarding by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus and on the school's website.
- Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence for a child who is subject to a child protection plan and where no contact can be established with the child or a parent or appropriate adult linked to the child.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately; documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguard.
- Ensure all records are logged on CPOMS, with actions and follow ups recorded under the same incident/alert.
- Ensure that we follow robust processes to respond when children are missing from education or missing from home or care.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Apply confidentiality appropriately.
- Liaise with the Director of Children's Services and Safeguarding Governor if escalation procedures are required if there are any concerns about the actions or inaction of social care staff or staff from other agencies.

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SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a positive 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. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We also recognise that there are children who are more vulnerable than others, which include children with special educational needs and or disabilities.

At White Trees will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- Developing the content of the curriculum to ensure broad and informative content is taught to enhance pupil's knowledge and understanding in keeping themselves safe and what to do to if they need help or support.
- Maintaining a White Trees ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment, and which gives pupils a sense of them being valued.
- The school behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy and peer on peer abuse policy which is kept up to date with national and local guidance and which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils at our White Trees School.
- At White Trees we will proactively ensure that all children know that some behaviours are unacceptable and will need to be addressed but as members of our school they are valued and will be supported through the time required to deal with any abuse or harm that has occurred, or outcomes from incidents. All pupils will have access to trained mental health first aiders and will have key identified adults that they can access daily as and when needed.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Social Care (in line with the Pathway to Provision Version 8, published in March 2019), Behaviour and Attendance Service and Education Psychology Service, use of Complex Case Resolution Meetings and the Early Help etc.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil leaves and is subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan or where there have been wider safeguarding concerns, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
- Ensuring that the vulnerability of children with special educational needs and or disabilities is recognised and fully supported by having immediate access to key/identified staff in a safe and secure environment.

SAFE STAFF AND SUPPORTING STAFF

- The leadership team and governing body of White Trees will ensure that all safer working practices and recruitment procedures are followed in accordance with the guidance set out in KCSiE 2023 Part Three and advised by The White Trees Group HR Services policy and practice guidance.
- School leaders, staff and members of the governing body will be appropriately trained in safer working practices and access the safer recruitment training which is available to staff on Edu Care.
- Statutory pre-employment checks and references from previous employers are an essential part of the recruitment process. We will ensure we adopt the appropriate necessary procedures to carry out the checks required and where any concerns arise, we will seek advice and act in accordance with national guidance.
- The school has in place recruitment, selection, and vetting procedures in accordance with KCSiE 2023 Part Three and maintains a Single Central Record (SCR), which is reviewed regularly and updated in accordance with KCSiE 2023 Part Three paragraphs 267 to 270 .
- Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and will be aware of the School Employee Code of Conduct, which includes contact between staff and pupils outside the work context. Staff can access a copy of this through the staff handbook, with these details being discussed during induction meetings.

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- Newly appointed staff will be informed of our arrangements for safer working practices by their line managers during their induction meetings, before beginning working and contact with pupils.
- In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the headteacher (or the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead) if the headteacher is not present, will be notified immediately. If it relates to the headteacher, the Director of Operations will be informed without delay. We will respond to all allegations robustly and appropriately in collaboration with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) LADO/Allegation Officer.
- Staff may find some of the issues relating to child protection and the broader areas of safeguarding upsetting and may need support which should be provided by the school.
- Advice and support will be made available by the DSL, Director of Children’s Services, Safeguarding Governor, LADO and HR where appropriate to the leadership team.
- All new employees will be appropriately inducted to their role, with a link to the Induction Checklist being accessed from their Induction booklets, which will be fully supported by their line managers.

This policy, together with the following, should be read alongside and in conjunction with other policies and statutory guidance regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together will make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Online safety
- Equalities
- Curriculum policy
- RSE Policy
- First Aid & Medication
- Health & Safety
- Wellness Policy
- Healthy Schools
- Risk Assessment
- ‘Who we are and What We Do’ at White Trees School
- Whistleblowing

All adults working with, or on behalf of, our school **must always follow all our procedures.**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff and volunteers

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone in our school who comes into contact with children and their families have a role to play in safeguarding children. All staff in our school considers, always, what is in the best interests of children.

White Trees School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our pupils, especially those who are most vulnerable, and expects all staff to share this commitment. Our training mantra and philosophy is to always ‘think the unthinkable’.

All staff must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all children and must know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise. To achieve this, White Trees School will ensure that all staff know that **Lukas Bradon, Operations Lead, is our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and has overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. Though some of the duties inherent to this role can and will be delegated to the Deputy

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DSLs in order that work is completed most efficiently, **the ultimate responsibility remains with the DSL**. In the absence of the DSL, the deputy DSL (who is identified) or the Executive head teacher (who has the advanced training) will undertake the DSL's duties.

All safeguarding leads and SLT have received advanced level training in order to undertake their roles and are also safer recruitment trained. All safeguarding leads receive updated training at least every two years; (From external local authority safeguarding specialists) and in addition, keep up-to-date with safeguarding developments at least annually in-house.

All staff within our school are particularly important as they are able to identify concerns early and provide help to children to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff contribute to providing a safe environment in which children can learn by ensuring all activities are accordingly planned, risk assessed with the staff having appropriate knowledge of pupils' backgrounds, knowledge and understanding – so schemes of work can be accordingly planned, incorporating appropriate PSHE/RSE lessons.

Staff know in the first instance to report concerns on CPOMS, alerting the Designated Safeguarding Lead and understand they may be required to support other agencies and professionals in assessments or referrals.

At White Trees we provide termly coffee mornings for parents to attend, providing them with a safe forum to seek support or advice. Pupils can access staff who are trained in mental health first aid. Furthermore, at White Trees we sign post children, parents and carers where to go for support, in school and through our website, posters, newsletters and during meetings.

We acknowledge the importance of children and social workers meeting during the school day where required and how our DSL works with social care and safeguarding partners to ensure children subject to child protection, child in need and CLA plans are kept safe and the child's needs are met. We are aware that children who need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs are potentially at greater risk of harm, therefore it is vital that effective communication and sharing information is effective and timely, ensuring all concerns are efficiently logged on CPOMS, appropriately actioning them.

We recognise how a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educational disadvantage in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. With this in mind, we ensure that we build effective rapport with all pupils and ensure that we tailor their educational offers to meet each individual's needs – ensuring all activities are accordingly risk assessed, with safety and safeguarding being paramount.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

All our staff are aware of systems within White Trees and these are explained to them as part of staff induction, which include our child protection policy; the employee code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. External training is provided each September which outlines key changes to White Trees policy and/ or KCSIE, including other associated acts and legislation; this training is at a Level 2. DSL & DDSL are all trained to Level 3.

Our school utilises an induction checklist when staff are inducted which includes the above, but also other policy and procedural information. They are given guidance and training on how to use the CPOMS logging system when reporting a concern. All our staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989/2004 and understand the role they may have in these assessments.

All our staff know what to do if a child is raising concerns or makes a disclosure of abuse and/or neglect. Staff will maintain a level of confidentiality whilst liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and

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children's social care. Our staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a disclosure or allegation, recognising this may not be in the best interest of the child.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns and reporting them on CPOMS.

To achieve this, they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Attend training to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" with regards to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL as soon as practical that day. If the DSL is not contactable immediately a Deputy DSL should be informed.
- Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or their Deputy is not available.
- Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
- Follow the procedures set out by the NSCP and take account of guidance issued by the DfE KCSiE 2023.
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan, child in need plan, CLA Care Plan.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to "keep a secret".
- Notify the DSL or their Deputy of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
- Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.
- Ensure they know who the DSL and Deputy DSL's are and know how to contact them.
- Have an awareness of the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Staff Behaviour Policy (or Code of Conduct) and procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education and the role of the DSL.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance.
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Ensure all staff, supply staff and volunteers are alert to the definitions of abuse and indicators (KCSiE 2023 paragraphs 21 to 30), and through access to regular training opportunities and updates.
- Ensure staff are alert to the various factors that can increase the need for early help (KCSiE 2023 paragraph 20).
- Working with Children's Social Care, support their assessment and planning processes including the school's attendance at conference and core group meetings as appropriate.
- Carry out tasks delegated by the governing body such as training of staff, safer recruitment and maintaining a single central register (SCR).
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school.
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures.

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- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DfE KCSiE 2023 Part Four 'Allegations of abuse made against teachers, and other staff, including supply teachers and volunteers').
- Note KCSiE 2023 Part Four Allegations of Abuse made against teachers including supply teachers, other staff and volunteers and contractors', paragraph 355- 356: Includes behaviours which covers where an individual has behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. The reason is because of transferable risk. Where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of schools/college which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children.
- In light of the government review into recent reports on sexual assaults in schools we have enhanced our policies and procedures around this. We have created an "information and concerns" reporting area at both sites - where pupils can anonymously report any concerns. The DDSL's will check the file at the end of each school day to ensure that any concerns are read and dealt with.

TEACHERS (INCLUDING ECTs) AND HEAD TEACHERS – PROFESSIONAL DUTY

The Teachers Standards 2012 remind us that teachers, newly qualified teachers and headteachers should safeguard children and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of our professional duties. The Children and Social Work Act of 2017, places responsibilities for designated teachers to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. At White Trees we promote the achievements of our CLA pupils by nominating them for Awards from their Local Authorities, sharing the achievements at PEPs and CLA reviews. Both pupils and staff are aware of who the DSL and DDSL staff are, these are on safeguarding posters in every classroom and corridors.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children and child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of the school leadership team, and their responsibilities are explicit in their job description.

We also have three Deputy Safeguarding Leads. The Deputy Safeguarding leads who operate on split sites will be responsible for overseeing the safeguarding of students who attend their sites. The DSL will oversee this. The Deputy Safeguarding Leads have received the same training as our Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. They will assist the Designated Safeguarding Lead in managing referrals, attending Child Protection Conferences, reviews and meetings and supporting the child/children.

We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure there is a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed by all of the members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse – using the schools CPOMs reporting system. In addition, other members of SLT are also Level 3 trained.

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The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

Manage Referrals

- Manage and respond to all CPOMS alerts
- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Support staff who make referrals to children's social care and other referral pathways.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and the DBS as required.
- Meet with both DDSL on a termly basis to discuss and review concerns. Both DDSL will be alerted to actions that the DSL takes via CPOMS so they are kept updated.
- Depending upon the concerns will depend upon the pupil's logistics and timetable for that moment in time – liaising with all external agencies and staff involved.
- The DSL will ultimately be responsible for oversight of any child on placements or alternative education arrangements, fully cataloguing the child's journey.

WORK WITH OTHERS

- Liaise with the headteacher/principal (where the Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead role is not carried out by the headteacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations.
- As required, liaise with the 'case manager' (as per Part Four of KCSiE 2023) and the LADO where there are child protection concerns/allegations that relate to a member of staff.
- Liaise with the case manager and the LADO/ LADO Allegation Officer where there are concerns about a staff member.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and deciding when to make a referral by liaising with other agencies and acts as a source of support, advice and expertise for other staff.
- Take part in strategy discussions or attend inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- Liaise with the local authority and other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- CPOMS is to be actioned and updated as and when necessary, securely alerting the appropriate staff
- Curriculum development is identified in the School Improvement Plan, along with regular staff and pupil voice meetings – listening to this feedback proves a vital role in the development of the curriculum and through learning experiences for both children and staff. Staff also undertake regular performance management meetings and supervision meetings with their line managers, where good practice/concerns can be addressed. The SLT operate an open-door policy to staff and pupils, where they can voice the concerns and opinions as and when needed. RSE will be taught as part of the PSHCE curriculum (*see RSE policy*), parents are provided with termly newsletters and are also invited into school once a term for coffee mornings where they can seek advice and support.

UNDERTAKE TRAINING

- Formal Designated Safeguarding Lead training will be undertaken every two years. Informal training and updating of knowledge and skills will be at regular intervals, undertaken at least annually. The Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for their own training and should obtain access to resources or any relevant refresher training.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is also responsible for ensuring all other staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities access up to date and timely safeguarding training and maintains a register or data base to evidence the training.

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The training undertaken should enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

- Have a working knowledge of Hertfordshire and Essex Local Authorities, the conduct of a child protection conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure that each member of staff has access to the child protection policy and procedures.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities and young carers.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, written records of concerns and referrals via CPOMs.
- Understand the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting and preventing children from the risk of radicalisation and being grooming into extremist behaviours and attitudes (KCSiE 2023 Annex B page 149).
- Understand the reporting requirements for FGM (KCSiE 2023 Annex B page 154)
- Understand and support children to keep safe when online and when they are learning at home. (KCSiE 2023 Paragraph 134 - 147 & 176 - 178).
- Encourage a culture of protecting children, listening to children and their wishes and feelings.

Raise awareness

- Ensure that the child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately.
- Ensure that the child protection policy is reviewed annually in consultation with staff members, and procedures are updated and reviewed regularly and implemented, and that the governing body is kept up to date and actively involved.
- Work strategically to ensure policies and procedures are up to date and drive and support development work within the school.
- Ensure that the child protection policy is available to parents and carers and uploaded to the school website and make parents/carers aware that referrals may be made about suspected abuse or neglect.
- Ensure all staff receive induction training covering child protection before working with children and can recognise and report any concerns immediately as they arise.

Child Protection file

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that when a child leaves the school or college their 'child protection', 'child in need' file or 'confidential' file is transferred to the new school or college at the same time the child goes on roll of its new school or education provision.
- Reports from CPOMS will be generated and securely shared with the new provision – when possible, hand delivered/recorded delivery with a received receipt signed from the new provision, within 2 months of receiving confirmation of where the pupil is to be educated.

Availability

- During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead or DDSL will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Appropriate arrangements will also need to be in place for any out of school hours' activities in line with the guidance contained in DfE KCSiE 2023, annex C.

Headteacher

The Headteacher of the school will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- The school has an up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR) which is reviewed regularly and is compliant with statutory guidance.

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- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.
- The Headteacher will ensure all staff including supply teachers have access to and read and understand the requirements placed on them through: - the Whole School Child Protection Policy; the Staff handbook, have a CPOMS account set up.
- The Headteacher will ensure there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to fully understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE 2023
- Where there is an allegation made against a member of staff (either paid or unpaid) that meets the criteria for a referral to the LADO, then the headteacher or principal will discuss the allegation immediately with the LADO (within 24 hours) and ensure that cases are managed as per Part Four of KCSiE (2023). If the allegation is against the Headteacher/Principal, then the Chair of the Governing Body/ Proprietor will manage the allegation – see below.

RECRUITMENT

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures. Please see our Recruitment Policy for full information.

Governing Body

The governing body (and proprietors) will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day to day safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring there is an individual member of the governing body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and champion child protection issues in the school.
- Ensuring that the school has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)
- Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to promote a child's welfare.
- Recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies through the statutory guidance provided within KCSiE 2023 Part Four: 'Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors: HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, HM Government guidance Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, published July 2018 and KCSiE 2023, the additional clarification about GPDR and withholding information.
- Ensuring cooperation with the local authority and other safeguarding partners.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead from the leadership team to take lead responsibility for child protection/safeguarding and that a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is appointed and appropriately trained.
- Ensuring that all staff, supply teachers and governors read and fully understand at least KCSiE 2023 Part One, Annex A and Part Five as a minimum, and ensure that there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as required within the guidance.
- Ensuring that the governing body understands it is collectively responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements, even though a governor will be nominated as the 'Safeguarding Governor' and person who will champion all safeguarding requirements.
- All members of the governing body will undertake training about child protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, in order to discharge their responsibilities and act as the school's 'critical friend'.

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- The Chair of Governors and named Safeguarding Governor will access role specific training to enable them to comply and discharge their child protection/ safeguarding responsibilities.
- The Governing body will collectively ensure there is a training strategy in place for all staff, including the headteacher, so that child protection training is undertaken with refreshed in line with KCSiE 2023
- Ensuring that staff undergo safeguarding child protection training at induction and that there are arrangements in place for staff to be regularly updated to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority.
- Ensuring that temporary staff who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities
- Ensuring there are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff and exercise disciplinary functions in respect of dealing with a complaint.
- Ensuring that arrangements/procedures are in place to manage 'low level' concerns (allegations and concerns about a staff member that after initial consideration by the DSL do not meet the criteria for a referral to LADO).
- Ensuring a response if there is an allegation against the headteacher by liaising with the LADO or other appropriate officers within the local authority.
- Ensuring appropriate responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, including child sexual exploitation and going missing in future.
- Be aware of the issues involving the complexity of serious violence and sexual violence and sexually harmful behaviour and ensure the school has the training and resources to manage any concerns or incidents harmful.
- Be alert to the growing concerns involving knife crime and ensure the school works closely with the police and safeguarding partners to raise awareness of the impact of such crime and adopt proactive practice to address concerns locally and within the community.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children online and children are taught about keeping safe online through the curriculum (White Trees are currently using the Umbrella security system to ensure online safety for pupils).
- Giving staff the opportunities to contribute and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.
- Prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, making decisions about additional checks and ensuring volunteers are supervised as required.
- Ensure at least one person on an interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.
- Recognising that certain children are more vulnerable than others, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Be open to accepting that child abuse and incidents can happen within the school and be available to act decisively upon them.

Looked After Children – The Role of Designated Teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- A teacher is appointed who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after (CLA). They have the appropriate training. The Designated Teacher (DT) will work with the Virtual School to ensure that the progress of the child is supported.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also have details of the child's social worker and the name of the Assistant Head of the Virtual School. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with the Designated Teacher, as we recognise that children may have been abused or neglected before becoming looked after. We will ensure their ongoing safety and wellbeing as well as supporting their education, through linking with their social worker, carers and parents where appropriate.
- We also recognise those children who were previously Looked After potentially remain vulnerable and all staff will be informed of the importance of maintaining support for them through our school. As a school we will continue to recognise the importance of working with agencies and take prompt actions where necessary to safeguard these children, who may remain vulnerable.

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Care Leavers

We recognise those children and young people who cease to be Looked After and become 'care leavers', should remain supported and our Designated Teacher and school staff will work with the Personal Advisor appointed for them, where one is appointed, to help develop a pathway plan with them and the young person.

Identifying Concerns

All members of staff, volunteers and governors will know how to identify pupils who may be being harmed and then how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, or where others raise concerns about them. Our staff will be familiar with procedures to be followed.

Staff understand that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition, and that in most cases multiple issues will overlap with each other. Staff who regularly come into contact with children are aware of the DfE guidance [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs, are influenced by gangs and drug and knife crime;
- Children who have limited or no support or supervision when online and or using social media sites outside of their understanding or age limits.
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.
- Children with mental or physical health issues or needs.
- Children or young people with 'carer responsibilities beyond their age or limitations'.

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The four indicators of child abuse are as follows:

1. **Abuse**
2. **Physical Abuse**
3. **Emotional Abuse**
4. **Sexual Abuse**
5. **Neglect**

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

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

Some of the Possible Indicators Could Include:

May be recognised by: Children with frequent injuries, injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns and scalds, fractures but also by aggressive behaviour. It may also be an indicator of concern where a parent gives an explanation inconsistent with the injury or gives several different explanations for the injury.

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 over protection 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.

Some of the Possible Indicators could include:

May be recognised by: Developmental delay, attachment issues, aggressive behaviour, appeasing behaviour, watchfulness or stillness, low self-esteem, withdrawn or a loner, or having difficulty in forming relationships. Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. Signs of emotional abuse may be associated or similar to other forms of abuse so presence of emotional abuse may indicate other abuse is prevalent as well.

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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Some of the Possible Indicators Could Include:

May be recognised by: Inappropriate sexualised conduct, age-inappropriate sexualised play or conversation, sexually harmful behaviour – contact or non-contact, self-harm, eating disorders, continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation, anxiousness or unwillingness to remove clothes – sports/ PE etc, pain or itching in genital area, blood on underclothes, bruising in genital region and/or inner thighs etc.

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.

Some of the Possible Indicators Could Include:

May be recognised by: Being constantly hungry; constantly tired; have a poor state of clothing; be emaciated; have untreated medical problems; be frequently late or have poor or non-attendance at school; have low self- esteem; display neurotic behaviour and/or have poor social relationships, have poor personal hygiene. A neglected child may also be apathetic, fail to thrive, or be left with or in the care of adults under the influence of alcohol or drug misuse.

Upskirting Definition: Upskirting typically 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.

All staff have undertaken (and will do if they join mid-academic year) Level 2 Safeguarding training from an external provider, where they will be informed/reminded that ‘upskirting’ is now a criminal offence. The pupils are made aware of this via RSE & PSHCE lessons and through questioning and answering sessions with visits from the local Police.

At White Trees we are aware that on-line abuse maybe a greater issue when children are not in attendance at schools and are engaging in learning remotely, with possibly limited supervision from parents. Parents are provided with support from school staff, via phone calls, a poster providing guidance and information and via termly coffee morning appointments/visits to the school.

Contextualised Safeguarding

We recognise safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of school and/or can occur between children outside of school. All our staff, but particularly our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL’s) will consider the context within which such incidents and or behaviours occur. We recognise this is known as ‘contextual safeguarding’ and will consider by assessing whether wider environmental factors are present in a child’s life that threaten their safety or welfare. In such cases we will work with safeguarding agencies and support the child and family as part of any referral process.

Arrangements, responses and support mechanisms are in place to address areas of contextualised safeguarding, which includes:

- Child Sexual Exploitation – CSE.
- Radicalisation and Extremism.
- Criminal Child Exploitation – CCE.
- Serious Youth Violence - County Lines.
- Human Trafficking.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour – HSB.
- Sexual Violence and Sexually Harmful Behaviour

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Referrals will be made to the relevant external agencies and local authorities if any child is deemed to be at risk of the above. The DSL will primarily make these referrals and liaise with social workers, local authorities as and when necessary/appropriate.

Our staff will be alert to the potential needs for a social care referral child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan, EHCP).
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- is at risk of modern-day slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- has returned home to their family from care.
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- has an age-inappropriate understanding of sexualised behaviours.
- is privately fostered.

All our staff are aware they must **always act in the 'best interest of the child'** and report or refer concerns in accordance with our school policies and procedures.

Children with Special Educational Needs

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN) and or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with SEN and or disabilities are especially vulnerable when identifying concerns due to their impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

This policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children which include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- addressing individual behaviour concerns and incidents considering the child's SEN and disabilities.

(Please see any positive handling plans (PHP) care plans, individual risk assessments for pupils for further and specific in-depth information)

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ATTENDANCE & CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

We know that a child's unexplained absence from school could mean that they are at risk of harm and that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We have a clear attendance policy, and:

Our school is small, and thus attendance is easy to track closely. Any child Absent from education will always get immediate attention from the DSL. Staff are trained to be alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage

- We will always seek to clarify the reason for a child's absence from school with the child's parent or carer as soon as is practicable on the first day, the reason for absence will be recorded on the register. If we are unable to obtain the reason for a pupil being absent, we will attempt to contact the pupil's emergency contacts. We ask for at least two emergency contacts for every pupil. At this stage, if we have been unable to contact the family or emergency contacts, a home visit will be carried out. As a last resort, if the school has not been able to ascertain where a pupil is after following the steps above, the pupil will be classed as a 'missing child' and they will be reported to the police.
- We will also always report an unexplained absence of a child with a Child Protection Plan to the child's social worker within one day
- We will always report a continued absence (10 or more school days) about which we have not been notified by the parent or carer to the Local Authority's SEN Team and Education Welfare Service
- We will always report to the local authority the name of any child who has been newly registered to attend our school but does not arrive on the expected day
- We will always report to the Education Welfare Service the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to school on the expected return date
- We maintain accurate attendance and admissions registers (all pupils are on both), in line with statutory requirements. This includes paying careful attention to off-rolling pupils in association with the local authority and knowing, and recording, pupil destinations consistently on the admissions register. Where a pupil destination is unknown, and unable to be sought after significant follow-up, the local authority, education welfare service and/or social care services will be informed
- We do not 'delete' pupils from the admissions register. We alert the child's local authority immediately if:
 - the pupil has been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. home education
 - the pupil has ceased to attend school
 - the pupil has been certified as medically unfit to attend school
 - the pupil is in custody

Keeping local authorities up to date is crucial so that they can check if children of compulsory school age are absent from education, and therefore might be in danger of not receiving an education and be at risk of abuse or neglect.

On the rare occasions that we exclude pupils for a fixed term (usually a day), we put this in writing to both the family and the placing local authority. While we provide the pupil with work to complete during their external exclusion, we are not responsible for the pupil's safety and welfare during their time at home.

EXTREMISM & RADICALISATION (THE PREVENT DUTY AND CHANNEL)

Since 2010, when the Government published *the 'Prevent Strategy'* (the key prevention aspect of *Contest*), there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from extremism. There have been several occasions, both locally and nationally, in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views

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justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

White Trees School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both children and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with a responsibility. Free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

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. White Trees School **is clear that exploitation and radicalisation is viewed as a safeguarding concern and must be dealt with accordingly.**

ALL staff at White Trees School must complete Prevent and Channel training as part of their induction and will receive regular briefings and update training.

FORCED MARRIAGE & HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE

A 'forced' marriage is distinct from a consensual 'arranged' marriage because it is without the valid consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. A child who is forced into marriage is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Information about a forced marriage may come from the child themselves, the child's peer group, a relative or member of the child's local community or from another professional. Forced marriage may also become apparent when other family issues are addressed, e.g. domestic violence, self-harm, child abuse or neglect. Forced marriage may involve the child being taken out of the country for the ceremony, is likely to involve non-consensual/under-age sex and refusal to go through with a forced marriage has sometimes been linked to 'honour killing'. Honour-based violence is an ancient cultural tradition that encourages violence towards family members who are considered to have dishonoured their family. It is rooted in domestic violence and is often planned and enacted by family members and associates, meaning victims are at risk from their parents and families.

School staff should respond to suspicions of a forced marriage or honour-based violence by alerting the DSL who will make a referral to Children's Social Care and if the risk is acute, to the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team.

School staff should not treat any allegations of forced marriage or honour-based violence as a domestic issue and send the child back to the family home. It is not unusual for families to deny that a forced marriage is intended, and once aware of professional concern, they may move the child and bring forward both travel arrangements and the marriage. For this reason, staff should not approach the family or family friends, or attempt to mediate between the child and family, as this will alert them to agency involvement. Further information and advice can be obtained from the Forced Marriage Unit www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage or 020 70080151 and the Honour Based Violence Helpline 0800 599 9247. Again, as with all concerns, please alert the DSL as soon as possible.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Female Genital Mutilation affects girls particularly from North African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone. Although our schools have no children from these backgrounds and consider our tiny number of

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girls in our schools to be safe from FGM, we will continue to review our policy annually and to include it in annual update training for all staff. School staff should be alert to the following indicators:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM
- A child may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent
- A child may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion
- A child may request help from a teacher or another adult
- Any female child born to a woman or has a sister who has been subjected to FGM must be considered to be at risk, as are most other female children in the extended family.

It is illegal in the UK to allow girls to undergo FGM either in this country or abroad. It is important to note that all staff have a duty to report personally any concerns they may have about girls at risk of FGM which will be shared with the police. Any concerns must be immediately shared with the DSL and teachers are aware that they have a mandatory duty to report known cases of FGM.

BULLYING (AND ALL FORMS OF, INCLUDING PEER ON PEER ABUSE)

We understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, is harmful to children. We have an **anti-bullying policy** that sets out our aim of ensuring no child becomes a victim of any form of bullying and the work that we carry out in school to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is known to be unacceptable. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

We understand that bullying may take different forms and may include, as examples, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and biphobia behaviours. Any such reported or observed incident will be dealt with in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

ONLINE SAFETY

We recognise that children's use of the internet is an important part of their education but that there are risks of harm associated with its use. We have an **online safety policy** that addresses how we seek to minimise those risks in school and teach children how to stay safe when using the internet in their lives outside of school. We also recognise that all members of staff must always be mindful of the need to follow our policy of acceptable use of our IT equipment.

New technologies have become integral to the lives of children and young people today, both within schools and in their lives outside of school. The requirement to ensure that children and young people are able to use the internet and related communications technologies appropriately and safely is addressed as part of our wider duty of care to which all who work in schools are bound. The use of these exciting and innovative tools in school and at home has been shown to raise educational standards and promote achievement.

Unfortunately, the use of these new technologies can put pupils at risk within and outside the school; pupils' access to their mobile devices is limited and monitored during the school day, this helps to safeguard pupils and ensure they are not accessing any inappropriate material on their personal devices. If any such issue should arise, further restrictions will be implemented to appropriately address the individual incident. While filters should not have overly restrictive parameters, as it may place unreasonable restraints on what pupils can be taught. It is also fundamental to be aware of some of the potential dangers that the internet can pose, including:

- Access to illegal, harmful, or inappropriate images, video games or other content

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- Unauthorised access to/loss of/sharing of personal information
- The risk of being subject to grooming
- The sharing/distribution of personal images without an individual's consent or knowledge
- Inappropriate communication/contact with others, including strangers
- Sexting
- Implications of geolocation
- Cyber-bullying
- An inability to evaluate the quality, accuracy, and relevance of information on the internet
- The potential for excessive use which may have a negative impact on the social and emotional development and learning of the young person.

KCSIE 2023 Paragraph 103 on page 28 contains new text making it clear that the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has responsibility for "understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place" as part of their remit.

KCSIE 2023, Paragraph 124 on page 32 expressly notes that "an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring" should be included in safeguarding and child protection training at induction for all staff.

CYBERCRIME

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

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- 'Denial of service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

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Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

Material published by children and staff in a social context which is considered to bring the schools reputation into disrepute or considered harmful to, or harassment of, another child or member of the organisation will be considered a safeguarding issue and a breach of conduct and behaviour and treated accordingly, as per **behaviour, equality, anti-bullying** and/or **staff conduct** policies/procedures.

SEXTING

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) have produced guidance for schools on how to tackle sexting and 'youth produced sexual imagery' as sharing photos and videos online is part of daily life for many people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives. This increase in the speed and ease of sharing imagery has brought concerns about young people producing and sharing sexual imagery of themselves. This can expose them to risks, particularly if the imagery is shared further, including embarrassment, bullying and increased vulnerability to child sexual exploitation.

Making, possessing, and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is 'indecent' is illegal. The relevant legislation is contained in the Protection of Children Act 1978 (England and Wales) as amended in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales). Specifically, it is an offence to possess, distribute, show, and make indecent images of children. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales) defines a child, for the purposes of indecent images, as anyone under the age of 18.

Although the production of such imagery will likely take place outside of school, these issues often manifest in schools working with children and young people. Staff respond swiftly and confidently to ensure that children are safeguarded, supported, and educated.

The response to these incidents should be guided by the principle of proportionality and the primary concern always should be the welfare and protection of the young people involved.

- All incidents involving sexting and youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to in line with the school's CPOMS system.
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate)
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

Sexual exploitation can take many forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention/affection, accommodation, or gifts, to serious organised crime and child trafficking. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. The perpetrator always holds power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops. White Trees School attempts to identify young people who are vulnerable to, or at risk of, sexual exploitation and who need services and interventions to keep them safe. We will pass on any information about CSE issues affecting the schools, for example concerns about adults hanging around the school, to the police.

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SEXUAL VIOLENCE & SEXUAL HARASSMENT BETWEEN PEERS/CHILDREN

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It may involve a single child or group of children sexually harassing or being sexually violent towards another child or group of children. It may happen both physically or verbally, online, or offline. Evidence suggests that girls, children with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND), children who are looked after (CLA) and children who identify as LGBTQ+ are at greater risk. It is important that all disclosures are taken seriously, victims are supported and there is a clear message that it is never acceptable.

Sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (It is important to consider when any of these crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence and may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos. sexualised online bullying; unwanted sexual comments and message (including, on social media);
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Any experience of sexual violence and sexual harassment is likely to have a significant impact on a pupil's emotional wellbeing and adversely affect their educational attainment.

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQ+ children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Staff are to report any concerns about a pupil to the designated safeguarding lead and log it on CPOMs.

SHARING OF NUDES AND SEMI-NUDES ('SEXTING')

The following is a suggested approach based on [guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety](#) for [all staff](#) and for [DSLs and senior leaders](#).

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

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If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

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Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children’s social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children’s social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person’s developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the Executive Headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children’s social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children’s social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through reporting 101 online to Hertfordshire Police or Essex Police – as appropriate, depending upon the school site.

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Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded and reported on CPOMs.

Curriculum coverage

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is freely available to all pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident – this will also be covered during RSE lessons.

ONLINE SAFETY & THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

Advice from the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, suggest that schools should:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

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Pupils are discouraged from bringing mobile phones into school but if they do, they typically hand them to the school offices for safekeeping until the end of the school day. Parents are aware of this process and support the school in encouraging pupils to hand mobile phones in. Site leads meet and greet pupils each morning, where they hand their mobile phones in to them before entering the school building.

School staff are not to use mobile phones during the school day, with the exception of calling the school or the emergency services if an emergency situation arises whilst off-site (eg. school trips).

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as 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, such as 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; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety

Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

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- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy.

ALLEGATIONS FROM PUPILS AGAINST OTHER PUPILS

In most instances, negative conduct of pupils towards each other will be covered by our **behaviour** and **anti-bullying** policies. However, some allegations and peer on peer abuse may be of a more serious nature and raise safeguarding concerns. Allegations made against another pupil may include **physical abuse** (e.g. violence, particularly pre-planned; forcing the use of drugs or alcohol), **emotional abuse** (e.g. bullying, blackmail, extortion, threats, intimidation), **sexual abuse** (e.g. indecent exposure, touching, sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexting, forcing the watching of pornography) and/or **sexual exploitation** (e.g. photographing or videoing indecent acts).

GANGS

Due to the vulnerable nature of our pupils, they are more likely to be targeted by gangs as they may be more susceptible to the grooming strategies utilised. Particularly, our pupils who come to us with historic gang associations may be more at risk of further targeting. Older pupils may also attempt to recruit younger pupils using various methods. It is also well documented that pupils suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people, under threat of violence.

Staff are to report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead and log it on CPOMS.

MINIMISING THE RISK

It is inevitable in our schools that some pupils will present a safeguarding risk to other pupils. A robust induction system ensures that we are informed as to whether a pupil arrives or re-joins presenting a safeguarding concern, for example after coming back into school following a period in custody or having experienced serious abuse themselves. Intelligent timetabling, groupings, supervision, and personalised risk assessments, including daily dynamic risk assessments, are central to the effective management of safety in our schools. This dramatically reduces the possibility of negative conduct against other pupils, and therefore of allegations.

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST OTHER PUPILS

All staff members treat this abuse very seriously and never consider it as 'banter' or part of growing up. When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern:

- The DSL should be informed as per the usual CPOMS system

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- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances
- The DSL will contact social care services to discuss the case. It is possible that social care services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around the pupil. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social care services referral where appropriate
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion, and any outcome
- If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police will be contacted at the earliest opportunity and their primary caregiver informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim)
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period, as per our 'How We Do It' and anti-bullying policies
- Where neither social care services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation will take place in any case, using our internal procedures
- In situations where the DSL considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan which will be monitored and evaluated with all adults working with the pupil. Individual risk assessments will also be amended accordingly.
- Both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) will be supported by the school, what this looks like may vary depending on the case, however it may include additional therapeutic support, home visits, personalised timetable, family support and ongoing communication with external agencies.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION: COUNTY LINES

The criminal exploitation of children 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 areal areas, market and seaside towns. Staff are aware that a key indicator to look out for is missing episodes; if a child has periods of going missing it is possible that they have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. This is another reason as to why our absence procedure is so important; we inform the police if we have been unable to obtain a reason for a child's absence as the pupil is classed as a 'missing child'.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, child criminal exploitation can affect any child under the age of 18. It can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual, there is usually some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. It can also involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Staff should raise the concern with the DSL as soon as possible and log any information relating to child criminal exploitation on CPOMS.

HOMELESSNESS

A pupil's welfare can be affected if they are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The DSL will be able to assist families in getting them support; in addition to discussions and supporting letters that can be provided to the Local Housing Authority, it may be deemed necessary to make a referral to children's social care if the child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

It should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or carers, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the DSL will ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

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Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness includes household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and antisocial behaviours as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

DRUG AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE

White Trees School recognises that young people are at risk from a range of both legal and illegal substances and that substance misuse is an increasing social problem that can have devastating consequences for individuals, their families and the community as a whole. The school is committed to the health, safety and welfare of children and will act to help safeguard their well-being as well as providing support, advice and education about drugs and substance misuse as appropriate. The schools will never condone the misuse of substances, and the possession or supply of illegal drugs, and it will be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Staff are to report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead and log it on CPOMS.

CHILDREN AND THE COURTS SYSTEM

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There is guidance available on the government website that explains the process and the support that is available for children.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following a relationship breakdown can be an extremely stressful time for the whole family. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool which parent/carer(s) may find helpful as it offers clear information in the dispute resolution service. Further information on the court system can be found at:

<https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/>

CHILD EMPLOYMENT

Only children over the age of 13 may be employed to do light work. Regulations determine the type of work and restrict the hours a child may be employed for. Children working in the UK who are still of compulsory school age are required to have a work permit in all cases; it is illegal for a child to work and not have a work permit, even if this is in a family business. Different regulations apply to children in entertainment, where children under thirteen may be licensed to perform in commercial performances under strict guidelines and controls. Further information on children in employment can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/child-employment>

PRIVATE FOSTERING

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately, without the involvement of a Local Authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 years of age 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. **Each party involved in the private fostering arrangement has a duty to refer it to the Local Authority at least six weeks**

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before the arrangement is due to begin, and not to do so would be an offence. The school has a duty to inform social services if we become aware of a private fostering arrangement that has not been shared with the Local Authority. Although there is no duty for the school to be informed of private fostering arrangements it would be helpful if the family could pass on the information to ensure support can be put in place. Further information on private fostering can be found at <https://www.privatefostering.org.uk>

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We have a risk assessment policy and health & safety policies for every school site, which demonstrate the consideration we give to minimising any risk to the children when on the school premises and when undertaking activities out of school under the supervision of our staff. This also includes alternate provisions, where the school is responsible for the safeguarding of pupils; risk assessments, site visits and a written statement is obtained from the provider stating that they have completed all the required staff vetting and barring checks that are necessary.

The school acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard all pupils in potentially vulnerable situations, such as changing rooms, while also acknowledging the child's right to privacy. A professional judgement is made based on the age and the developmental needs of the pupils; appropriate supervision is achieved by staff being in close proximity to the changing room and pupils should be aware of this, knowing that adults will enter the room if necessary. Showers at local gym and leisure facilities are available for pupils to make use of, if required.

IF YOU HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN

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 will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in Appendix 1.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Refer to the Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

Acting where concerns are identified

Our staff recognise the difference between concerns about a child and a child in immediate danger. If staff have concerns about a child, they will need to report it immediately on CPOMS to alert the DSL and DDSL's. A discussion will then take place with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to agree a course of action.

If a child is in immediate danger or risk of harm a referral will be made immediately to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and/or the police immediately by the member of staff if required, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead being informed of the referral.

If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about alleged abuse, there are a number of actions that staff will undertake to support the child:

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- The key facts will be established in language that the child understands, and the child's words will be used in clarifying/expanding what has been said.
- No promises will be made to the child, e.g. to keep secrets.
- Staff will stay calm and be available to listen.
- Staff will actively listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying.
- Where questions are asked, this should be done without pressurising, and only using open questions;
- Leading questions should be avoided as much as possible
- Questioning should not be extensive or repetitive
- Staff will not put words in the child's mouth but will subsequently note the main points carefully.
- A full written record will be kept by the staff duly signed and dated, including the time the conversation with the child took place, outline what was said, comment on the child's body language etc.
- It is not appropriate for staff to make children write statements about abuse that may have happened to them or get them to sign the staff record.
- Staff will reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform them and inform the child that this information will now have to be passed on.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be immediately informed, unless the disclosure has been made to them.
- Information should be shared with children's social care without delay, either to the child's own social worker or to the MASH. Children's Social Care will liaise with the police where required, which will ensure an appropriate police officer response rather than a uniformed response.
- The Police would only therefore be contacted directly in an emergency.

Staff should never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected child abuse by interviewing the child or any others involved especially if a criminal act is thought to have occurred. The only people who should investigate child abuse and harm are Social Care, Police or the NSPCC.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential; however, a member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to children; children will not be given promises that any information about an allegation will not be shared.

Where there is a child protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or to children's social care. When a child is in immediate danger children's social care/the police will be contacted.

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff, including the level of involvement of other agencies, only on a 'need to know' basis.

All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. They are aware that the Data Protection Act 1998 should not be a barrier to sharing of information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.

We acknowledge further guidance can be found by visiting Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Child-protection/Hertfordshire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership/hscp.aspx>

Information Sharing

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Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment and service provision to keep children safe. Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record and thereby understand the significance of sharing information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare of children (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 para 23).

We will adopt the information sharing principles detailed in statutory safeguarding guidance contained within:

- New DfE KCSiE 2023 paragraphs 106 - 123
- HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 Para 23 to27 and on pages 20 and 21.
- HM Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (which has been updated to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GPDR) and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Policy and Practice Guidance.

All staff and Governors are to undertake GDPR training, staff to complete EduCare courses which cover GDPR.

Records and Monitoring (KCSiE 2023 paragraphs 68 - 76, Part one, Annex B & Annex C)

CPOMS is closely monitored with actions updated accordingly by the DSL and /or the DDSL. Safeguarding updates are provided at Governors meetings and are challenged accordingly. The Safeguarding Governor has access to CPOMS and undergoes audits, where he is also alerted on CPOMS to any concerns that are then escalated to referrals. The Director of Children Services also has access to CPOMS and can be called upon for advice as and when necessary.

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours on our online CPOMS system. All records will provide a factual and evidence-based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions, attaching any relevant supporting documents to the online CPOMS report. Any written records will be signed, dated and, where appropriate, witnessed and also attached to CPOMS. Where an opinion or professional judgement is recorded this should be clearly stated as such.

At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person; this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures. The body map below should be used in accordance with recording guidance.

Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services e.g. CP referral or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.

A chronology will be logged on CPOMS, under the correct headings, prior to the commencement of a cause for concern report. Staff, particularly team leaders, will record any minor concerns on the chronology and will take responsibility for alerting the Designated Safeguarding Lead should the number of concerns rise or, in their professional judgement, become significant. At the point at which a cause for concern alert is commenced then the chronology can be downloaded as a report.

Safeguarding, child protection reviews, referrals, Police Intervention, CSE, Self -harm and welfare concerns are just an example of all categories that are on CPOMS to log under, staff ensure that when they are reporting an incident that they log in under the correct category – alerting the DSL & DDSL.

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Our school will ensure all our files will be available for external scrutiny for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit.

Why recording is important

Our staff will be encouraged to understand why it is important that recording is comprehensive and accurate and what the messages from serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information. It is often when a chronology of information is pieced together that the level of concern escalates or the whole or wider picture becomes known.

Our school White Trees Uses CPOMS, which was signed off by its robust Governing body, with regular safeguarding audits taking place. Furthermore, the Safeguarding Governor is a part of the CPOMS systems and is kept up to date with key incidents.

We acknowledge without information being recorded it can be lost. This could be crucial information, the importance of which is not always necessarily apparent at the time. On occasions, this information could be crucial evidence to safeguard a child or be evidence in future criminal prosecutions.

The Child Protection (CP), Child in Need (CiN) or Confidential file (KCSiE 2023)

The establishment of a Child Protection, CiN or Confidential Safeguarding file, which is separate from the child's main school cause for concern category – where on CPOMS any reports/information is logged under a CP and CIN category. This is an important principle in terms of storing and collating information about children which relates to either a child protection or safeguarding concern or an accumulation of concerns about a child's welfare which are outside of the usual range of concerns which relate to ordinary life events. It should be borne in mind that what constitutes a 'concern' for one child may not be a 'concern' for another and the child's particular circumstances will need to be taken into account for example if a child is subject to a child protection plan, CiN plan or has looked after status (CLA). Professional judgement will therefore be an important factor when making this decision and will need clear links between pastoral staff and those with Designated Safeguarding Lead responsibilities in school.

A 'child protection' or 'confidential' log on CPOMS should be commenced in the event of:

- A Child Protection referral/Children's Social Care.
- A number of minor concerns on the child's main school file.
- Any child open to social care.

All 'child protection' or 'confidential' log on CPOMS should contain:

- A front sheet.
- A chronology.
- A record of concern in more detail and body map, where appropriate.
- A record of concerns and issues shared by others.

The school will keep electronic records of concerns about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to Child Protection/Children's Social Care (or similar) immediately but these records will be kept within the separate CPOMS concerns categories.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect. Any live child

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protection concerns will be kept in a file, which is locked away in the Head Teachers Office, which will be updated regularly and reviewed at full Governors meetings. CPOM's only allows key members of staff to access and run reports, with an admin account – which can be accessed by a two key authenticator application.

The 'confidential' file can be active or inactive in terms of monitoring i.e. a child is no longer LAC, subject to a child protection plan or CiN and this level of activity can be recorded on the front sheet as a start and end date. If future concerns arise, they can be re-activated and accordingly logged on CPOMS and indicated as such on the front sheet and on the chronology as new information arises.

Where children leave the school, we will ensure their confidential/child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. It would be good practice, wherever possible, for the file to be hand-delivered to the receiving designated safeguarding lead with a discussion taking place. There should be a smooth and safe transition for the child.

Those schools and colleges that use electronic case record management systems should continue to have good dialogue between the Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure children subject to child protection and safeguarding concerns are well supported and any transition arrangements or change of school and or education provision should be seamless.

Recording Practice

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child.

A record/log of each and every incident or concern for the child will be made, including any telephone calls to other professionals. These will also be recorded CPOMS and kept within the child protection file for that child (if a live concern, if not then on CPOMS only), as over time they are likely to help identify any patterns or emerging risks and needs. This will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child. Actions will be agreed, and roles and responsibility of each agency will be clarified, and outcomes recorded.

The chronology will be brief and log activity; the full recording will be on CPOMS.

NOTE: Body maps are accessed online on CPOMs to use and where necessary and guidance are below in the Appendices.

Further detailed recording will be added to the CPOMS report and actioned as and where appropriate by the DSL/DDSL. Records will include an analysis of the event or concerns and will take account of the holistic needs of the child, and any historical information held on the child's file.

Support and advice will be sought from social care, or early help whenever necessary. In this way a picture can emerge, and this will assist in promoting an evidence-based assessment and determining any action(s) that needs to be taken.

This may include no further action, or whether a referral should be made to CP/Children's Social Care in-line with the Hertfordshire local authority thresholds.

Such robust practice across child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will assist the school and DSL team in the early identification of any concerns which may require addressing further and the prevention of future harm, risk or abuse.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm (through the concern file and through an ongoing dialogue with lead staff). They will ensure that we contribute to assessments of need and support multi-agency plans for those children.

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PUPILS WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

LOOKED-AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN

(in accordance with statutory guidance: Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children - roles and responsibilities of the Designated teacher & KSCiE 2023 Paragraphs 190 - 196 Virtual school heads)

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed an appropriately trained teacher, Louise Gordon, Designated Teacher, to take the lead on promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

As part of their role, they will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children

Educating Young People – Opportunities to teach safeguarding (KCSiE 2023 paragraphs 129 -131).

As a school we will to teach children in an age-appropriate way about youth produced imagery, on-line risks associated with social networking to prevent harm by providing them with the skills, attributes, and knowledge to help them navigate risks.

This approach to tackling sensitive issues promotes a whole school approach to safeguarding giving children the space to explore key issues and the confidence to seek the support of adults should they encounter problems.

This issue will be taught as part of a wider RSE programme, as RSE becomes mandatory in all schools from September 2020 (please see RSE & Curriculum policy).

As part of the curriculum, we spend a great deal of time teaching our pupils about on-line safety, all computers in school have Umbrella security on them to ensure any inappropriate sites cannot be accessed.

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Teaching the pupils, not just blocking the content, is obviously key – so they can make informed decisions when they are at home/away from school accessing the internet and or social media. We also support parents/carers with online safety by providing them with advice and information leaflets, so they are aware of how to support their children at home when they are accessing the internet and where they can seek further advice/support from.

Helplines and reporting

- Children can talk to a ChildLine counsellor 24 hours a day about anything that is worrying them by ringing 0800 11 11 or in an online chat at <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/>
- Where staff members feel unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feel they have a genuine concern that is not being addressed we acknowledge they may wish to consider whistleblowing channels (please see whistleblowing policy). Likewise, if parents and carers are concerned about their child, they can contact the NSPCC Helpline by ringing 0800 028 028 0295, or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk

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Appendix 1

**White Trees Independent School Child Protection/ Safeguarding Flow Chart
‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, at risk of harm or neglect’**

Member of staff has concerns about a child’s welfare

- Be alert to signs of abuse and question unusual behaviour.

Where a child or young person discloses abuse or neglect

- Listen to what they say, keep calm, reassure they are right to tell, and you will act to help keep them safe. **DO NOT DELAY take any immediate necessary action to protect the child.**
- Inform them you need to share the information and what you are going to do next
- Do not promise confidentiality, you will need to share/ report the information onwards.
- Do not question further or inform the alleged abuser.

Discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- The Safeguarding Lead will consider further actions including consultation with Children’s Social Care/ CP referral (if a new concern).
- Concerns and discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded on CPOMS alerting the DSL & DDSL

Still have concerns? Make Child Protection Referral Social Care
Have child/ families’ personal details to hand and be clear about concern/ allegations.

Safeguarding concern Resolved / no longer held
Support has been agreed, record decision, any follow up actions.

Children’s Social Care
During Office Hour, Monday to Friday
Child Protection Tel: -0300 123 4043
If the child is at immediate risk
TEL: 101 and ask for assistance
Record all decisions and actions, working to agreed outcomes and within timescales.
Escalate any emerging threats/concerns by adopting Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures –
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Child-protection/Hertfordshire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership/hscp.aspx>

Out of hours
Emergency
Duty Team
5.00pm – 8.30am
Tel 0300 123 4043

NSPCC Whistle
blowing Tel:
0800 028 0285

Unmet needs identified
Decide what actions are needed to support the child.

Consult with child young person, family and relevant agencies: Agree support,

Contacts: For any allegations/concerns regarding an adult who works with (in either paid/ voluntarily) employment with children contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (Hertfordshire’s safeguarding children board):
Community Safety Lead: Bill Jephson, 03001234043, Head of CP: Roger Carruthers, 01992556937, Consultation Hub: 01438737511 **This flow chart is intended as a brief guide. Please refer to our Child Protection Policy**

School/Academy Child Protection/ Safeguarding Policy

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Body Map Guidance for Schools (Body maps available on CPOMS)

Medical assistance should be sought where appropriate.

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

***At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures, the body map below should be used in accordance with recording guidance. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. MASH or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.**

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record

The body map should be accessed on CPOMS and saved accordingly.

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