



Sedbergh Schools Group

<p>Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection</p> <p>Known as the SAFEGUARDING POLICY</p>	
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1 Scope of the Policy

1.1 Safeguarding arrangements during the interim merger period (June 2026)

Terrington Hall Preparatory School joined the Sedbergh Schools Group on 1st June 2026. For the remainder of the Summer Term 2026, the Schools Group will operate under transitional safeguarding arrangements. During this time, the safeguarding and child protection procedures previously implemented at each of the Schools in the Group will continue to apply to the respective staff, pupils and departments of those Schools. All safeguarding practice across the Group must remain fully compliant with current statutory guidance, including Keeping children safe in education (September 2025), and with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures and multi-agency arrangements.

Where there is any inconsistency, conflict, or difference between the Sedbergh Schools Group Safeguarding Policy, procedures, practice or guidance and those of Terrington Hall Preparatory School's existing Safeguarding Policy, staff must follow whichever policy provides the greater level of protection, oversight, or safeguarding assurance for children. In such circumstances, the higher safeguarding standard will prevail. Any uncertainty regarding the implementation of safeguarding procedures during the Summer Term 2026 must be referred without delay to the relevant School's DSL, or to the Group Director of Safeguarding, for direction.

These transitional safeguarding arrangements will be reviewed regularly throughout the Summer Term 2026, and an updated Sedbergh Schools Group Safeguarding Policy will be implemented in September 2026.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Sedbergh School, Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School, Terrington Hall and The Mulberry Bush Nursery recognise their primary responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in their care. We strive to minimise risk and prevent harm through the rigorous implementation of this Policy but are aware that vigilance is always necessary in order to reduce potential risks to children.

In formulating these policies and procedures and tailoring them to the needs of the School full account has been taken of:

1. inter-agency procedures set out by Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships;

School	Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
Sedbergh School	Westmorland and Furness
Casterton, Sedbergh Preparatory School	Westmorland and Furness
Terrington Hall Preparatory School	North Yorkshire
Mulberry Bush Nursery	Westmorland and Furness

2. statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*, 'Prevent' Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023), The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 and the Independent Schools Inspectorate Handbook including National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2022). Further relevant legislation which is referred to within these documents is listed in [Appendix 3](#). Safeguarding within the EYFS

setting is determined by the EYFS (welfare requirements) Regulations 2024, Section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006.

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors working for and on behalf of the Schools Group. It is available to parents on individual Schools' websites and by request.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, 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.

(KCSIE 2025)

All children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or racial heritage, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or identity. Sedbergh Schools Group recognises its legal duty to work with and in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and the Governing Body acknowledges its collective responsibility to ensure that safeguarding duties are carried out carefully, thoroughly and in accordance with its obligations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

This responsibility is underpinned by the following aims:

- a. to effectively promote the welfare of children;
- b. to protect children from harm (maltreatment) and to understand the many and varied definitions of harm;
- c. to prevent impairment of children's health and development;
- d. to ensure children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- e. to take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes;
- f. to be a dynamic document able to respond to changing events and circumstances.

1.2 Reporting and Communication

Schools will develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences. In addition, the School will adhere to local and inter-agency procedures to report Safeguarding issues, without the need for parental consent, by:

- a. Reporting matters which come to its notice through observation, information or disclosure to children's services in the relevant LSCP (in the case of concerns about children), the LADO (in the case of concerns about staff/volunteer conduct towards children and/or the Police where it is considered that a criminal offence may have been committed. Note: In the absence of designated safeguarding officers, anybody can make a referral by making contact with the relevant local authority.

- b. Notifying Children’s Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is in receipt of a child protection plan, or absent from School without explanation.
- c. Following procedures set out in this Policy where an allegation is made against a member of staff, including agency staff. These procedures deal with allegations against visitors, volunteers, the Executive Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as well as staff.
- d. Reporting to Ofsted, the Independent Schools Inspectorate and the Charity Commission on Serious Incidents of any serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Ofsted registered providers must also inform Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with the requirement commits an offence. (EYFS welfare requirement 2.8.)
- e. Notifying the DBS (and the TRA where appropriate) within one month of any person leaving the School (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.

[For the purposes of this section, ceasing to use a person’s services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. It is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence. ‘Compromise agreements’ cannot apply in this connection, or where the individual refuses to cooperate with an investigation. Proprietors of independent schools have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but they do not have to find it from other sources.

Independent schools are also under a duty to consider making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, and should make reference to this in their policies. The reasons such an order would be considered are: “unacceptable professional conduct”, “conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute” or a “conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence”. Further guidance is published on the TRA website.]

- f. Ensuring, where necessary, that records are passed on to the receiving school if a pupil transfers or where this is not known, reporting the child as ‘missing in education’.

The central principle of WT 2023 is the requirement that schools and agencies work together in order to identify children at risk and protect them from harm. In this respect, the welfare of the child is paramount, meaning that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations will not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. However, this does not negate the right of the individual to be protected when an

allegation has been made and is being investigated, during which time every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

1.3 Recording

Records are essential in order to identify patterns, explain decision-making and promote accountability. The School will:

- a. keep electronic chronological records of concerns about children using CPOMS. This will include concerns which fall below a referral threshold to ensure early indicators or emerging patterns of possible harm can be identified, and preventive measures implemented.
- b. ensure that any written records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

The School is also mindful of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. All organisations working with children (including all schools) have been directed to preserve all documents relating to the care of children so that they are available for inspection should they need to be. In light of the Inquiry the School has suspended its routine destruction of pupil and staff files and old safeguarding policies.

2 Roles, Responsibilities and Duties

2.1 Introduction

Child Protection is one very important aspect of Safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. The term 'significant harm' was defined by The Children Act of 1989 as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children, and gives Local Authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Whilst there are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm, the overriding consideration is that the physical and mental health and welfare of a child is being avoidably impaired or prevented, or the child is being ill-treated. Specifically, the following factors are used by the Designated Safeguarding Team in assessing any case. Close liaison will also take place with Children's Services in order to obtain advice and guidance:

- a. The degree and extent of harm.
- b. The duration and frequency of abuse and neglect.
- c. The extent of premeditation.
- d. The presence and degree of threat, coercion, sadism.
- e. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning), but often, it is the consequence of a compilation of significant events (both acute and long-standing) which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. (WT 2023).

The School is also aware of other important factors which can impinge on the welfare of children and will always take into account specific issues such as Female Genital Mutilation, domestic abuse (including where children may see, hear or experience its effects), substance

misuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, honour-based violence, upskirting or child-on-child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment) and bullying. These issues are only examples of the types of harm that might befall children. Consequently the School will always evaluate any emerging themes depending on the School demography, the local community and any emerging national issues.

Staff should be clear that they must not make judgements or carry out investigations. The only agencies that can carry out investigations are those authorised to do so under the law. This includes Children's Services (and LADO), or the police. The NSPCC is also a child protection agency but does not carry out investigations and will pass any information to Children's Services of the local authority. The information in these procedures must be read in the context of the specific advice offered herein, in terms of how to act in cases where safeguarding and/or child protection issues are suspected.

2.2 Responsibilities of all Staff (and where specified, volunteers)

All staff and volunteers must attend safeguarding training upon request, and at least annually or where specific updates are required, such as when there are changes to statutory guidance. Such updates and changes will be communicated to colleagues through School email and Common Room meetings, and reiterated at the next whole-School INSET opportunity.

- a. All staff and volunteers who work with children are trained at least annually in accordance with the requirements of the Westmorland & Furness Safeguarding Children's Partnership, and must read Part 1 of KCSIE 2025 including Annex A and subsequently, every time that document is updated. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should also read Annex B, which contains additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. All staff must ensure their full understanding and sign a declaration to confirm that they have read and understood that document. The School will offer support to staff whose first language is not English.
- b. The School may wish to take additional steps to satisfy itself that any member of staff, supply/agency staff or volunteer has understood Part 1 of KCSIE 2024 including Annex A and, where relevant, Annex B, and their individual responsibilities.
- c. All new staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership, are provided with induction training that includes:
 - i. the School's Safeguarding Policy
 - ii. the Staff Code of Conduct
 - iii. Whistleblowing Policy
 - iii. the identity of the members of the Designated Safeguarding Team, including the DSLs and Deputy DSLs
 - iv. a copy of or link to Part 1 of KCSIE 2025 including Annex A
 - v. Pupil Behaviour Policy
 - vi. Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education (CME)
- d. Training will include guidance on the duties of staff and volunteers in relation to both children in need of additional help and support and children at risk of harm. Training will include explicit teaching in the definition and signs of sexual abuse, as well as the actions to be taken in the event of a report or disclosure of sexual harassment or sexual abuse.

- e. Staff development training will also include training on online safety and anti-radicalisation 'Prevent' training (including the online general awareness training module on the 'Channel' process).

In order to protect pupils in its care, the School will maintain an ongoing assessment of the appropriate level and focus for staff training and responsiveness to specific safeguarding concerns such as radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation female genital mutilation, cyberbullying and mental health. It will also remain alert to any specific themes that may emerge either locally or nationally and on which additional training is required.

All staff and volunteers are required to follow the procedures outlined within this policy, in particular the steps outlined in Appendix 2 which provide guidance about what to do if you have Safeguarding concerns about any child.

Sedbergh School is committed to promoting an open and transparent culture in which any concerns about any adult(s) working in or on behalf of the School (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Any member of staff who has a concern of this nature must consult and follow the procedures for addressing low-level concerns, complaints and allegations, which may be found in Section 4.7.3 of this policy.

Staff who are pet owners should consider carefully the risk that an animal may present to pupils and other employees, or the discomfort that a pet may cause to someone who dislikes particular animals. It is always the responsibility of the owner to manage the animal which should never be allowed on site in an uncontrolled manner. Dogs must never be allowed on playing fields because of the health risk that fouling represents.

Staff who may wish to keep a pet in School accommodation should consult their line manager about the suitability of such a decision including the appropriateness of the breed before bringing it on site or into School accommodation. The School will not allow breeds of dog identified as "dangerous" to be brought onto site or to be kept in School accommodation and will make a Safeguarding referral of any injury to a pupil which is caused by any pet.

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

This is an inescapable, personal and professional responsibility held by all staff for the promotion of welfare and protection of children from harm.

2.3 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and supporting personnel

The School has appointed Dr Jenny Burns as Director of Safeguarding and Senior School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to be responsible for matters relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection in the School and to represent Safeguarding on the Senior Management Team.

Mr Nick Goligher has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead with specific responsibility for safeguarding at Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School.

Mrs Rachel I'Anson has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead with specific responsibility for safeguarding at Terrington Hall Prep School.

The DSLs will be trained regularly and to an appropriate level in:

- a. The role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding and Child Protection (Level 3)
- b. 'Prevent' training (Home Office certificated course)
- c. inter-agency protocols
- d. supporting children in need
- e. children at risk of radicalisation

The School role description of the DSL and DDSL is set out in [Appendix 4](#) of this document. The statutory responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Annex B of KCSIE 2025 and reproduced in [Appendix 5](#) of this policy.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads have been appointed in:

Sedbergh Senior School
Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School
Terrington Hall Preparatory School
The Mulberry Bush Nursery

At all times of the year either a DSL, Deputy DSL or a member of SMT will be contactable for any safeguarding issues, via the relevant School Office.

The Headmaster and Senior Deputy Heads of the senior school and Heads of the prep schools are trained to Safeguarding Level 3, in Safer Recruitment and have completed online 'Channel' training.

The Governor with special responsibility for Safeguarding is Revd Mat Ineson.

The names and contact details of these adults with responsibility for Safeguarding are set out in [Appendix 1](#).

The responsibilities of the Director of Safeguarding and DSLs within the Sedbergh Schools Group are:

- a. to be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, external agencies and any other in all matters of Safeguarding.
- b. to be the primary communicator with the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), Westmorland & Furness Council's Children's Services, WFSCP and the Police on matters of Safeguarding. Communication will take place within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. All records will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- c. to maintain all Safeguarding records on CPOMS or in secure and confidential locations.
- d. to attend any meetings pertaining to an incident.
- e. to co-ordinate information for an Early Help Assessment and Referrals to external agencies.
- f. To maintain copies of current Safeguarding legislation (including Prevent Duty), national and relevant local guidance and advisory documents and be conversant with these.
- g. to ensure the School is compliant with Safeguarding and Child Protection legislation and local requirements and to co-ordinate the safeguarding procedures in the School.
- h. to liaise with the appropriate agencies within the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- i. to review incidents on a termly basis in order to determine the emergence of patterns and to advise the Executive Leadership Team and Governing Body on the perceived risks of harm to individuals or groups of pupils.
- j. To work with the Safeguarding Governor to undertake a full review of all aspects of Safeguarding and Child Protection in accordance with Part 8 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 to ensure that they comply with the requirements and to enable the DSLs to provide a comprehensive written report for the Governing Body.

2.3.1 Training Responsibilities of the Director of Safeguarding

In order to discharge these responsibilities the Director of Safeguarding will arrange or provide training to all staff, Governors, volunteers and visitors working for and on behalf of the School. Through the Director of Safeguarding, the School undertakes to provide training in accordance with local authority recommendations and in particular:

- a. to ensure that all DDSLs receive training to Level 3, including inter-agency working, at two yearly intervals. This training covers inter-agency working, participation in child-protection case conferences, supporting children in need, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children.
- b. to ensure all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children effectively and that this is kept up to date by regular refresher training.
- c. to ensure all staff who work with children know how to access and be conversant with the School's safeguarding procedures, including how to manage reports or concerns about child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- d. to ensure that all staff and volunteers are provided with Induction Training regarding the School's arrangements for safeguarding children within seven working days of their commencement of work via the Director of People. This training will include provision of this document, the Staff Code of Conduct, the Whistleblowing Policy, the name and contact details of the relevant DSL and the requirement that they read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025: information for all school and college staff' (Part 1; all staff), KCSiE Annex B (staff in leadership positions and those who work directly with children) and make an electronic record to indicate that they have done so.
- e. understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as Early Help Assessments.

- f. have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute effectively to these when required to do so.

2.3.2 Effective implementation of the roles of Director of Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Lead

In order to ensure that safeguarding duties are carried out effectively, the School will ensure that:

- a. sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Director of Safeguarding and DSLs to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussion and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- b. all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regard to safeguarding children. The Schools Group undertakes to treat such concerns sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.

2.3.3 Action and Referrals by the Designated Safeguarding Leads

The School, through the DSLs, undertakes:

- a. to develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services.
- b. to decide upon the appropriate level of response to specific concerns about a child, whilst operating within the legislative framework and recommended guidance in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and thresholds. Further considerations will include:
 - i. immediate safety of pupil(s), staff or the public
 - ii. welfare implications for all involved
 - iii. the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint
 - iv. the child's wishes or feelings when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children by ensuring children are able to express their views and give feedback.
 - v. duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.
- c. **that any likelihood of a serious criminal offence, including the identification of illegal terrorist-related activity, will always be referred to the relevant safeguarding hub or the Police without further investigation within the School.**
- d. to consult with Children's Services or other appropriate professionals if there is doubt about whether a referral should be made.
- e. to make an immediate referral to children's services in the event that a child is at risk and that a multi-agency referral form will be completed and sent to children's services within 24 hours.
- f. to make any necessary referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO has overall responsibility for the management of allegations of abuse by adults who work with Children, provides advice and guidance, liaises with the Police, Social Care Teams, Regulatory Bodies such as Ofsted and other organisations as needed and ensures a consistent, fair and thorough process for both child and adult. The role of the LADO is set out in more detail in [Appendix 4](#).

- g. to co-operate with the 'Channel' Panel and the Police to provide relevant information so that each can effectively carry out its functions to determine whether an individual is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The School will respond to requests for information from the police promptly and in any event within five to ten working days.
- h. to submit reports and ensure the School's attendance at child protection conferences.
- i. to contribute to decision making and delivery of actions planned to safeguard the child.
- j. to ensure that the School effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns, including notifying Children's Services when there is an unexplained absence of more than two days for a child who is the subject of a child protection plan.
- k. to ensure that accurate safeguarding records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file and are passed on securely should the child transfer to a new educational provider.
- l. to notify children's services of any serious incident, injury or death of any child while in the care of the School, and to act upon any advice from those agencies. Contact details of the foregoing Agency may be found in [Appendix 1](#).

2.3.4 Alternative to the Designated Safeguarding Leads

If the relevant DSL is unavailable, their duties will be carried out by a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance, and, in their absence, by the Head.

In the same way, if a DDSL is absent within one part of the School, another DDSL will be authorised to deal with matters in the relevant School.

2.4 Roles in EYFS

There are DDSLs with specific responsibility for safeguarding in EYFS settings. Names and contact details are set out in [Appendix 1](#). They will inform the DSL of any serious allegations of harm or abuse, by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises. The DSL will follow the foregoing procedures in respect of these allegations.

The EYFS Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy must ensure that all statutory EYFS safeguarding requirements are met, including:

- The maintenance of statutory staff:child ratios (Under 2s: 1:3; Age 2: 1:5; Age 3+: 1:8 or 1:13 with QTS/EYPS).
- The operation of the key person system, ensuring every child has an identified key person to support their emotional wellbeing and communication with parents.
- The monitoring of compliance with the Paediatric First Aid (PFA) requirement: at least one person with a full 12-hour PFA certificate present on site and on outings at all times. Certificates must be renewed every 3 years, and parents.
- Ensuring that all staff who qualified after June 2016 are PFA trained in order to be counted in ratio as of September 2025, and ensuring that there is a staff member qualified in PFA present and in direct contact with the children at all snack and meal times.

- Awareness of staff suitability checks, including disqualification checks, carried out by the People Team, and notification to Ofsted within 14 days where a staff member's suitability may be compromised.

As a registered EYFS establishment the School has a responsibility to report any abuse to Ofsted within 14 days of awareness of an incident. Ofsted can be contacted in three ways.

- a. Telephone: 0300 123 1231 (Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm)
- b. Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- c. Letter: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

All policies relating specifically to The Mulberry Bush Nursery may be found on the Sedbergh School Hub and are available on request.

2.5 Role of Governors

The Governing Body appoints a Designated Governor to have an overview of this area but recognise that the Safeguarding duties remain the responsibility of the whole Governing Body, including the Chair of Governors. The Governing body also recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. Opportunity will therefore be provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and policy.

The role description of the Designated Governor is found in [Appendix 4](#). The responsibilities of the Designated Governor include:

- a. ensuring that the School is adhering to current Statutory legislation, Local Authority, and inter-agency procedures.
- b. ensuring that the School has Policies and Procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection which are known to all staff and governors and in accordance with Statutory legislation, Local Authority, and inter-agency procedures and that these are made available to all parents.
- c. Working with the Director of Safeguarding and the Governing Body to carry out an annual review and audit to judge the efficiency with which the procedures have been implemented and to ensure that any deficiencies are remedied immediately.
- d. The submission of any annual reports required by the Local Authority or agencies.

3 Risks and Indicators

3.1 Abuse and Neglect

All School staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. In accordance with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and KCSIE 2025, all should be aware of:

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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via

the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Particular types of abuse include:

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

Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

The School recognises the different forms of abuse that can take place and makes it clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up" or "just having a laugh".

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's mental or physical 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 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.

Domestic Abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual,

financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of these forms of domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development, and ability to learn.

3.2 Specific types of abuse

In addition to these general types of abuse, the School recognises that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour Based Violence (HBV), Up-skirting and Radicalisation are types of abuse which can happen in our community. All staff should be aware of the information on these areas.

3.2.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threat of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Harmful sexual behaviour (as defined by the NSPCC) includes:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases
- inappropriate touching
- using sexual violence or threats
- full penetrative sex with other children or adults.

Children and young people who develop harmful sexual behaviour can harm themselves and others.

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

KCSIE 2025 provides details of “[Shore Space](#)”, an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour, and offers a confidential chat service supporting young people who are concerned about their own or someone else’s sexual thoughts and behaviour.

Signs of CSE may include:

- a. Unexplained gifts and new possessions
- b. Association with other young people involved in CSE
- c. Children who suffer STI
- d. Children who suffer changes in emotional well-being
- e. Children who go missing for periods of time, regularly come home late and miss education.

However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

KCSIE 2025 states that, when considering HSB (harmful sexual behaviour) both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

3.2.2. Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered maltreatment, 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 mental health concern about a child that is also potentially a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken. Involvement of both the relevant DSL and a medical professional should be sought (ordinarily through the duty nurse phone number or in an emergency, by calling 999).

3.2.3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in Annex B of the Multi agency Statutory Guidance of Female Genital Mutilation April 2020. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

All staff must be aware of the requirement for teachers to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with one of the DSLs and involve Children's Social Care as appropriate.

If the teacher is unsure whether this reporting duty applies, they must refer the matter to the DSL in accordance with this policy. See the Home Office guidance *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information (January 2020)* for further details about the duty.

3.2.4 Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from School, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice is provided in the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and its 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

3.3 Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. The School operates IT systems which filter-out extreme and radical websites and online radicalisation and incitement. The School recognises that Radicalisation and Extremism can be religious, political or focused around single issue groups. Whilst the overall risk is low in relative terms, awareness and vigilance are expected at all times, and staff receive on-going training and support, including Guidance about Visiting Speakers (see [Appendix 6](#)) and the importance of raising pupil awareness. Staff are referred to the School anti-radicalisation "Prevent Policy". In EYFS settings staff must be aware of the need to 'look beyond the setting' and to be sensitive to the behaviours of young children.

3.4 Further Specific Safeguarding Risks and threats of abuse

Children and young people may also be subject to specific threats to their safety. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example information for schools and colleges can be found on the TES website and NSPCC website. Staff in schools and colleges can also access guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website and resources listed in [Appendix 3](#):

- a. child missing from education, home or care
- b. bullying including cyberbullying
- c. domestic violence
- d. drugs
- e. fabricated or induced illness

- f. faith abuse
- g. forced marriage
- h. gangs and youth violence
- i. gender-based violence
- j. violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- k. mental health
- l. private fostering
- m. sexting
- n. teenage relationship abuse
- o. trafficking
- p. upskirting
- q. harmful online challenges and hoaxes

Children may also find themselves at greater risk of safeguarding concerns if they experience:

- child abduction or the threat thereof
- community safety incidents
- the court system
- family members in prison
- cybercrime
- homelessness

3.5 Sexting

Sexting can be defined as images or videos generated:

- a. by children under the age of 18 or,
- b. of children under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature or are indecent.

It is important to be aware that young people involved in sharing sexual videos and pictures may be committing a criminal offence. Specifically, crimes involving indecent photographs (including pseudo images, ie digitally-manipulated or computer-generated representations that appear to be real but are fictional or artificially created) of a person under 18 years of age fall under Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1978 and Section 160 Criminal Justice Act 1998. Under this legislation it is a crime to:

- a. take an indecent photograph or allow an indecent photograph to be taken;
- b. make an indecent photograph (this includes downloading or opening an image that has been sent via email);
- c. distribute or show such an email;
- d. possess with the intention of distributing images;
- e. advertise; and
- f. possess such images.

Any decision to charge individuals for such offences is a matter for the Crown Prosecution Service, and whilst it is unlikely to be considered in the public interest to prosecute children, young people need to be aware that they may be breaking the law.

Staff should respond to any disclosure relating to sexting in the same way they would in any other safeguarding disclosure (See [Appendix 2](#)). However, the following points should also be noted:

Staff may confiscate an electronic device if they think there is good reason for doing so (see Behaviour Policy), however any search of that device should be conducted by a DSL, Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral), or a Prep School Head. Material should not be moved from one device to another (eg via email), printed out or saved.

An image that has been shared across a personal mobile device should not be viewed unless there is a clear reason to do so (such as a belief that a young person is at risk of physical or emotional harm).

If indecent images of a child are found, the DSL will agree a course of action, which will include some or all of the following:

- a. Store the device securely
- b. Assess the risk to the young person
- c. Contact the police (if appropriate)
- d. Make a referral if needed
- e. Put the necessary safeguards in place for the pupil (which may include counselling)
- f. Inform parents and/or carers about the incident and how it is being managed (although this will depend on the nature of the image and the family circumstances of the young person).

New guidance has been issued to schools on how police may respond to allegations of sexting. Advice for schools can be found here:

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)

3.6 Children missing from education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or CSE. Staff should follow the School's Pupil Supervision Policy (Missing Pupil Search Protocol) for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify these risks and prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

3.7 Signs of abuse and neglect

Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to:

- a. the pupil says he/she has been abused or asks a question or makes a comment which gives rise to that inference.
- b. there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury, the injury is unusual in kind or location or there have been a number of injuries where there is a pattern to the injuries. This includes bruises in odd places, marks of slapping, biting, gripping, cuts in odd places and any unexplained injury which is considered to be of such severity that the child requires immediate medical treatment (ie Medical Centre or A&E).

- c. the pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour, or there is a sudden or significant change in the pupil's behaviour.
- d. emotional isolation, an inability to sleep, thumb-sucking at an advanced age, "frozen watchfulness".
- e. the pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons or is reluctant to participate in PE, games or swimming.
- f. the pupil's development is delayed.
- g. the pupil appears neglected, eg dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed, shows marked weight fluctuations or there is a significant deterioration in the child's general well-being.
- h. the pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or carers.
- i. inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with children, for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- j. mental health deterioration

Staff should remember that these symptoms are possible signs and do not automatically mean that abuse has taken or is taking place; there may be other explanations. Equally, staff should be aware that children who have been abused or have experienced sexual violence may present with a very wide range of responses to their experience. In most cases it will be appropriate for staff to discuss observations with the pupil's Housemaster or Housemistress, or Form Tutor in the prep school, to decide whether it should be referred to a DSL. All concerns about a child's wellbeing should be recorded on CPOMS.

3.7.1 Further information may be found at the following:

NSPCC Child Protection factsheet

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects>

3.8 Children at Risk and Children in Need

It is important to distinguish between children who have suffered, or are likely to suffer significant harm, and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. This is the distinction between Children at Risk and Children in Need.

Children at Risk should be reported to the relevant local authority's children's services, or in the case of Radicalisation, Channel, immediately. In the case of FGM, it is mandatory for the teacher to contact the Police.

In cases where it is felt the child requires assistance from other agencies that support pupils, The School will liaise with these agencies and inter-agency assessment using local processes such as the Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Child approach as appropriate.

Please be aware of the following:

- a. Concerns or a Child in Need require immediate action to the DSL for early help, pastoral support or children's social care, as appropriate.

- b. A child at risk requires immediate action ideally to the DSL in the first instance who can pass on to children's social care or the police if a perceived crime has been committed. This must happen as soon as is practically possible and always within the 24-hour referral window.
- c. Referrals can be made directly by any member of staff.

3.8.2 Children who need a Social Worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances. A child's experience of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behavior and mental health.

The School keeps a record of those pupils who have allocated social workers and necessary extra pastoral support is in place for each of these children.

3.8.3 Thresholds for Support

Each child or young person has different needs and will need different support in order to ensure their needs are met and they meet their potential in life and thrive.

Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships' threshold guidance to assist professionals in identifying and assessing where a child or young person lies on this spectrum and understanding the subsequent actions expected of them at each level in order to ensure that the child's needs are met may be found here:

Westmorland and Furness: [Cumbria Threshold Guidance](#).

North Yorkshire: [Framework for Decision Making](#)

4 Safeguarding Procedures

4.1 Introduction

Safeguarding procedures are tightly controlled in order to ensure the best outcome for all concerned. Those that follow are detailed requirements which should be adhered to in all foreseeable circumstances. In the event that a member of staff believes that circumstances warrant an alternative response, they should discuss it with the DSL in advance of committing to, or enacting it.

In the event that the DSL or DDSL and the Head of the relevant School are unavailable, anybody can make a referral by making contact with the appropriate safeguarding hub:

- Westmorland & Furness (Tel: 0300 373 2724) or [How to report a concern](#)
- North Yorkshire (Tel: 0300 131 2 131) or [Universal-Referral-Form-Feb-2024-3.doc](#)

Professionals from the Police, Health agencies, Children's Social Care and Youth Justice Services work together to ensure high quality and proportionate support is offered at the earliest opportunity to children, young people and their families. The multi-agency safeguarding hub will also offer advice to agencies and professionals, for example where they:

- a. are not sure at which level the child is within the definition of 'need', as defined by the Multi Agency Threshold Guidance;
- b. feel they would benefit from advice whilst undertaking an Early Help Assessment;
- c. need guidance and consultation in respect of a child with whom they are working, having completed an Early Help Assessment which has identified the child's needs but consider that insufficient progress is being made in addressing these needs.

4.2 Safer Recruiting

The Recruitment, selection and vetting procedures of the School are outlined in the Recruitment & Selection Policy held by the Director of People and follows guidelines given in the safer recruitment training developed by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

The School practices safer recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff (engaged in regulated or non-regulated activities), supply staff and volunteers (including members of the Governing Body and staff employed by another organisation) to work with children and young people in accordance with the guidance given in KCSIE 2025 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 (as amended). This ensures due regard to the protection of our children by ensuring the eligibility and suitability of all staff before appointment and that the School is compliant with the Independent School Standards Regulations, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Director of People ensures that DBS checks/Vetting and Barring procedures are followed for the appointment of all staff and assurance is obtained that appropriate safeguarding checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation who will work with our pupils. This includes a medical questionnaire, references and qualification checks as outlined in the recruitment policy. Checks also include Prohibition from teaching (applies to teachers, instructors and coaches appointed since May 2012) and Prohibition from Management and Leadership (applies to the Executive Head, members of the SLT/SMT, those in senior positions (as defined by HR) and Governors appointed since August 2015).

In addition to the Director of People and other members of the People Team, the Heads of all Schools in the Group, the Director of Safeguarding, and the DSLs are all trained in Safer Recruitment. Pre-approved Safer Recruitment questions form part of all formal interview procedures.

Appropriate childcare disqualification checks are carried out in line with Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006. This is carried out at recruitment stage by the People Team.

Staff should note that DBS checks are required for recruitment of volunteers who have unsupervised contact with children. The School is registered with the DBS update service.

4.3 Support for Children

The Schools Group recognises that:

- a. A child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- b. A child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated and may feel self-blame.

- c. School may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- d. Research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal, to aggression or withdrawal.
- d. A child may not feel ready or know how to tell an adult that they are being abused.
- e. A child may not be aware that he/she has been abused or maltreated.

Schools will support all pupils by:

- a. Listening to children's wishes and feelings when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children.
- b. Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- c. Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the School, and ensuring that all children, including those who may be LGBTQ+, have a trusted adult in School with whom they may be open.
- d. Liaising and working closely together with all other support agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- e. Notifying Children's Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
- f. Providing continuing support to a pupil, about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the School (other than at the end of Y13) by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can provide additional safeguarding challenges. The School recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children and will take steps to ensure that the appropriate level of attention is given to this group. This can include:

- a. assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's impairment without further exploration;
- b. children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- c. communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

4.4 Support and Guidance for Staff

Teachers are expected to fulfil many roles in and out of the classroom and will work with large and small groups of pupils. In addition, the teacher may often find themselves 'in loco parentis'. Particular care must be taken when working with pupils on a one-to-one basis (such as individual lessons in performing arts and sports).

The law is weighted in favour of the child, applying a burden on staff to safeguard children's welfare and providing for the child's protection rather than protecting the adult. Because of the requirement for schools and agencies to share information about allegations, there is little anonymity once an allegation has been made, even if it turns out to be false in the end. The burden of evidence is to disprove rather than prove the allegation. Given the risk of false alarms and even deliberate hoaxes on the part of pupils, staff are advised to think carefully about the setting and nature of their varied relationships with their pupils so as not to lay themselves open to undue suspicion or accusation. (See Staff Code of Conduct.)

Coping with concerns about the possible abuse of a child can be very stressful for all involved, however the first responsibility is to the child. The member of staff/volunteer should therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the relevant Senior Deputy Head or relevant Prep School Head.

Pastoral interaction between teachers and pupils is an intrinsic part of the School's educational provision. The following points are important to bear in mind:

If engaging with pupils in a non-public setting, it is prudent to take some of the following steps:

- a. meet with at least two pupils at any one time
- b. advise Housemaster, Housemistress or relevant Prep School Head in advance
- c. keep the door open

Inappropriate physical contact should be avoided and teachers should be particularly aware of the risk of over-familiarity and physical contact. However, this does not remove the need for occasional contact and the following is a (non-exhaustive) list of examples of appropriate physical contact and 'non-abusive' actions:

- a. Applying restraint to prevent a pupil self-harming or harming another person.
- b. Removing, with reasonable force, potentially dangerous items from a pupil's possession, or a pupil from a dangerous location.
- c. Upon obtaining permission from the pupil, an instrumental teacher may at times need to aid the pupil in the playing of an instrument or a sports coach demonstrate a body position or skill.
- d. Shepherding pupils, for example with a hand on back or shoulder.
- e. Comforting, for example with a hand on shoulder, back or arm; and
- f. Securing attention by tapping a pupil's shoulder.

It is always unacceptable to harm a pupil.

4.5 Action where abuse may have been caused outside School

Suspicion or knowledge of abuse must be reported immediately to the DSL who will take action in accordance with this policy. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to the relevant department of children's services immediately.

4.5.1 Action by Staff who have concerns about a child

Staff who notice unexplained indicators of abuse (see Section 3.7) or who are told anything significant related to child protection by another pupil, must report their concerns immediately to the DSL or DDSL who will determine what action to take according to this policy. If a member of staff has concerns about any pupil which may indicate any type of abuse they must discuss them with the relevant DSL or DDSL immediately. It is better to act on such signs early and thereby minimise risk to any child.

4.5.2 Action where abuse is reported

Any adult to whom abuse is reported by a pupil has a duty to listen to the pupil, to provide reassurance, not ask leading questions, not guarantee confidentiality and subsequently to record the pupil's statements.

Detailed guidance can be found in Appendix 2 “What to do if a child makes a Disclosure”. All staff are particularly reminded:

- a. Teachers must report to the police known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) in under 18s.
- b. Normal referral processes must be used when there are concerns about children who may be drawn into terrorism.

4.6 Action where abuse may be child-on-child

It is important to recognise that abuse may be perpetrated by one, or several pupils on one or more pupils. Suspicion or knowledge of such abuse must be reported immediately to the DSL where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering harm. The DSL will take action in accordance with this policy which may include referral to local agencies. It should be noted that in these circumstances the alleged victim and alleged perpetrators will be regarded as being in need of help and support and treated accordingly. (Please see the School’s Counter-Bullying Policy.) Action regarding the prevention of child-on-child abuse as well as statutory response to reported incidents forms a critical part of staff training and pupil/parent understanding.

It is also important to distinguish between abuse and bullying or adolescent behaviour. The School uses a Threshold Analysis document to aid it in making this decision. Key determinants in this document include:

- a. Risk of, or actual physical or mental harm
- b. Inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- c. Violent, threatening and aggressive behaviour
- d. Disparity of age in cases of child-on-child incidents
- e. Involvement of adults
- f. Degree of vulnerability
- g. Use of alcohol, illicit substances or prescription medicine
- h. The inappropriate use of digital media
- i. Any potentially criminal act will be referred to the local safeguarding hub or the Police.

KCSIE 2025 states that governing bodies should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare, including an effective child protection policy which reflects the School’s approach to child-on-child abuse.

Proactive Procedures

The following procedures are employed to foster a supportive and safe environment, as well as positive relationships of trust, and thereby to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse and facilitate early intervention in safeguarding concerns.

- i. Children are nurtured to become tolerant and law-abiding citizens with a good understanding of right and wrong. The School’s values of humility, ambition, resilience and, above all, kindness, encourage pupils to be respectful of the needs and vulnerabilities of others, and to behave at all times with consideration and empathy towards their child’s.

- ii. Through safeguarding training and updates, staff, volunteers and senior pupils are expected to be proactive by setting a good example and positively contributing to an environment in which people are respected and listened to. It is made clear that it is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and senior pupils to challenge low-level behaviours (such as the use of sexist, homophobic or racist or sexualised language) which, if ignored or normalised, can lead to a culture in which abuse can occur.
- iii. Children are encouraged, through Assemblies, PSHE and RSE lessons, House and Tutor group activities, as well as through component parts of subject-specific schemes of work, to consider different points of view, to analyse and critically evaluate their own and others' beliefs, and to be tolerant and respectful in their interactions with others.
- iv. The Schools Group's boarding nature and associated pastoral structure (involving Tutors, Housemasters/mistresses, resident staff, the Chaplain, counter-bullying team, Heads of Houses and School Prefects, as well as members of the senior management team with specific pastoral and safeguarding responsibilities) provides a strong framework for getting to know pupils very well such that concerns are observed, shared and acted upon swiftly.
- v. All senior school pupils are able to report concerns anonymously using a QR code which is published across the School campuses.
- vi. Through the PSHE and RSE programme, outside speakers and organisations regularly visit to provide additional information, training and support for staff, pupils and parents on issues of particular concern or importance. (See PSHE Policy and RSE Policy)
- vii. In addressing pastoral and safeguarding concerns, including child-on-child abuse, conflict and disagreement, children are encouraged and helped to manage their emotions and behaviour calmly and reflectively. Housemasters/mistresses and the counter-bullying team spend time with children on a one-to-one or small group basis to address issues of bullying, and there is a strong focus on building and, where necessary, restoring positive relationships. In cases of conflict between pupils, or when an allegation of bullying or child-on-child abuse is made, pastoral monitoring and support are offered to all parties: the child(ren) making the allegation, the child(ren) accused of perpetrating the behaviour, and, where appropriate, the wider child group.
- viii. Pupils are valued, included and very visible, and changes in patterns of behaviour, or emerging unhealthy attitudes or actions connected with but not limited to safeguarding concerns (such as grooming, exploitation, radicalisation or harassment) are quickly identified and subject to early intervention.

The document also states it is most important to ensure opportunities of seeking the voice of the child are heard. In the Sedbergh Schools Group, children's views are sought through the Pupil Voice structure, which includes calendared meetings and regular surveys, and they are invited to suggest future items for PSHE/RSE sessions and other School activities. Anonymous reporting is available to all pupils who may wish to share a concern.

It is important to be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. Often there is a gendered nature to child-on-child abuse and it is statistically more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators; however all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The Schools Group recognises that such abuse may take place within intimate personal relationships between pupils.

This is most likely, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber bullying),

- physical abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm),
- sexual violence (such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault),
- sexual harassment (such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, online sexual harassment, which may be stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse),
- Upskirting (which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence and anyone of any gender can be a victim),
- prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- initiation-type violence and rituals and
- sexting.

Such abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up" and will be treated as a safeguarding issue where it is reasonable to suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

All children involved whether victim or perpetrator will be treated "at risk" and supported. All staff should be alert to the well-being of pupils and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by child-on-child abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

Signs that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include:

- failing to attend School, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out School related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected;
- physical injuries;
- experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing;
- becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much;
- broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse;
- changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age; and
- abusive behaviour towards others.

The above list is by no means exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse. The behaviour that children present with will depend on their particular circumstances, and it is essential that all staff remain alert to the fact that child-on-child abuse may still be happening even when cases are not reported. Rather than checking behaviour against a list, staff are trained to be alert to behaviour that might cause concerns, to think about what the behaviour might signify, to encourage children to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour, and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents so that the cause(s) of their behaviour can be investigated. Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being

harmed or abused) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.

The power dynamic that can exist between children is also very important when identifying and responding to their behaviour: in all cases of child-on-child abuse, a power imbalance will exist within the relationship. This inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the child responsible for the abuse and the child being abused. It may, for example, be the result of their relative social or economic status. Equally, while children who abuse may have power over those who they are abusing, they may be simultaneously powerless to others.

4.6.3 If it is decided, in line with the School's Counter-Bullying Policy, that an incident should be treated as a Child Protection concern (i.e. where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm), the School will discuss the matter with the appropriate local authority officer.

4.6.4 Where an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made the School may seek advice from Children's Services on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved. This will include the pupil or pupils accused of abuse who will be treated as being at risk alongside the victim.

Appropriate safeguarding procedures in accordance with this Policy will be followed and subsequent actions may include:

- a. The DSL or other senior staff may meet with the child to gain further insight into the matter.
- b. Provision of a medical examination or treatment for the pupil, if appropriate.
- c. Protect the pupil(s) who have been the victims of alleged abuse. This may include the suspension of the pupil(s) against whom an allegation of abuse has been made. The School's Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions Policy will apply.
- d. To take steps to protect the informing pupil as appropriate, ensuring that the pupil is aware that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed but that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know, and the child will know who these people are. If the allegation involves abuse by other pupils, it is likely that the pupils against whom the allegation has been made will need to be told.
- e. The DSL or other senior staff may meet with any pupil(s) against whom an allegation has been made to gain further insight and understanding of the matter and to provide information to support these pupils too, in terms of further actions and involvement of others.
- f. Ensure the parents of any of the pupils involved are aware of the allegation.
- g. Refer the matter to the local safeguarding hub for all of the children involved, as appropriate.
- h. Ensure that a reference is made on the child's main School file and that there is a record on CPOMS.
- i. Ensure that appropriately detailed records are kept on CPOMS (safeguarding information) and iSAMS (Reward and Conduct Manager) such that any patterns of behaviour may be identified and addressed.

If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that the pupils' parents are informed as soon as possible and that pupils

are supported during the interview by an appropriate adult. In the case of pupils whose parents are abroad, the pupil's Guardian will be requested to provide support to the pupil and to accommodate him/her if it is necessary to suspend him/her during the investigation.

4.7 Action where abuse may have been caused by staff or volunteers

4.7.1 Duties of the School as an employer

The School has a duty of care to their employees. It will provide effective support for any employee facing an allegation and a named contact if they are suspended.

An allegation of abuse may be made against a teacher or member of staff and volunteers (including Governors and visitors or agency staff working for and on behalf of the School) if he/she has:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- c. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm by working regularly or closely with children.

The School will endeavour to ensure that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child whilst at the same time supporting the subject of the allegation.

4.7.2 Introduction

In the case of an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer:

If staff have low-level concerns or safeguarding concerns about another member of staff that meet the harms test, or if an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, then this should be referred to the Head of the School in the first instance.

- a. The Head will make a record of any low-level concerns, complaints or allegations received about a member of staff, and will, in discussion with the DSL, ensure that the concern is investigated and addressed appropriately and without delay. This will usually involve speaking to the person who raised the concern, to the individual involved and to any witnesses in order to gather as much evidence as possible. Records of low-level concerns, the context in which they occurred, and any actions that arise from them will be retained by the Head's office. The name of the person reporting any such concern should be noted, respecting any potential wish to remain anonymous as far as is reasonably possible.
- b. Staff following procedures for dealing with allegations must be aware that they need to be applied objectively and with common sense but with the welfare of the child as the priority.
- c. Some cases may not meet the criteria set out above at all, or may do so but without requiring consideration of a Police investigation or enquiries by local authority Children's Services. In these cases the School's informal disciplinary procedures should be followed to resolve cases quickly and without delay. If the allegation

relates to a member of agency staff, then the agency will be fully involved in the procedure.

- d. In borderline cases, the incident will be discussed with the LADO. This will be done without giving names in the first instance. What appears minor at first can later be revealed to be much more serious and an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. Thus the School will not do anything that may jeopardise a Police investigation such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate borderline allegations of abuse without authority to do so.
- e. It may be the case that an allegation will be sufficiently serious as to require immediate intervention by Children's Services and/or Police. The LADO will then be informed so that he/she can consult Police and local authority Children's Social Care Services, as appropriate.

4.7.3 Low-level concerns, complaints and allegations

A low-level concern is any concern, however 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. A low-level concern is one which does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

It is important to draw a distinction between complaints and allegations against staff. The former suggest misconduct or unprofessionalism and the latter specifically raise child protection concerns.

Any concern which involves the possibility of physical, emotional or sexual abuse will always be discussed with the LADO and their advice taken. If Safeguarding procedures are needed, an investigation will be carried out by the appropriate external agency and/or the Police. School staff and Governors must not carry out investigations themselves in these circumstances. An appropriate representative(s) of the School will be invited to a Strategy Meeting at a very early stage.

4.7.4 Procedure following an allegation against a member of staff

4.7.4.1 Initial investigation

- a. The DSL will discuss the allegation with the LADO immediately, and inform the Director of Safeguarding and Head of the relevant School.
- b. The purpose of this initial discussion is for the LADO and the Head/DSL to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. The DSL may need to provide or obtain additional information which may be relevant.
- c. If the allegation is against the DSL, the Head will take on the role outlined above. If the Head is unable to do this, the Director of Safeguarding will take on the Head's role in this procedure.
- d. If the allegation is against the Head, the Executive Head will take on the Head's role in this procedure without informing the Head of the allegation.
- e. If the allegation is against a member of the Governing Body then the Chair of Governors would liaise with the Local Authority with guidance from the Director of Safeguarding/Head.
- f. If the allegation is against the Chair, the Vice Chair would liaise with the Local Authority with guidance from the Director of Safeguarding/Head.

- g. Where there is any conflict of interest in reporting an allegation or a complaint of this, the LADO should be contacted and their advice sought.

In the unlikely event that it is not possible to report to any of the roles named above, a report should be made immediately to the nearest Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DDSL will take action in accordance with these procedures and will inform the Head, Director of Safeguarding and/or Chair of Governors as soon as possible and as appropriate according to the circumstances.

4.7.4.2 Further Investigation

The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern. In such a scenario, this decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the DSL and the LADO, and agreement reached as to what information should be put in writing to the member of staff concerned (and by whom).

The DSL should then consider with the LADO what action should follow in respect of the member of staff and those who made the initial allegation.

Where further investigation is deemed necessary, the DSL should seek guidance about that process from the LADO and agree how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. This may include internal investigation by the Director of Safeguarding. However, the nature or complexity of the allegation may require an independent investigator such as Children's Services or the Police.

4.7.4.3 Communications with parents

Parents or carers of a child or children involved will be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or the LADO, Police or Children's Services need to be involved, the Head will not do so until those agencies have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents.

Parents will be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.

4.7.4.4 Suspension

The Head, in consultation with the Director of Safeguarding, will consider carefully whether the circumstances of a case warrant the member of staff being suspended from contact with children at the School until the allegation or concern is resolved. Suspension is not the default position – an individual will only be suspended if there is no reasonable alternative, such as moving to another area of the School or removing them from specific types of duties which have contact with children. In the case of residential boarding staff, the School will ensure that the member of staff concerned will be accommodated elsewhere, away from pupils of the School.

Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be sent within one working day, giving the reasons for the suspension. The person will be informed at that point who their named contact is within the School organisation and provided with their contact details.

If the allegation is not demonstrably false or unfounded, and there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion will be convened in accordance with the procedures of local agencies.

If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the Police should take account of the fact that teachers and other School staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Where it becomes clear that an investigation by the Police or Children's Services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the LADO will discuss the next steps with the Director of Safeguarding and the Head. The Chair of Governors will be kept informed.

In these circumstances the options depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available and may range from taking no further action to summary dismissal or a decision not to use the volunteer's services in future.

4.7.4.5 Timescales

The School recognises that it is in everyone's interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. All allegations will be investigated as a priority so as to avoid any delay. The time taken to investigate and resolve individual cases will depend on a variety of factors including the nature, seriousness and complexity of the allegation. It is hard to place a time limit on such investigations which may, in exceptional cases, take twelve months.

For any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unfounded or malicious then it is expected that they should be resolved within one week.

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence it will be for the School, as the employer, to deal with. If there are concerns about Child Protection, the Director of Safeguarding will discuss action with the LADO.

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the timescale will conform to the School's Staff Disciplinary Policy.

4.7.4.6 Supporting Staff

The School will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations and disciplinary process.

The member of staff will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the Police, LADO or Children's Services.

The member of staff will be advised to contact their Trade Union representative, if they have one, and/or a colleague for support. He/she will also be given access to a senior member of staff as a named contact to provide information regarding the progress of the case and any current work-related issues.

Social contact with colleagues and friends will not be prevented unless there is an indication that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

4.7.4.7 Confidentiality

When an allegation is made the School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while investigations are carried out. Specific provisions are made to protect staff in:

KCSIE 2025 states that “it is extremely important that when an allegation is made, the school or college makes every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.”

The Education Act 2002, Section 141F The Act makes it a criminal offence for a newspaper to publish any information which may lead to the identification of a teacher against whom criminal allegations have been made by a pupil prior to them being formally charged by the Police. The scope of Section 141F of the Act is wide and includes publishing any information that may lead a member of the public to identify the teacher in question. This could include identifying the School.

The School will take advice from the LADO, Police and Children’s Services to agree the following:

- a. Who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared.
- b. How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip.
- c. What if any information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation.
- d. How to manage press interest if and when it should arise.

In accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance the Police will not normally provide any information to the press or media that might identify an individual who is under investigation, unless and until the person is charged with a criminal offence. (In exceptional cases where the police might depart from that rule, e.g. an appeal to trace a suspect, the reasons should be documented and partner agencies consulted beforehand.)

4.7.4.8 Privacy

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Further information on sharing information can be found:

- In Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children, which includes a myth-busting guide for information sharing.
- At Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers. The seven golden rules for sharing information are particularly useful.
- At The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO), which includes ICO GDPR FAQs and guidance from the department.

- In Data Protection: toolkit for schools – guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the GDPR.

4.7.4.9 Resignations, Dismissal, Ceasing to Provide Services, ‘Settlement Agreements’ and References

If a member of staff tenders his/her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

Ceasing to use a person’s services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed term contract; not continuing with the employment of a probationer, no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation, and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial training, or volunteering.

Every effort will be made to reach a conclusion in all cases where allegations relating to the safety or welfare of children are concerned.

Wherever possible the member of staff will be given the opportunity to answer and make representations with regard to the allegation. However, the investigative processes outlined above will continue in cases where this does not happen for whatever reason.

A ‘compromise agreement’, by which a person agrees to resign if the School agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, **must not be used** in these cases. No such agreement will prevent a thorough Police investigation or override the statutory duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate.

Cases in which an allegation was proven to be unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious will not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be unsubstantiated, malicious etc. will also not be included in any reference.

4.7.4.10 Record keeping

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, will be kept on a member of staff’s confidential personnel file, and a copy provided to the person concerned.

The purpose of this record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. (It could provide clarification in cases where future DBS Disclosures reveals information from the Police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it could help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.)

The statutory requirement is for records to be retained on the School Child Protection file for a period of ten years from the date of leaving the employment of the School. This follows published guidance from the Information Commissioner in its Employment Practices Code. However, the School is also mindful of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. All organisations which work with children (including all schools) have been instructed to preserve

all documents relating to the care of children so that they are available for inspection should they need to be. In light of the Inquiry the School will suspend its routine destruction of pupil and staff files and old safeguarding policies.

4.8 Early Years Specific Procedures

- *Mobile Phones & Devices* – Staff, visitors, and volunteers must not use personal mobile phones, cameras, or smart devices in EYFS rooms or outdoor areas where children are present. Photographs and recordings of children must only be taken on School-owned devices, stored securely, and shared with parents in line with School policy and GDPR requirements.
- *Attendance in EYFS* – The School maintains a written attendance policy for children in EYFS, setting clear expectations for parents to report absences promptly. The DSL or EYFS lead will follow up on unexplained or prolonged absences as a safeguarding concern.
- *Medication & Staff Health* – Staff taking medication must obtain medical clearance confirming fitness to work with children. All medication must be securely stored and inaccessible to children.
- *Smoking & Vaping* – Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited in all EYFS indoor and outdoor environments, at all times, including during School outings.
- *Behaviour Management* – Behaviour must be managed in a positive, developmentally-appropriate way, supporting children’s emotional wellbeing. Corporal punishment, threats of corporal punishment, or any practice that may humiliate or frighten a child are prohibited under all circumstances.
- *Staff Supervision & Training* – All EYFS staff must receive safeguarding training at least every two years, in line with Annex C of the EYFS framework. In addition, staff must have regular supervision meetings to discuss practice, well-being, and safeguarding issues.
- *Progress Check at Age 2* – Practitioners complete a written progress check when a child is aged between 2 and 3 years, identifying strengths and areas for development, and sharing the summary with parents. With parental consent, the check may also be shared with health visitors or other professionals to support safeguarding and early intervention.

5 Action on conclusion of a case

In the case of an incident of abuse which has been the subject of criminal prosecution, the Police or the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will inform the School and LADO straight away when a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete, or if it is decided to close an investigation without charge, or not to continue to prosecute the case after the person has been charged.

In these circumstances the LADO will discuss with the Head and Chair of Governors whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. The information provided by the Police and/or the Children’s Services can inform that decision.

The options will depend on the circumstances of the case and the consideration will need to take into account the result of the Police investigation or the trial, as well as the different standard of proof required in disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the School ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the LADO should discuss with the School and its Director of People whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of inclusion on the barred lists is required.

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where they think that an individual has engaged in conduct (including inappropriate sexual conduct) that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

In such circumstances, the duty to refer an individual to the DBS arises where an employer has removed the individual from relevant work with children or the person has chosen to cease relevant work in circumstances where they would have been removed had they not done so. The School will also make a referral to the DBS, TRA and Ofsted where a teacher or practitioner has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned) for reasons of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence. Referrals will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the member of staff involved and within one month of ceasing to use the person's services.

In cases where it is decided on the conclusion of the case that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the School will consider how best to facilitate this, bearing in mind that most people will benefit from some help and support to return to work after a very stressful experience. Depending on the individual's circumstances, a phased return and/or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance and support in the short term may be appropriate. The School will also consider how the person's contact with the child or children who made the allegation can best be managed if they are still a pupil at the School.

6 Action in respect of unfounded or malicious allegations

If an allegation is determined to be unfounded or malicious, the Director of Safeguarding will discuss with the LADO whether to refer the matter to Children's Services to determine whether the child concerned is in need of services, or may have been abused by someone else.

In the event that an allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil who made it, or the Police could be asked to consider whether any action might be appropriate against the person responsible, even if he or she was not a pupil of the School.

Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation the Head will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the School on the basis that they have treated the School or a member of staff unreasonably.

Whether or not the person making the allegation is a pupil or a parent (or other member of the public), the School reserves the right to contact the Police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

7 Learning lessons

At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated the LADO will review the circumstances of the case with the Head and/or Director of Safeguarding to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

The Director of Safeguarding will periodically review records of low-level concerns, complaints and allegations so that any potential patterns of concerning, inappropriate or problematic behaviour can be identified and addressed, either through internal disciplinary procedures or by referral to the LADO if the harms threshold is met. Consideration will be given to any wider cultural issues in the School that may have enabled the behaviour to occur, and to reviewing policies and staff training arrangements with a view to minimising the risk of recurrence.

The Director of Safeguarding will report on recommendations to the Governing Body as a part of the Safeguarding Report and will confirm which actions have been enacted and completed, as well as the rationale for those actions.

8 Whistleblowing

In order to foster a culture of safety the School values the views of staff and volunteers who reflect on School practice. Staff and volunteers should follow the School's separate Whistleblowing Policy to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the School, potential failures by the School or its staff to properly safeguard the welfare of pupils or other wrongdoing in the workplace that does not involve the safeguarding and welfare of children.

The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday) and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

9 Parents' Response

The School recognises that involvement in an allegation of abuse (as protagonist or victim) or involvement in child protection matters is amongst the most difficult and stressful situations a parent may encounter.

The School will do all that we can to minimise the distress suffered by parents, pupils, staff and anyone else involved, subject to the constraints under which we operate in accordance with statutory and local Safeguarding law and guidance.

The School will seek swift and clear outcomes with pupils' interests at the forefront of our decision-making.

Nonetheless, we recognise that there may be circumstances where parents may be dissatisfied with the outcome of our management of such a matter. In this instance, parents may complain to the School directly using the School Complaints Procedure.

10 Monitoring and review

The Director of Safeguarding will ensure that the procedures set out in this Policy and the implementation of these procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, working with the Governors as necessary. The Director of Safeguarding will update the Executive Leadership Team regularly on the operation of the School's safeguarding arrangements, and will collate the termly safeguarding reports from each School for the Governing Body.

Any Child Protection incidents at the School will be followed by a review of these procedures by the Director of Safeguarding and included in a report made to the Governing Body. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the LADO will be asked to assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the School's procedures. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements at any time will be remedied without delay.

The full Governing Body will undertake an annual review of this Policy and the School's Safeguarding procedures, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation and the effectiveness of inter-agency working. The Director of Safeguarding will work with the Designated Safeguarding Governor, preparing a written report commissioned by the full Governing Body. The written report should address how the School

- a. ensures that this Policy is kept up to date;
- b. staff training on safeguarding;
- c. referral information;
- d. issues and themes which may have emerged in the School and how these have been handled;
- e. the contribution the School is making to multi-agency working in individual cases or local discussions on safeguarding matters.

The full Governing Body should also consider independent corroboration, such as inspection of records or feedback from external agencies. The full Governing Body will review the report, this Policy and the implementation of its procedures and consider the proposed amendments to the Policy before giving the revised Policy its final approval. Detailed minutes recording the review by the Governing Body will be made.



Signed:

Date: 1 June 2026

Approved by the Executive Head on



Signed:

Date: 1 June 2026

The Policy will next be reviewed by: 1 September 2026

APPENDIX 1

Sedbergh Schools Group Designated Safeguarding Team

Role	Name	Email	Phone
Sedbergh Schools Group			
Designated Safeguarding Governor	Revd M D Ineson	safeguardinggovernor@sedberghschool. org	015396 20535
Chair of Governors	Mr I W Durrans	id.gov@sedberghschool.org	015396 20535
Director of Safeguarding	Dr J M Burns	jmb@sedberghschool.org	07857 500268
Sedbergh School			
Senior Deputy Head Pastoral Designated Safeguarding Lead	Dr J M Burns	jmb@sedberghschool.org	07857 500268
Senior Deputy Head Deputy DSL	Mr C D Gunning	gun@sedberghschool.org	07980 304041
Assistant Head Pastoral Deputy DSL	Mr C P Mahon	cpm@sedberghschool.org	07730 924752
Sedbergh Preparatory School, Casterton			
Deputy Manager, Mulberry Bush Nursery Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ms J McConville	janie.mcconville@sedberghprep.org	

Housemistress Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs H T Hankey	htth@sedberghprep.org	07522 233797
Assistant Housemistress Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Miss D Belcher	delina.belcher@sedberghschool.org	07738 408830

Terrington Hall Preparatory School			
Deputy Head Pastoral Designated Safeguarding Lead	Miss R I'Anson	rianson@terringtonhall.com	07817232843
Head Deputy DSL	Mr H Thomas	hthomas@terringtonhall.com	07538 122831
Deputy DSL	Miss K Hardy	khardy@terringtonhall.com	
Deputy DSL	Mr O Sigsworth	osigsworth@terringtonhall.com	
Deputy DSL	Mrs A Salisbury	asalisbury@terringtonhall.com	
Deputy DSL	Mr N Hyde	nhyde@terringtonhall.com	

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Email or Website</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Westmorland & Furness Safeguarding Hub North Yorkshire Safeguarding Hub	Welcome Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership NYSCP	0300 373 2724
LADO Westmorland & Furness LADO North Yorkshire	lado@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk lado@northyorks.gov.uk	0300 303 3897 01609 798005
Police	www.cumbria.police.uk Home North Yorkshire Police	Non-emergency: 101 Emergency: 999
Prevent Team	concern@lancashire.pnn.police.uk Prevent North Yorkshire Police	0800 011 3764 National Prevent Helpline
DfE Extremism in Schools: Helpline for Teachers	counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk	020 7340 7264
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	www.nspcc.org.uk	0808 800 5000
Childline	www.childline.org.uk	0800 1111
Ofsted	Contact us Ofsted	0300 123 123
Children's Commissioner	Homepage Children's Commissioner for England (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)	020 7783 8330

APPENDIX 2**What to do if a child makes a Disclosure**

The following information is intended to assist you if you become involved in a potential child protection situation when a child or young person makes a disclosure.

- a. Listen, allow the pupil to finish without directly questioning or stopping them. Let them tell you what they want to. Be careful to avoid asking leading questions and do not criticise any alleged perpetrator.
- b. Staff should **never give children or adults an absolute guarantee of confidentiality**, but must ensure that the information is disclosed only to the people who need to know. Make sure that this is clear early on, not sprung on the pupil at the end.
- c. It should be explained to children and young people that secrets cannot and should not be kept if keeping them means that they, or others, will continue to be harmed.
- d. Staff should reassure children that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Children should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Staff should explain to the child what the next steps will involve.
- e. Stay calm and convey this through word and action; reassure the child or young person that you are taking what they have to say seriously.

After the interview with the pupil, the member of staff should make a CPOMS record of the disclosure including the following:

- a. Date, time and place of the interview
- b. Record as much as you can remember, as soon as possible and preferably immediately afterwards, using the pupil's own words. Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- c. Record any significant non-verbal behaviour used or demonstrated by the child
- d. Use CPOMS functions if appropriate to indicate positions of injuries.

Those in receipt of a disclosure from a child or adult need to be aware of the impact that sharing traumatic and personal information can have. This may help to inform the pastoral element of the response as regards support given to the individual.

The record must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It will be retained securely in CPOMS.

Actions when there are concerns about a child

- (1) In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance. Such concerns should not be recorded on CPOMS, but shared with the Head of the relevant School directly.
- (2) Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from coordinated early help an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
- (3) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include section 17 assessments of children in need and section 47 assessment of children at risk of significant harm- full details in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- (4) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

APPENDIX 3

Sources of Information

In formulating these policies and procedures, the School has taken due regard of the following legislation, documentation and guidance:

1. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
2. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
3. Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)
4. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
5. Disqualification under the Childcare Act (2018)
6. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
7. The Children Act (2004) (Every Child Matters)
8. The Education Act (2002) (Sections 157 & 175)
9. The Protection of Children Act 1999
10. Data Protection Act (2018)
11. The Children Act (1989)(2004)
12. Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018)
13. When to Call the Police: Guidance for Schools and Colleges (NSPCC)
14. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | NSPCC Learning
15. Safeguarding deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning

APPENDIX 4 (1)**Safeguarding the welfare of children**

Safeguarding the welfare of children is of the highest priority to the Sedbergh Schools Group. Every employee of the School has a responsibility to:

- a) Protect children from maltreatment
- b) Be aware of safeguarding procedures
- c) Know how to access and implement the required procedures
- d) Keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event
- e) Report any matters of concern to the DSL
- f) Attend annual in-service training provided by the School

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Team**1. Director of Safeguarding**

The Director of Safeguarding provides strategic leadership, oversight and assurance for safeguarding, child protection, pupil wellbeing, and the safeguarding culture across the Sedbergh Schools Group. They are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory, regulatory and best-practice requirements, and that the Sedbergh Schools Group maintains a culture in which the welfare of children is paramount. The Director of Safeguarding acts as the Group's senior safeguarding professional, providing advice to the Governing Body, Executive Leadership Team, Senior Management Teams and the Designated Safeguarding Team, ensuring consistency and continuous improvement across all schools.

Key responsibilities:

1. Development and implementation of the Group safeguarding strategy
2. Promoting a culture of vigilance, transparency, and child-centred safeguarding practice
3. Reporting to the Governing Body on safeguarding matters
4. Ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements
5. Development and review of safeguarding policies and procedures
6. Monitoring implementation of safeguarding policy across the Group
7. Providing professional supervision and guidance for DSLs and DDSs
8. Supporting schools in managing complex safeguarding cases, child protection investigations and referrals
9. Ensuring consistency in the recording, referral, monitoring and case management practices
10. Ensuring appropriate escalation in situations requiring senior intervention
11. Advising on allegations and low-level concerns involving adults working with children

12. Development and delivery of safeguarding training and regular safeguarding updates for all staff
13. Liaising with external agencies as appropriate
14. Oversight of safeguarding risks across the Group, identifying risks and advising on mitigation strategies
15. Development of a culture in which pupils feel safe, heard and supported
16. Participate in emergency and critical incident management as required

These roles and responsibilities provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the level of this post.

2. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters within their School. The DSL provides advice and support to staff, ensures compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, coordinates safeguarding concerns and referrals, and promotes a culture in which the welfare of children is paramount.

The DSL works closely with the Head, Governing Body, Director of Safeguarding, staff, parents, local safeguarding partners, and external agencies to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that children receive appropriate protection and support.

Key responsibilities:

1. Promote a strong safeguarding culture across the School
2. Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters within the School
3. Be the principal point of contact for safeguarding concerns
4. Make referrals to external agencies where required
5. Monitor the progress of cases and ensure that support is provided for children
6. Attend and contribute to child protection conferences, strategy and multi-agency meetings
7. Oversee vulnerable children, particularly those subject to child protection plans, child in need plans or other safeguarding interventions
8. Oversee the use of CPOMS in the School
9. Ensure that safeguarding information is transferred appropriately when children move schools
10. Provide safeguarding advice, guidance and support to staff
11. Provide professional challenge where safeguarding practice requires improvement
12. Coordinate safeguarding induction for new staff, volunteers and governors
13. Promote awareness of safeguarding procedures with children and parents
14. Support the Head in managing low-levels concerns and allegations against adults, liaising with the LADO where appropriate
15. Overseeing pupils' wellbeing, promoting early identification of concerns and interventions

16. Maintain oversight of online safety arrangements, including familiarity with filtering and monitoring systems
17. Prepare termly safeguarding reports for Governors

These roles and responsibilities provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the level of this post.

3. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in all areas of safeguarding and child protection.

This includes:

- Acting as a point of contact for staff with safeguarding concerns.
- Supporting the DSL in maintaining accurate records, liaising with external agencies, and ensuring best safeguarding practices are followed.
- Taking appropriate action under the guidance of the DSL in the absence of the DSL.
- Contributing to the promotion of a safeguarding culture throughout the School.

The DDSL does not hold lead responsibility but must be fully trained and able to act in the DSL's absence if necessary.

Key responsibilities:

1. Support the DSL in managing cases of suspected abuse, neglect, and other safeguarding concerns.
 2. Assist in the referral process to external agencies, including Children's Social Care and the LADO, under DSL direction.
 3. Monitor safeguarding systems (CPOMS) and ensure they are up-to-date and accurate.
 4. Help ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are known, understood and used appropriately by all staff.
 5. Be available for staff who require safeguarding advice, escalating concerns to the DSL where appropriate.
- Liaise with pastoral staff and SEND team on safeguarding-related issues.
 - Maintain appropriate confidentiality at all times.
 - Attend multi-agency and strategy meetings as directed by the DSL.
 - Assist in maintaining comprehensive safeguarding records.
 - Ensure all concerns are recorded accurately and in line with School policy.
 - Support the DSL in preparing reports for Governors, external agencies or inspections.
 - Support the delivery of safeguarding induction and ongoing training to staff, under the DSL's guidance.
 - Keep up to date with changes to legislation and best practice through regular training (minimum every two years).

- Promote a culture of listening to pupils and considering their wishes and feelings in any safeguarding actions.
- Understand the School's filtering and monitoring systems.
- Support the DSL in addressing online safety concerns raised by staff, pupils, or parents.

These roles and responsibilities provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the level of this post.

APPENDIX 4 (2)

Role Description
DESIGNATED GOVERNOR for SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding of Children

Safeguarding the welfare of children is of the highest priority to Sedbergh School including Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School. Every employee of the School has a responsibility to:

- a) Protect Children from maltreatment
- b) Be aware of the School's safeguarding procedures
- c) Know how to access and implement the required procedures
- d) Keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event
- e) Report any matters of concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- f) Attend annual in-service training provided by the School

Purpose

As the Designated Governor, you will play an essential role in ensuring children in Sedbergh School & Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School are kept safe from harm. The Designated Governor plays an important role in ensuring oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding policy, procedure and practice on behalf of the full Governing Body. It is recognized that Governors are volunteers and generously give of their time, interest and expertise to the ultimate benefit of children in our Schools but it should not be underestimated that your role is that of a 'senior manager' of a School with accountability befitting such a significant responsibility.

Role

Your role as Designated Governor for Safeguarding is to:

- a) Act as a 'critical friend' to the School, in order to ensure that the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to cover all aspects of the safeguarding agenda and all statutory governing body responsibilities are met.
- b) Monitor appropriate policies, including the safeguarding and Whistleblowing Policy.
- c) Ensure there is a suitably qualified, trained and supported Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has responsibility for responding to and overseeing safeguarding issues.
- d) Ensure there is a suitably qualified, trained and supported Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) who has responsibility for responding to and overseeing safeguarding issues as agreed reasonable to be delegated by the DSL.
- e) Ensure that the DSL adequately supervises and supports the work, development and wellbeing of the DDSL and any other individual to whom they may delegate additional safeguarding responsibilities in order that there are clear lines of accountability.
- f) Ensure there is a robust system for recording, storing and reviewing child welfare concerns.
- g) Liaise with the Executive Head about general child protection and broader safeguarding issues within the School and as such be able to provide reports to the

- Governing Body in respect of themes and issues within the School/locality to enable adequate oversight, understanding and development of solutions.
- h) Ensure that School staff training is up to date and recorded within the HR database.
 - i) Attend Basic Awareness Safeguarding training every three years and other training as appropriate to the role and relevant to issues within the School/locality.
 - j) Ensure other Governors attend appropriate safeguarding training.
 - k) Ensure appropriate members of the Governing Body complete training in respect of allegations against staff.
 - l) Ensure at least one member of every recruitment and selection panel for staff has successfully completed accredited Safer Recruitment training.
 - m) Ensure interview panels are convened appropriately and safer recruitment practices and policies are followed.
 - n) Have oversight of the Single Central Record and ensure it is up to date and maintained in line with guidance.
 - o) Take account of how safe pupils feel when in School.
 - p) Ensure the voice of pupils is truly heard and appropriately acknowledged.
 - q) Ensure the School constantly review and consider their curriculum in order that key safeguarding 'messages and lessons' run throughout.
 - r) Ensure the School does not operate in isolation and has an awareness of agencies available to support children and families
 - s) Ensure the safeguarding agenda is embedded in the ethos of the School.
 - t) Monitor progress against any outstanding actions by the Governing Body Safeguarding audit and any other local authority review.
 - u) Provide an annual report to the full Governing Body to include, amongst other relevant items detail pertaining to training, themes and issues.

APPENDIX 4 (3)

Role Description
LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

The role of the LADO is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and is governed by the Authorities duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Cumbria's Inter-Agency Policy and Procedures. This guidance outlines procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed.

The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

The LADO is responsible for:

- Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers.
- Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom an allegation is made.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.
- Recommending a referral and chairing the strategy meeting in cases where the allegation requires investigation by police and/or social care.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO is available to discuss any concerns and to assist in deciding whether you need to make a referral and/or take any immediate management action to protect a child.

Contact details for the Westmorland & Furness and North Yorkshire LADOs can be found in Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 5**Guidance about Visiting Speakers**

(extracted from the “Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy”)

Teaching Approaches

We strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some children becoming alienated and disempowered, especially where the narrow approaches children may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences, this guidance and support be delivered in lessons and Form Times with the children’s tutors. We ensure that all of our support and approaches will help our children build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We develop strategies and staff training to ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. We are flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate and address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. In doing so we follow the three broad categories of:

- a) making a connection with children through positive engagement and a learner centered approach;
- b) facilitating a “safe space” for dialogue
- c) equipping our children with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience.
- d) actively promoting fundamental British Values and paying due regard to the ‘Prevent’ duty.

Therefore this approach will be embedded within the ethos of our School so that children know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. This will work in conjunction with our School’s approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children.

Our goal is to build mutual respect and understanding and to promote the use of dialogue not violence as a form of conflict resolution. We will achieve this by using an approach that includes:

- a) Citizenship topics which take place throughout the School.
- b) Open discussion and debate.
- c) Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach to conflict resolution.

If necessary, we will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism such as the Westmorland & Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership, the Cumbria Constabulary and the Westmorland & Furness Council.

At Sedbergh School, we promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage children to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our children safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

When inviting visiting speakers to our School we will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- a) any messages communicated to children are consistent with the ethos of the School and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals;
- b) any messages do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise children through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies;
- c) activities are matched to the needs of children and
- d) Activities are carefully evaluated to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our School is to encourage children to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to be able to actively engage with them in informed debate, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this. Therefore by delivering a broad and balanced programme, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we strive to ensure our children recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help children develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.”

APPENDIX 6**The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is not a part of safeguarding legislation, nonetheless the School is aware of its responsibilities to the Inquiry. The following is a summary of the remit of the Inquiry and the obligations placed upon Schools. That which follows is, inevitably, a precis of information received by the School, more information about the Inquiry may be found at <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/>.

Professor Alexis Jay OBE is leading the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse set up in March 2015 by the Home Secretary. The purpose of the Inquiry set out in its terms of reference is “To consider the extent to which State and non-State institutions have failed in their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation; to consider the extent to which those failings have since been addressed; to identify further action needed to address any failings identified; to consider the steps which it is necessary for State and non-State institutions to take in order to protect children from such abuse in future; and to publish a report with recommendations.”

In its earliest phase, the Inquiry has identified twelve institutions to be investigated. Residential schools, as a whole, are one group of institutions to be investigated. This is not specific to Sedbergh School. The Inquiry will also pursue a series of thematic investigations which will include abuse facilitated by the internet and sexual exploitation of children by organised networks.

All institutions are required to co-operate with the Inquiry and Schools are required to them to preserve all documents and records relating to the care of children and safeguarding matters and to urge them to review current safeguarding practice.

As a result of this direction the School has taken to following actions:

1. The School has collated all records in a single secure area and has an ongoing record management procedure. The School will retain all records and personal information which might at any futures stage be required for use by the Inquiry.
2. The School has reviewed current safeguarding policies and procedures to make sure they are consistent with best practice in order to provide the safest possible environment for children.
3. The School and its Governors review Safeguarding policies and procedures every term to ensure they are effective.

The School has reviewed its historic safeguarding records in order to learn from the management of past incidents. All institutions have been asked to “self-report” past cases which were not addressed according to safeguarding law at the time, to the Inquiry. In the event that such cases come to light, the School will comply with this direction.

APPENDIX 7**Safeguarding Pupils Aged 18 and Over**

While the legal definition of a child ends at age 18, Sedbergh School recognises that pupils who turn 18 or 19 years of age and remain enrolled in the School will continue to require appropriate safeguarding and welfare oversight.

In line with **KCSIE 2025** and the **National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2022)**, the School maintains its safeguarding responsibilities for all pupils and recognises the need to balance legal adulthood with the duty to protect younger children.

All aspects of the Safeguarding Policy, including peer-on-peer abuse, e-safety, behaviour, counter-bullying, and the Prevent duty, apply equally to pupils over the age of 18 years.

Accommodation and Supervision

- Room allocations in boarding Houses ensure that pupils of 18 years of age and over do not share rooms with younger pupils. When planning room allocations in boarding Houses, staff will take into consideration the age, maturity, previous behavioural concerns, vulnerabilities and other relevant factors pertaining to pupils, as well as the suitability of the accommodation, including bathrooms and changing areas.
- The Pupil Supervision Policy and staff responsible for boarding houses will ensure appropriate supervision levels, recognising the increased autonomy of older pupils while maintaining a safe environment for younger pupils.

Behaviour and Responsibilities of Pupils Aged 18 and over

All pupils, including those who are aged 18 and over are expected to abide by the School's rules, values and expectations. In its management and pastoral care of older pupils, the School will support them to understand that their status as legal adults does not in any way exempt them from the safeguarding and other arrangements in place for the protection, wellbeing and support of other pupils.

Information Sharing and Consent

The School acknowledges that, once a pupil turns 18, he/she becomes legally entitled to make decisions about their personal information. However, in the event of a safeguarding concern involving a pupil aged 18 or over, and especially where there may be an impact on younger pupils, the School reserves the right, and may be required, to share information appropriately under safeguarding exceptions. Equally, the School encourages an ongoing partnership and communication with parents and guardians of all pupils aged 18 and over where appropriate and with the consent of the pupil.

Safeguarding Concerns, Response and Support

Any safeguarding concern involving a pupil over the age of 18, either as the subject of concern or as a potential risk to others, will be logged with, investigated and recorded by the DSL, escalated in accordance with child protection or other local authority procedures where necessary, and addressed with age-appropriate pastoral support and, in line with the Behaviour Policy, any required disciplinary actions.