Bethany School Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
September 2026

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BETHANY SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Incorporating Child Protection
September 2026

This document has been reviewed with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023), Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings 2022, and The Children Act 2004. These documents are kept on file in the school.

This policy should be read alongside departmental advice:
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, DfE (March 2015),
Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (updated May 2024), together with any statutory information-sharing guidance in force, and section 3 of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, where applicable.

Further detailed guidance can be found on the Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership website here **Safeguarding information and resources for practitioners working with children**

This policy is written in line with our:

- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Online Safety Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Good Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Mental health and Wellbeing Policy
- Attendance Policy (incorporating 'children missing from education')
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy (incorporating 'Low Level Concerns')

These are all available on request from the school office, via the school website and on the teachers' google drive.

SCHOOL STATEMENT

Bethany School is a Safeguarding School. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the 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.

The terms 'child' and 'children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

Bethany School strongly believes that as precious gifts from God (Psalm 127 v 3), our children's welfare is paramount. We take the Biblical command to 'learn to do right, seek justice, defend the oppressed' (Isaiah 1v17) seriously, and we recognise that 'the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.' (James 5:16). We commit ourselves to regular prayer, in our homes and in Bethany School, regarding child protection issues, and will take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our school.

We are committed to safeguarding children and young people and creating a culture of vigilance where everyone who works in our school shares this commitment. We acknowledge that safeguarding is

everyone's responsibility. All adults in our school take welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. Our concern is to always act in the best interest of the child. We **will** invoke child protection procedures where necessary.

Action will also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or at immediate risk. Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that child.

GOVERNORS AND LEADERS RESPONSIBILITIES

Bethany School Governors take their responsibility to safeguard the welfare of the children entrusted to the School's care seriously. The Governors will ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate the skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the Independent School Standards are met consistently. They actively promote the well-being of pupils according to section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004(**a**).

The Governors will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are distributed, adopted, implemented and monitored.

They will ensure that the DSL or a Deputy DSL will always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Robust cover arrangements will be in place for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances, to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay. Any Deputy DSL providing cover will be trained to the same standard as the DSL.

The Governors recognise the need to build constructive links with statutory childcare authorities, and will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

The Governors are committed to:

- Listening to, relating effectively and valuing children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within school activities.
- Ensuring safeguarding is taught 'as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum', including online safety.
- Employing the expertise of the staff when reviewing safeguarding policies and providing opportunities for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Ensuring that staff members are given support and training.
- Ensuring all staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm.
- Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities.
- Ensuring the DSL and staff are aware of and follow local safeguarding partnership arrangements so that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Following Safer Recruitment practices laid out in the school's 'Staff Recruitment Policy' to comply with best safe recruitment procedures. This includes appropriate checks, and supervision and training for teachers, parents and other adults who work in the school in line with nationally published guidelines (KCSIE). All Governors and Leaders will undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check via 'Thirty-one eight,' right to work check, managers list section 128 check and will complete child protection training. The Governor's names and photographs will be published on the school website.

NAMED LEADERS

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Mr David Charles is our Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). He provides support and

direction to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and to liaise closely with other services such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the police, and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), when managing referrals (see Appendix 3 for role of the DSL and DSD). His role in Safer Recruitment is to ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with the children.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL)
Mrs Emma Ireland and Mrs Anna Daniels are our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Deputy DSL). Their role is to provide support to the DSL and be available if the Lead is unavailable.

EYFS Lead
Mrs Emma Ireland is the EYFS Lead.

Online Safety Coordinator
Mr David Charles is the Online Safety Coordinator.

Child Looked after Designated Teacher
Mrs Anna Daniels is the SENDCO and Designated Teacher for children looked after.

Safeguarding Governor
Mr Ben Udejiofo is our Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor. His role in Safeguarding is to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and take the lead in dealing with allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher.

Safeguarding Administrator
Mrs Sarah Walker is our safeguarding administrator. Her role is to support the team by assisting with the administration of safeguarding responsibilities.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND PARENTS

We recognise that **everyone** who encounters children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Anyone working in the school (from this point called 'staff members', but also including regular volunteers) is particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating; they form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. For a description of this system, see Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 - GOV.UK

Everyone involved with Bethany School understands that children are God's gift to families (Psalm 127:3). Children are 'wonderfully made' (Psalm 139:14) and parents recognise a duty to bring them up in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord' (Ephesians 6:4). This involves parents lovingly training their children to do what is right and protecting them from anything that would cause them harm. All parents are members of Bethany School and are therefore bound by the Safeguarding Policy. Parents are given safeguarding information, covering issues of child protection, online safety and the school safeguarding policy in "new parents training", as an annual update in parents' meetings and via email handouts. Our safeguarding and online safety policies are available via the school website and in the school office, and links to KCSIE and other helpful resources are provided.

All staff members should make themselves aware of the systems within the school that support safeguarding, which are explained in the staff induction. This includes the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct; and the members of the Safeguarding Team.

All staff members have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They have a responsibility to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, vulnerable, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from help and support before concerns escalate. This includes universal services and community-based Early Help and, where needs require a

coordinated response, Family Help. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 - GOV.UK) brings together targeted early help and section 17 support within Family Help to provide a more seamless offer for children and families.

Bethany school understands that providing help and support early is more effective in promoting children's welfare than reacting later. Staff should understand that Family Help can include targeted early help and support for children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, while section 47 enquiries apply where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Staff should understand that any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).
- has a mental health need.
- is a young carer.
- is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves.
- is showing early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours, or signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded, or is in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery or trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation.
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism.
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves.
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.
- is a privately fostered child.

Staff members are advised to maintain an '**it could happen here'** attitude in relation to safeguarding issues.

When concerned about the welfare, safety or wellbeing of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child. They should not wait until there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm before reporting a concern. Any concern should be acted on immediately in accordance with this policy by raising it with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. This also includes situations of abuse that may involve other staff members. The Safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care, although any staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral must be made to local authority children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.

Staff members should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of the home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. See KCSIE 2026 for more detailed information about indicators of abuse.

Staff should follow the school's procedures for persistent absence and children missing education, act promptly to identify underlying safeguarding risks and help prevent absent pupils becoming children missing education.

In all cases, if staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.

Staff members should be aware of any signs of extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources – students, staff or Governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies, or individuals. We encourage pupils to see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

More information about universal services, community based Early Help, Family Help and statutory intervention is set out in KCSIE 2026 and working together to safeguard children 2026.

SAFER WORKING PRACTICES

The school has regard to the Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2022 underpinning principles as follows:
https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/_files/ugd/f576a8_0d079cbe69ea458e9e99fe462e447084.pdf

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way including self-reporting if their conduct or behaviour falls short of these guiding principles.
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the Head Teacher if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and sexual orientation.
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action, and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).
- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.
- Staff should be aware of and understand their establishment's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff behaviour policy, whistleblowing procedure and their local authority safeguarding procedures.
- Staff should make themselves familiar with the relevant school documents and policies
- Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; and a note of any action taken, decisions reached, the reasons for those decisions and the outcome.
- Where a child leaves the school, the DSL will ensure that the child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. For an in-year transfer, this should be within five days, or within the first five days of the start of a new term. The child protection file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. The DSL will also consider whether it is appropriate to share any additional information

with the new school or college in advance of the child leaving to enable appropriate safeguarding support to be put in place.

KEY TRAINING AREAS

All staff will undertake a safeguarding induction when they begin working at Bethany School. They will attend annual update training delivered by the DSL/Deputy DSL on our Safeguarding Policy and be required to read Part 1 KCSIE each year (see Appendix 1). Bethany School follows Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership Professional Development Pathway which requires, amongst other things, 3 yearly Basic Safeguarding Children training delivered by Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board or interim e-learning course. Training will highlight the signs and symptoms of abuse to look out for, contextual safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm, how to raise concerns (including low level concerns about adults), understanding the difference between identifying a safeguarding concern, identifying a vulnerable learner and identifying a child in immediate danger, the staff code of conduct including online guidance, safer working practices and the role of the DSL.

Online safety training will be undertaken regularly (see 'online safety' policy for details). Relevant updates will be given throughout the year as needed in staff meetings and via email safeguarding bulletin/online safety newsletter. There is also a wealth of information, with links, to help schools and parents keep children safe online in KCSIE 2026.

Regular volunteers (including those who are parents) will complete a face-to-face safeguarding induction, annual updates, and also be required to read Part 1 "Information for all schools and college staff" of KCSIE each year. Signed record sheets will be kept demonstrating that this has taken place. (see volunteer file/parent training records).

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same level, undergoing updated child protection training every year, following the Sheffield Safeguarding children in education training pathway.

IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS:

Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere, and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in this school. See Appendix 4 for Referral Flowchart.

Safeguarding concerns about adults in the school should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Head teacher.

Safeguarding concerns about Independent School proprietors should go straight to the Local Authority Designated Officer - the LADO via the Safeguarding hub 0114 273 4855.

To contact the following safeguarding staff members please call the school office in the first instance, and see posters displayed around the school and found in the safeguarding induction pack 'how our setting safeguards students'.

Our Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mr David Charles, 0114 2726994
Our Deputy DSLs are: Mrs Emma Ireland, and Mrs Anna Daniels, 0114 2726994
Our SENDCO and Deputy DSL is: Mrs Anna Daniels, 0114 2726994
Our Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor is: Ben Udejiofo

All staff members may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care services via the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855

The school will work with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as deemed appropriate. The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations that have concerns about a person working or volunteering with children and young people who may have behaved inappropriately, or you have received information that may constitute an allegation.

For further advice or help contact:

- Thirty-one Eight: 0845 1204550
- Sheffield Safeguarding Hub: 0114 273 4855
- Sheffield Social Services Duty Social Worker: 0114 273 4491/273 4855
- The NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- The NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline: 0800 028 0285
- The Police: 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response; 999 when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened

MULTI-AGENCY LEVELS OF NEED AND RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

In Sheffield we refer to the Sheffield Threshold of Need Guidance to support decision making in regards to child protection and early help. See the document and guidance found here for more information.
Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - Early Help Assessment and Threshold of Need

THE ROLE OF THE CURRICULUM

Bethany School recognises the crucial role of preventative education which keeps pupils safe and prepares them for life in modern Britain. We ensure that our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted throughout our school aims, behaviour norms and curriculum. Our curriculum is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, according to our beliefs.

Pupils are taught about the values underpinning public life in the UK which have been summarised as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and the tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This supports our pupils to be responsible citizens and prepares for an adult life living and working in Britain which is diverse and changing.

We understand that schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain, creates a culture of zero tolerance for discrimination, and encourages mutual respect for all.

The broad and balanced curriculum includes age appropriate teaching about healthy relationships, boundaries and consent, stereotyping, prejudice and equality, self-esteem, how to recognise abuse and harassment and concepts of, and laws relating to these, and getting help.

Annex A of KCSIE provides resources which help inform our understanding and teaching about safeguarding.

We will also work with local partners, families, and communities in our efforts to ensure our school understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our pupil's experiences and horizons. We will help support students who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a pupil is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences, we will ensure that that pupil is offered mentoring.

CHILD PROTECTION

The Bethany School Safeguarding Policy incorporates 'Child Protection' which relates to pupils who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm due to neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, including extremism and radicalisation.

SIGNIFICANT HARM

Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act

1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Decisions about significant harm should be informed by a careful assessment of the child's circumstances and discussion between statutory agencies and with the child and family.

DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from the document *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* 2026. They are indicators of abuse which staff should be aware of when considering the well-being of children and the likelihood that they may suffer significant harm.

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, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. 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. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child-to-parent or caregiver abuse.

Physical Abuse

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

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing, causing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration whether with part of a person's body or an object (for example rape or assault by penetration) and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity, and specific offences make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

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

Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

The following signs may or may not be indications that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Physical Signs of Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- Reluctance to change for or participate in games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc., which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/ scratches/ substance abuse.

Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning female genital mutilation.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams, or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia

Emotional Signs of Abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, depression/ aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/ or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/ stealing/ lying

RESPONDING TO A CHILD WANTING TO TALK ABOUT ABUSE OR NEGLECT

General Points

- If a child makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, you must always take any such concerns seriously and follow the school's procedures for reporting allegations.
- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Helpful things you may say or show

- Show acceptance of what the child says.
- "Thank you for telling me".
- "I will help you".

Do not say

- "Why didn't you tell anyone before"?
- "I can't believe it!"
- "Are you sure this is true?"
- "Why? How? When? Who? Where?"
- Never make false promises.
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

Concluding

- Again, reassure the child what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens. The DSL should consider whether advice or action from local authority children's social care and/or the police is needed before the child returns home where there is a risk of further harm.
- Contact the DSL or Deputy DSL in accordance with this policy. Where necessary, contact local authority children's social care and/or the police. Staff may also seek advice from an appropriate safeguarding service such as the NSPCC.
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

REPORTING A CONCERN
WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT THAT ABUSE MAY HAVE OCCURRED

If you have a **'Concern'** about a child's welfare, safety and wellbeing, you must follow the steps below

1. Report the concern as soon as possible to Mr D Charles (DSL), who is nominated by the Governors to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of the DSL, the matter should be brought to the attention of Mrs E Ireland or Mrs Anna Daniels (hereafter the "Deputy DSL").

2. Use the form "reporting concerns sheet" located in the school office to make accurate notes as soon as possible, writing down what has been seen, said or heard. Include **who** was involved, **what** happened, **when** it happened and what action you have taken ie **who** you referred the issue to. Remember to be factual and not add your own views or interpretation without explanation. Record

dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

3. If the suspicions in any way involve the DSL or Deputy DSL, then the report should be made to the Safeguarding Governor, Mr Ben Udejiofo who should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

4. Only involve those who need to be involved when a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

5. Although members of the school are expected to use the procedure stated in step 1, it is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from a reputable safeguarding agency. Please inform the DSL immediately, if you do so. If, however, you feel that the DSL or Deputy DSL have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation directly. We hope that by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the school to effective child protection.

Where a child is vulnerable, suffering significant harm or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that child. Once a child has talked about abuse, the DSL should consider whether it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. Where there is a risk of further harm, the DSL should seek immediate advice from the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and/ or Police and follow their directions about safety arrangements.

Action will also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or at immediate risk (ie Early Help or pastoral support in school).

See Sheffield Children's safeguarding partnership page below for detailed referral information.
Referring a safeguarding concern to Children's Social Care

ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY OR NEGLECT

If a child has a physical injury or there are concerns that a child may be experiencing neglect, the DSL or Deputy DSL will consider the information available and take appropriate safeguarding action without delay.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral will be made immediately to local authority children's social care and, where appropriate, the police, in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

Where emergency medical attention is required, this will be sought immediately. Medical professionals will be informed of any relevant safeguarding concerns.

Parents or carers should normally be informed of concerns and referrals unless doing so would place the child at increased risk of harm, prejudice an investigation, or otherwise be contrary to the child's welfare. Where there is uncertainty, advice should be sought from local authority children's social care or the police before informing parents or carers.

The school will not investigate suspected abuse itself. Staff should record and report concerns accurately and promptly and cooperate fully with any assessment or investigation undertaken by statutory agencies.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Any allegation, disclosure or suspicion that a child may have been sexually abused must be taken seriously and reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

The DSL will consider the information available and, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, make an immediate referral to local authority children's social care. The police will also be contacted where appropriate and in accordance with local

safeguarding procedures.

If a child is in immediate danger or there is an immediate risk of serious harm, the police and/or local authority children's social care must be contacted without delay. Any member of staff may make a referral directly where necessary, although the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

The school will not investigate allegations of sexual abuse. Staff should listen carefully to the child, avoid asking leading or unnecessary questions, make an accurate record of what has been said and report the matter promptly.

Parents or carers should normally be informed unless doing so would place the child at increased risk, prejudice a police or social care investigation, or otherwise be contrary to the child's welfare. Where necessary, the DSL should agree with local authority children's social care and/or the police when and how parents or carers should be informed.

HELPING VICTIMS OF ABUSE – THE CHILD'S WISHES

As a Christian school, we are committed to supporting victims of abuse, and encouraging them in their faith.

The school will ensure the child's wishes or feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Staff members should not promise confidentiality to the child and always act in the **best interests** of the child.

If a child – or their parent/carer – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff must always take any such concerns seriously and follow the school's procedures for reporting allegations.

POLICY ON SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF

Staff, including volunteers, must be aware that they may be vulnerable to accusations of abuse and must, therefore, follow the schools code of conduct. This states that staff should maintain professional standards of behaviour and appropriate boundaries at all times in relationships between themselves and the pupils, themselves, and the parents, and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others. Staff should report any such incident to the Head Teacher. This is as relevant in the online world as it is in the classroom; staff engaging with pupils and/or parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.

There is a duty to report (including self-reporting) any incident in which an adult has or may have behaved in a way that is inconsistent with the organisation's staff code of conduct including inappropriate behaviours inside, outside of work or online.

Staff should recognise their individual responsibility to raise any concerns regarding behaviour or conduct (including low level concerns) that falls short of the principles outlined in this document and the staff code of conduct. It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (see KCSIE), are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Staff members should:

- report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.
- report allegations against staff and volunteers to the Head Teacher, or where they have concerns about the Head Teacher, report these directly to the Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Governors.
- escalate their concerns if they believe a child or children are not being protected.
- follow the organisation's whistleblowing procedures as appropriate.
- where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should utilise other whistleblowing channels that are open to them as outlined in KCSIE.

If the allegation or suspicion in any way involves the DSL or Deputy DSL, then the report should be made to the Safeguarding Governor, Mr Ben Udejiofo, who should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer via the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and give as much information as possible. Allegations of abuse against people who work with children - LADO

Bethany school promotes an open and transparent culture where staff feel valued and are confident to report any concerns. We will ensure that all concerns about adult conduct are heard, received in a sensitive manner, taken seriously, actioned, recorded with clear outcomes and ensure all concerns that do meet the harm threshold are reported to the LADO without delay.

The school will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where it removes an individual from regulated activity, or would have removed the individual had they not left, and believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults, satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults, and/or been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence.

A person satisfies the harm test if they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm. It is something a person may do to cause harm or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. (See Making barring referrals to DBS - GOV.UK).

The school will also consider whether a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) is required where a teacher is dismissed or would have been dismissed for serious misconduct. Current referral information is available through GOV.UK.

Regard must be given to the section 'Allegations of Abuse Made Against Teachers and Other Staff', in the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which is on file in the school office. This should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates he or she may not be suitable to work with children.

This is due to the principle of transferrable risk where an individual is involved in an incident outside of school which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. For example, domestic violence at home – even if no children were involved, could a child trigger the same reaction, and thereby be put at risk.

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

An awareness of potential safeguarding issues will help our community to keep children safe and promote their wellbeing. Bethany School is alert to the specific safeguarding risks outlined in KCSIE 2026 in relation to the following issues. The relevant Sheffield Safeguarding Hub guidance will be referred to as needed. Safeguarding information and resources for practitioners working with children

Bethany School refers to KCSIE Part 1 and Annex A for further details about specific safeguarding issues including those outlined below.

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions. Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and are at greater risk of experiencing abuse and bullying. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.The school holds a SEND Policy and refers to the SEND code of practice https://www.gov.uk/government/publi cations/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25 and Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK and provides extra support and attention for pupils with SEND, acknowledging that disabled children have an equal right to be protected from abuse.

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Bullying including cyberbullying - see also our Online Safety Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) - see also Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners - GOV.UK
- Child-on-Child Abuse including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children(See further detail in later section)
- County Lines
- Children and the Court System
- Children Missing Education (See below and school Attendance Policy)
- Children with Family Members in Prison
- Cybercrime - see KCSIE Annex A and our online safety policy
- Domestic Abuse – including 'teenage relationship abuse'
    - Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at: NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse
    - Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
    - Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives
    - Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
    - Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)
- Homelessness – the DSL should be aware of the contact details and referral routes of the Local Housing Authority to enable them to raise concerns. Referrals to the Local Housing Authority should not replace referrals to children's social care where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.
- Honour or faith-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage) see also FGM
    - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
    - **Teachers** have **a specific legal duty to act** with regards to concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM). They must personally report to the police a disclosure that FGM has been carried out (in addition to liaising with the DSL). However, all staff should also speak to the DSL where there are concerns.
    - The school will refer to documents found in in Annex A of KCSIE 2026 regarding FGM
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism. See Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK
- Mental Health - see also our Mental Health and Wellbeing policy
- Preventing radicalisation, The Prevent Duty, Channel (See below)
- Sharing nude and semi-nude images – Taking and sharing nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. See Online Safety Policy, Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident - GOV.UK, and Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Young Carers

THE PREVENT DUTY

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' safeguarding approach.

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.

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

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of the school's wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023), which came into force on 31 December 2023, including its education section. The school will maintain an appropriate understanding of local and national risk, complete and review a proportionate Prevent risk assessment, provide role-appropriate training, work in partnership with relevant agencies, and ensure appropriate IT and filtering arrangements are in place.

The full Government Prevent Guidance (2023) can be viewed at: Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023) - GOV.UK

Staff members and Governors are asked to complete prevent duty training using the link below
Prevent duty training

The school holds a separate Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy and has regard to Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023), as updated, and any subsequent statutory guidance in force.

CHANNEL

Channel duty guidance: protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (accessible) - GOV.UK
Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme that provides support at an early stage to people who are susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be considered through the Channel process, where a multi-agency panel assesses the circumstances and considers appropriate support. A representative from the school may be asked to contribute to the process. Engagement with Channel support is voluntary.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.
Statutory guidance on Channel is available in the current Channel duty guidance: protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (updated October 2025).

For additional support see Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

Schools and EYFS providers have a critical part to play. In England, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) accordingly places clear duties on providers to keep children safe and promote their welfare. To protect children in our care, we must be alert to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child's life at home or elsewhere.
As a school and EYFS provider, we are expected to demonstrate activity in the following areas:

- Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism.
- Demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
- Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements consider the policies and procedures of the local

authority, the police, and the health service.
- Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism
- Expected to ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members should follow the school's procedures found below and in the attendance policy for dealing with children who go missing. More information about children who are missing from education can be found here. Educational Neglect

Bethany school follows statutory guidance found in the documents below with regard to monitoring and reporting attendance at school. See also the Attendance Policy for further information.

Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK
Working together to improve school attendance - August 2024 - GOV.UK

The Department for Education Guidance states that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education are defined as children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Parents have a duty to ensure their children are receiving appropriate full-time education and may choose to educate them in a school or at home.

As part of the Bethany School's safeguarding duty concerning our pupils, the school will investigate any unexplained absences. Where the school has reason to believe that a child may be missing education, or the child's whereabouts or education cannot be established, it will act promptly and work with the local authority. The school will not wait for a fixed period where safeguarding or welfare concerns require earlier action.
All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absences and children missing from education procedures.

Bethany school will notify the local authority when we are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register at a non-standard transition point under any of the grounds listed in the regulations, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

The school will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification will include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

The School will monitor pupils' attendance through the daily register. Where a pupil has not returned to the school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education - the list below presents some of the circumstances that local authorities consider when establishing their CME policies and procedures:

- Pupils at risk of harm/neglect
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families
- Children of Service Personnel
- Missing children and runaways
- Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System
- Children who cease to attend a school
- Children of new migrant families

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE INCLUDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARRASSMENT (SVSH) BETWEEN CHILDREN

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that this can happen both inside and outside school and online. Staff should understand their role in preventing child-on-child abuse as well as responding to it and should be clear about the school's policy and procedures.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in the school it does not mean child-on-child abuse is not happening. Concerns about child-on-child abuse, whether thought to have taken place on or off-site, should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Staff should also be alert to times when children may be at highest risk around the school day.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents.
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse').
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm, including serious physical assault and harm or the threat of harm with a weapon (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- sexual harassment, including sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse and may include misogyny or misandry.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated or digitally altered using artificial intelligence.
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
- 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).

Actions the school will take

The school deals with a wide continuum of children's behaviour on a day-to-day basis and most cases will be dealt with via school-based processes. These are outlined in the following policies:

- Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy

- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

The school will also act to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by ensuring the establishment provides a safe environment, promotes positive standards of behaviour, has effective systems in place where children can raise concerns and provides safeguarding through the curriculum via PSHE and other curriculum opportunities. This may include targeted work with children identified as vulnerable or being at risk and developing risk assessment and targeted work with those identified as being a potential risk to others.

Bethany School staff are aware of the particular risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges as outlined in KCSIE Part 5: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment. We understand that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Any suspicion or allegation that a child has been sexually abused by another child or may pose a risk of sexual abuse to another child or adult, should be referred immediately to the DSL. The DSL will consider the need for referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police in accordance with KCSIE 2026 Part Five and local safeguarding procedures. Staff may make a referral directly where necessary but should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

School staff are committed to handling any such reports sensitively and in line with current guidance and are aware that some groups are more at risk (girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk).

Particular considerations for cases where child-on-child abuse is a factor include:

- What is the nature, extent, and context of the behaviour including verbal, physical, making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes and/or online abuse? Was there coercion, physical aggression, bullying, bribery or attempts to ensure secrecy? What was the duration and frequency? Were other children and /or adults involved?
- What is the child's age, development, capacity to understand and make decisions (including anything that might have had an impact on this i.e., coercion), and family and social circumstances?
- What are the relative chronological and developmental age of the two children and are there any differentials in power or authority?
- Is the behaviour age appropriate or not? Does it involve inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation?
- Are there any risks to the child themselves and others i.e. other children in school, in the child's household, extended family, peer group, or wider social network?

The school will use resources on such issues to address these matters in PSHE.

Resources on child-on-child pressure can be found at: Resources on peer-on-peer sexual abuse in education and healthy relationships | NSPCC Learning

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should **never** be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it;
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported;

- challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Taking action on serious concerns by reporting to the DSL who will consider the need for referring to the local authority and/or police

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. All staff should understand it is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

Guidance on this matter may be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 5.

Bethany School keeps a record of any reports of SVSH which is reported to Governors at the end of each academic year.

OTHER SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Alternative Provision

If the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school remains ultimately responsible for safeguarding that pupil. The school will carry out safeguarding checks and its own due diligence to ensure the provision is appropriate for the child's individual needs, keep records of the address of the provider and any subcontracted or satellite sites, and review the placement at least half termly to assure itself that the child is attending regularly, remains safe and the placement continues to meet the child's needs. Any safeguarding concerns will trigger an immediate review and, where necessary, termination of the placement unless or until concerns are satisfactorily addressed.

Adults Who Supervise Children on Work Experience

When organising work placements, the school will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to safeguard pupils and will apply the current regulated activity and safer recruitment requirements in KCSIE 2026. (See also Bethany School Work Experience Policy)

Sharing Safeguarding/Child Protection Information with a New School or College

When a pupil with child protection issues moves school, the DSL should consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a pupil leaving, in addition to the child protection file. The DfE gives the example of information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting a victim of abuse and have the appropriate support in place for the pupil's arrival.

Children Looked After, Previously Looked After and Privately Fostered

The school recognises that children looked after/ children in care are one of the most vulnerable groups of children so need more frequent observational assessment to meet their needs. All staff will be made aware of anyone in the school who is looked after so that the child can be supported adequately. On admission, it will be established who has parental responsibility so that statutory requirements are met.

The Governing body will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children or previously looked after children safe. Appropriate staff will have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her will be available for all staff involved, including the designated safeguarding lead having details of the child's social worker.

When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, the school will work together with all agencies involved and take prompt action when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - Children 'in care' or 'looked after'

It should be noted that when a child or young person is looked after for more than 28 days by someone who is not their parent, legal guardian or close relative, this is called private fostering, and must be reported to the Local Authority. Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - Private fostering

Children who are questioning their gender
The school will respond to any request relating to social transition in accordance with KCSIE 2026, safeguarding law and equality and human rights law. The school will not initiate social transition. Decisions will be made carefully, documented and reviewed, with the DSL involved and parents or carers involved as set out in KCSIE 2026. Relevant staff will have the accurate information they need to safeguard the child and others. The school will maintain the required sex-based arrangements for toilets, changing rooms and, where applicable for safety, single-sex sport.

Use of school premises for non-school activities
In the case of the school premises being hired out to organisations for non school activities, Bethany school will take steps to ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place including seeking assurances in line with After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK

Mental Health
All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They can also indicate that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health problem. Education staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify changes or warning signs, including significant changes in behaviour, ongoing difficulty sleeping, withdrawing from social situations, no longer wanting to do things they usually enjoy, or physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should follow this Child Protection Policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy. If a child is in danger, staff should call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If urgent mental health help is needed but it is not an emergency, staff can use NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

See KCSIE 2026 Part One and Part Two for advice and guidance on children requiring mental health support.

One-to-one situations
Staff working in one to one situations with pupils at the setting, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

To safeguard both pupils and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should always be undertaken. Each assessment should consider the individual needs of each pupil and should be reviewed regularly.

Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the pupil, and their parents/carers.

Where staff are expected to work one to one with a pupil on a virtual platform, clear expectations should be

set out for all of those involved that are reflective of the settings safeguarding policies and procedures.

Staff should:

- work one to one with a child only when absolutely necessary (both in person or online) and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers.
- be aware of relevant risk assessments, policies and procedures, including child protection, Acceptable Use Agreements , and behaviour management.
- ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.
- always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry.
- consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved
- ensure prior to any online learning, there are clear expectations of behaviour and conduct of all parties that have been agreed in advance.

Personal Care

Assisting with personal care is routine practice for our Early Years and Infant setting and Bethany School follows guidance below from Sheffield Children's safeguarding partnership. Staff members **only** (not volunteers) provide personal care when required, following safeguarding standards, records of incidents are kept and dignity and privacy are respected.

Where regular, specialist care is required outside of this setting, an individual plan, risk assessment or EHCP will be required.

https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/assets/d504ee07/personal_care_showers_and_changing_rooms_sept_23.pdf

Physical Intervention, Use of Reasonable Force, Searching and Screening

The term 'reasonable force' covers a range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Where reasonable force is required Bethany School makes reference to
Use of reasonable force - GOV.UK
and
https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/assets/d504ee07/reasonable_force_searching_screening_and_isolation.pdf

Reasonable force is defined as using no more force than needed to control or restrain pupils either passively, i.e. standing between pupils, or to physically hold or bring a pupil under control. The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it and the degree of force is in proportion to the circumstances and seriousness of behaviour All staff can legally use reasonable force to prevent pupils hurting themselves or others, or damaging property and causing disorder. Parental consent is not required, however parents would be spoken to the same day and the incident recorded, via the usual incident reporting system, if a physical intervention has been used. Risk assessments and close monitoring of the need for reasonable force are required to maintain the welfare of pupils and staff members.

In cases where a pupil has frequently behaved disruptively, a risk assessment may point to planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans, and agreeing them with parents and carers. Efforts would be made to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force or planned restrictive physical interventions.

Appropriate adjustments and/or training may be needed for pupils with special educational needs or disability.

Photography and Images

Bethany school will implement its Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy in order to safeguard

children against abusive situations involving images.

In summary, to protect children, we will:

- Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in publications)
- Only store photos on school equipment
- Use only the child's first name with an image
- Remind parents that photos taken at school events are for personal use only (i.e. not to be shared without permission)

Sharing nude and semi-nude images – See The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) non-statutory guidance on Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (YPSI), entitled 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident - GOV.UK, our Online Safety policy and Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK

External Visitors/Contributors, Speakers

Visitors with a professional role, such as the school nurse, social worker, educational psychologist, or members of the Police will have had the appropriate vetting checks undertaken by their own organisation. Any professionals visiting the school should provide evidence of their professional role and employment details (an identity badge for example). If felt necessary, the school will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity. Records of the visit are kept in the Visitors Book.

The Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership has provided a letter of assurance regarding visiting professionals from partner agencies here.
https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/assets/d504ee07/letter_of_assurance.pdf

- Regular volunteers and employees will be subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required.
- One off contractors and volunteers for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children.
- Agency staff members attending the school should be verified as the same person that the agency has provided the vetting checks for.

A record of external visiting speakers is kept in the school office.

REPORTS AND SAFETY MATTERS

A Safeguarding audit is completed by the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Safeguarding Governor and submitted to the Sheffield safeguarding children's board annually each August/September. In addition, an annual Head Teachers report to Governors is submitted in September (Appendix 5). The Safeguarding Governor undertakes an audit throughout the year and reports to the Governing Board in order to review all aspects of safety for children and young people.

The Governor Audit and report should consider the following issues.

How does Bethany School

- Ensure high standards of provision and care for children and learners
- Actively promote equality and diversity
- Tackle bullying and discrimination immediately
- Actively promote British values
- Prevent radicalisation and extremism
- Ensure that all persons know how to complain and understand the process for doing so
- Ensure that children and learners are protected and feel safe.
- Challenge any discriminatory behaviour and give help and support to children about how to treat others with respect

- Consistently promote positive behaviour
- Ensure that all children and learners can identify a trusted adult with whom they can communicate about any concerns and know that these adults will listen to them and take their concerns seriously
- Ensure that written records are made in a timely way and held securely where adults working with children or learners are concerned about their safety or welfare. Information will be shared appropriately, lawfully and proportionately for safeguarding purposes. Consent is not required where there is a lawful basis to share information without consent in order to safeguard a child; concerns about data protection must not prevent necessary safeguarding information from being shared.
- Make clear risk assessments
- Oversee the safe use of technology by ensuring that our policies and procedures are adhered to
- Use Acceptable Use Agreements
- Carefully select and vet staff and volunteers working with children and learners according to statutory requirements.
- Check all staff using Enhanced DBS checks
- Ensure that all staff have regular Child Protection and Safeguarding Training
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Leads undertake training at two-yearly intervals, and in addition receive an update at least yearly
- Ensure that the Deputy DSL is trained to the same standards as the DSL.
- Ensure training allows the DSL to "recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online".
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSL have job descriptions, where their roles are explicit, with clear cover arrangements. DSLs will be drawn from the senior leadership team and will be the persons carrying out the day-to-day work of safeguarding and child protection. Their responsibilities will not be delegated to others. See *Appendix 1.*
- Keep the Single Central Record up to date
- Regularly review safeguarding policies and procedures to keep all children and learners safe
- Ensure the school holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

This policy will be reviewed annually
Policy Adopted by Governors: October 2026
Policy Due for Review: September 2027

Appendix 1
Keeping children safe in education part 1: information for all school and college staff, September 2026

This document can be found at the link below, in the safeguarding file in the school office, and on the notice board in the staff/parent room

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 – GOV.UK

Appendix 2
Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022
Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022

Appendix 3
The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy
https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/assets/d504ee07/designated_safeguarding_lead_and_deputy_role_incl_action_plan_sept_23.pdf

Appendix 4
Referring a safeguarding concern to Children's Social Care

APPENDIX 5

Annual Head Teacher's Report to Governors under Safeguarding Policy
September_____ - August _____

Number of safeguarding concerns reported to DSL: ____(Specify if SVSH)

Number of online safety concerns reported to DSL:_____

Number of referrals made to children's safeguarding and specialist services; include the nature of the referral, (physical/sexual/emotional/neglect):____

Number of safeguarding consultations held with the local safeguarding board or 'Thirtyone eight':____

Total number of 'children looked after' on the role throughout the year:____
Total number of children 'previously looked after' on the role:_____

Number of 'Early Help' family meetings school:_____
Number of referrals following 'Early Help' meeting:____

Number of children reported to children missing in education, including those moved into home education:____

Other comments on safeguarding issues:____

Signed: (Chair of Governors)

Date: