Bledlow Ridge School Child Protection Policy

September 2022

This policy was adopted on.   1st September 2022

The policy is to be reviewed by   1st September 2023

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1. *Contacts*

School contacts

Headteacher	Natasha Harrison nharrison@bledlowridge.bucks.sch.uk 01494 481253
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Natasha Harrison nharrison@bledlowridge.bucks.sch.uk 01494 481253
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Gemma Grimaldi ggrimaldi@bledlowridge.bucks.sch.uk 01494 481253
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Penny Perry
Chair of Governors	Hugh Gage/Dirmuid Jennings office@bledlowridge.bucks.sch.uk 01494 481253

Contacts in County

Education Safeguarding Advisory Service ESAS offers support to education providers to assist them to deliver effectively on all aspects of their safeguarding responsibilities.	01296 387981 Secure-esasduty@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

First Response Team (including Early Help, Channel) The First Response Team process all new referrals to social care, including children with disabilities. Referrals are assessed by the team to check the seriousness and urgency of the concerns and whether Section 17 and/or Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 apply. The First Response Team will ensure that the referral reaches the appropriate team for assistance in a quick and efficient manner.	01296 383962 Out of hours 0800 999 7677 Secure-cyp.firstresponse@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) The Buckinghamshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for overseeing the management of all allegations against people in a position of trust who work with children in Buckinghamshire on either a paid or voluntary basis	01296 382070
[Bucks Family Information Service](#) Information for families on a range of issues including childcare, finances, parenting and education	01296 383065 Secure-lado@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
[Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) (BSCP) Procedures, policies and practice guidelines	
[Schools Web](#) School bulletin, Safeguarding links, A-Z guide to information and services	
Buckinghamshire Council Equalities & School Improvement Manager	01296 382461
Buckinghamshire Council Prevent Co-ordinator	01296 674784
Thames Valley Police	101 (999 in case of emergency)

Other contacts

NSPCC [NSPCC](#)	0800 800 5000
Childline [Childline](#)	0800 11 11

Kidscape – Parent Advice Line (bullying) (Mon-Weds from 9:30am to 2:30pm) Kidscape	020 7823 5430
Female Genital Mutilation Helpline (NSPCC) NSPCC FGM Helpline	0800 028 3550 fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
Samaritans - Helpline Samaritans	116 123
Forced Marriages Unit - Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced marriage - GOV.UK	020 7008 0151 fmu@fco.gov.uk
Crimestoppers Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
R-U Safe? Barnardos - Children/Young People Sexual Exploitation Service Barnardos RUSafe Bucks	01494 785 552
CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)	

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Children Looked After
- Equalities and Community Cohesion
- Lettings
- SEN/Inclusion
- Health & Safety (including managing children with medical needs)
- E-Safety (including use of social media)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- PSHE (including RE & RSE)
- Whistleblowing
- Safer Recruitment

Safeguarding Statement

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child. Anyone can make a referral, which will usually be to the school's DSL, but can be directly to Children's Social Care, if necessary.

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process and it refers to the procedures undertaken to protect individual children who have been identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Further information regarding the categories of abuse can be found in the appendix to this document.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18

2. *Introduction*

2.1. At Bledlow Ridge School we believe that a policy on child protection is founded on the right of all children to be safe. We expect all members of the school community including staff, governors, supply staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Every member of the school community is responsible for contributing to a positive culture of safeguarding.

The aim of this policy is to provide staff, supply staff, governors and volunteers with the framework they need to keep children in Bledlow Ridge School safe and secure and to provide parents and carers with the information about how we will safeguard their children whilst in our care.

This policy has been developed in accordance with following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 (amended 2004)

- "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" - July 2018 Working Together To Safeguard Children July 2018

- "Keeping Children Safe in Education"- statutory guidance for schools and further education colleges - Sept 2022 Keeping Children in Education 2022

- Information Sharing Guidance for Safeguarding Practitioners [Information Sharing Guidance](#) – DfE July 2018

- Children Missing Education; Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities - Sept 2016 [Children missing education - GOV.UK](#)

- Statutory Guidance issued under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act - 2015 [Prevent Duty Guidance](#)

- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges – Sept 2021 [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges](#)

- The Equality Act - 2010 [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)

- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - March 2015 [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#)

- Statutory guidance on FGM [Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)

2.2. We believe clear governance and leadership is central to embedding a safeguarding culture. The Governing Body takes its responsibility seriously under **section 175 of the Education Act 2002** to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; working together with other agencies to ensure effective and robust arrangements are in place within our school to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or whom may be at risk of harm. Governors will ensure all staff at the school have read and understood their responsibilities pertaining to **Part 1 and Annexe A**

2.3. All staff are required to read and adhere to the **Staff Code of Conduct**. Every member of the school community is responsible for contributing to a positive culture of safeguarding.

2.4. The school recognises that as well as risks to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation outside their homes and from other children. Staff must remain vigilant and alert to these potential risks.

2.5. The aims of this policy are:

2.5.1. To provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected.

2.5.2. Children feel confident that they can talk to adults within school to share any concerns that they may have.

2.5.3. To ensure all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, supply staff, governors and volunteers:

- are aware of the need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children
- identify the need for early support
- promptly report concerns, in line with guidance from the Buckinghamshire Continuum of Need
- are trained to recognise signs and indicators of abuse.

2.5.4. For all staff to recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment

·   Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

·   Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision and effective care

·   Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2.5.5. To provide systematic means of monitoring children known to be, or thought to be at risk of harm and ensure contribution to assessments of need and support plans for those children.

2.5.6.   To ensure Bledlow Ridge School has a clear system for communicating concerns both internally and with external agencies in line with the Working Together guidance.

2.5.7. To ensure the school has robust systems in place to accurately record safeguarding and child protection concerns.

2.5.8. To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding, supporting the needs of children at our school.

2.5.9.   To ensure that all staff appointed have been through the safer recruitment process and understand the principles of safer working practices as set out in our **Staff Code of Conduct**.

2.5.10. To ensure that any community users of our facilities have due regard to expectations of how they should maintain a safe environment, which supports children's wellbeing.

2.5.11. This policy is published on our website at https://bledlow.eschools.co.uk/website/child_protection_policy/163593 and hard copies are available from the school office.

3. *Responsibilities*

3.1.   All staff, supply staff, volunteers, visitors, governors and contractors understand safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Any person who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to Natasha Harrison (Designated Safeguarding Lead; DSL) or, in their absence, to Gemma Grimaldi (Deputy DSL). In the absence of either of the above, concerns will be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff on site. Staff understand that if there is an immediate risk of harm then the police or First Response will be called directly, and the DSL will be updated at the earliest opportunity.

3.2   Staff must maintain a good working knowledge of the Buckinghamshire Continuum of Need The Continuum of Need - Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (buckssafeguarding.org.uk) and any updates and how it should be used to inform decision making regarding a referral to First Response.

3.3   Staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep both looked after children and previously looked after children safe.

3.4   Staff understand vulnerability and that barriers exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children. Consider the following groups who may have increased vulnerability:

·   Young carers

- Children with SEND
- Children living with domestic abuse
- Children whose parents suffer with poor mental health, including substance misuse
- Criminal exploitation, including sexual exploitation, radicalisation and gang involvement
- Look after children and previously look after children
- Children who have a social worker
- Privately fostered children
- Asylum seekers
- So-called Honour Based Violence, including FGM and forced marriage
- Children who frequently go missing or whose attendance is a concern
- Children who are part of the LGBTQ group or who are exploring gender identification
- Children who are at risk of discrimination due to faith and belief, race or ethnicity.

3.5. The Governing Body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.

It must:

3.5.1. Ensure that the Headteacher and (when not the Headteacher) the Deputy DSL create and maintain a strong, positive culture of safeguarding within the school.

3.5.2. Ensure that this policy reflects the unique features of the community we serve and the needs of the pupils attending our provision. This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

3.5.3. Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this Child Protection Policy.

3.5.4. Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and has the required level of authority and also appoint at least one Deputy DSL. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for safeguarding within the school. The roles and responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL are made explicit in those post-holders' job descriptions.

3.5.5. Recognise the importance of the role of the DSL, ensuring they have sufficient time, training, skills and resources to be effective. Refresher training must be attended every 2 years, in addition knowledge and skills must be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.

3.5.6. Ensure measures are in place for the governing body to have oversight of how the school's delivery against its safeguarding responsibilities are exercised and evidenced. Ensure robust structures are in place to challenge the Headteacher where there are any identified gaps in practice or procedures are not followed.

3.5.7. Recognise the vital contribution that the school can make in helping children to keep safe, through incorporation of safeguarding within the curriculum. This will also be taught through the PSHE curriculum and relevant issues through the Relationship Education (primary schools) or Relationship Sex Education (secondary schools, mandatory from Sept. 2020). Ensure that through curriculum content and delivery children understand to keep themselves safe.

3.5.8. Ensure that school is following the statutory RSE guidance –[Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

3.5.9. Ensure safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures are in place.

3.5.10 Ensure resources are allocated to meet the needs of pupils requiring child protection or early intervention.

3.5.11 Ensure the DSL completes an Annual Safeguarding Report for Governors and a copy is shared with the Education Safeguarding Advisory Service at Buckinghamshire Council.

3.6. It is the duty of the Chair of Governors to liaise with relevant agencies if any allegations are made against the Headteacher. If there are concerns that issues are not being progressed in an expedient manner, staff/pupils/parents/carers should escalate concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via First Response.

3.7. The Governing body must ensure that procedures are in place to manage safeguarding concerns of allegations against staff, supply staff, governors, volunteers, visitors or contractors where they could pose a risk of harm to children. The guidance in Part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 must be followed if there were any such concerns. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#)

3.8. The Governing Body must ensure that a named teacher is designated for Children Looked After and that an up-to-date list of children who are subject to a Care Order or are accommodated by the County Council is regularly reviewed and updated. The school must work with the Virtual Schools Team to support the educational attainment for those children who are Looked After.

3.9. The governing body has a statutory duty to appoint a Nominated Governor for safeguarding. The Nominated Governor must be familiar with [Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) procedures, Local Authority procedures and guidance issued by the Department for Education. The Nominated Governor must:

3.9.1. Work with the DSL to produce the Child Protection Policy annually.

3.9.2. Undertake appropriate safeguarding training, to include Prevent training.

3.9.3. Ensure child protection is regularly discussed at Governing Body meetings

3.9.4. Meet at least termly with the DSL to review and monitor the school's delivery on its safeguarding responsibilities and to review the Single Central Record.

3.9.5. Take responsibility to ensure that the school is meeting the OFSTED requirements as set out in the inspection guidance:

[Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings](#)

[Education inspection framework (EIF) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

3.10. All governors must complete safeguarding training on appointment, to also include Prevent training.

3.11. The governing body must ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, which allow them to share or withhold personal information when it is necessary to safeguard any child.

3.12. We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is responsible for:

3.12.1. Creating a culture of safeguarding within the school, where children are protected from harm. Ensuring all staff receive an effective induction and ongoing training to support them to recognise and report any concerns.

3.12.2. Ensuring children receive the right help at the right time using the Buckinghamshire Continuum of Need document.

3.12.3. Ensuring referrals to partner agencies are followed up in writing, including referrals to First Response.

3.12.4. Establishing a safe and secure system for recording and recording safeguarding and child protection records. These records must be audited regularly to ensure all actions are completed.

3.12.5 Ensuring all child protection files are held separately from pupils' educational records.

3.12.6. Maintaining the record for staff safeguarding training. Ensuring that the safeguarding team contact details and photos are displayed in prominent areas around the school and also on the website.

3.12.7. Being the designated point of contact for staff to be able to discuss and share their concerns.

3.12.8. Being available to staff and outside agencies during school hours and term time for consultation on safeguarding concerns raised.

3.12.9. Having responsibility to ensure that cover is arranged outside of term-time during working hours.

3.12.10. During residential and extended school hours, ensuring arrangements are in place for staff to have a point of contact.

3.12.11. Contributing effectively to multi agency working, for the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children, as set out in Working Together.

3.12.12. Providing the Headteacher (if the Headteacher is not the DSL), with an annual report for the Governing Body, detailing how the school delivers on its safeguarding responsibilities and any child protection issues within the school. The Governing Body will use this report to fulfil its responsibility to provide the Local Authority with information about their safeguarding policies and procedures.

3.12.13. Meeting regularly (at least once a term) with the Nominated Governor to share oversight of the safeguarding provision within the setting, monitor performance and develop plans to rectify any gaps in policy or procedure.

3.12.14. Meeting the statutory requirement to keep up to date with knowledge, enabling them to fulfil their role, including attending mandatory and any other additional relevant training.

3.12.15. Referring immediately to the Police, using the guidance, When to call the police, [2491596 C&YP schools guides.indd (npcc.police.uk)](#) , for any cases where a criminal offence may have been committed or risk of harm is imminent.

3.12.16 Take responsibility, when a child leaves the school, for ensuring that the child protection file is transferred securely to the new school as soon as possible and obtaining confirmation of receipt. Such a transfer of information should be separate from the main pupil file. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. Such files should be sent to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of a new term. As a recipient of a child protection file from a previous school, the DSL must ensure that key staff, including the SENCO, are made aware as required.

3.12.17 The DSL should liaise with the headteacher to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019.](#)

4. Procedures

4.1. Our school procedures for all staff, supply staff, governors, volunteers, visitors and contractors in safeguarding and protecting children from harm are in line with Buckinghamshire Council and [Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) safeguarding procedures, **"Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018"** [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), **"Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022"** [Keeping children safe in education 2022 (publishing.service.gov.uk)](#) and statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#).

The school will make every effort to respond to the needs of the community and overcome barriers in communicating and recognising child protection issues. This may include, for example: language barriers, disability, cultural issues. However, it is important to stress that child protection will always take precedence over these.

We will ensure:

4.2. We have a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team who has undertaken appropriate training for the role, as recommended by the BSCP. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be required to update their training in accordance with the Learning Pathway agreed by the BSCP.

4.3.   We have a member of staff (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) who will act in the DSL's absence and who has also received training for the role of DSL. In the absence of an appropriately trained member of staff, the most senior member of staff on site will assume this role.

4.4.   All adults (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) new to our school are made aware of the school's policy and procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the DSL, their role and responsibilities under **"Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022"** Keeping children safe in education 2022 (publishing.service.gov.uk) and the booklet **"What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused"** Stat guidance template (publishing.service.gov.uk) . They will have these explained, as part of their induction into the school.

4.5.   Visitors must be:

- · Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- · Met and directed by school staff/representatives.
- · Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- · Given a safeguarding leaflet to read or directed to a poster informing them of how to report a concern.
- · Given restricted access to only specific areas of the school, as appropriate.
- · Escorted by a member of staff/representative as required.
- · Given access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.

4.6.   All staff receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) training and updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required. DSL/DDSL organises/delivers training regularly to continue to provide staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

4.7.   All parents/carers must be made aware of the school's responsibilities regarding child protection procedures through this policy.

All staff, including supply staff, must follow the reporting procedures as follows when reporting any child protection concerns:

- · Staff must ensure the child is in a safe place and in receipt of support;
- · Staff must initially make a verbal report to the DSL to alert them to the safeguarding/child protection concern;
- · Staff must make a written report using the school record keeping process;
- · Historic concern forms (pre Sept 2021) are kept in the Headteacher's Office. Recent concerns are logged using the Cura system.
- · Staff must ensure the time and date of the incident is recorded;
- · A factual account of the incident must be recorded, including who was involved, what was said/seen/heard, where the incident took place and any actual words or phrases used by the child;
- · Use a body map to record any injuries seen or reported by the child:
- · Staff must sign and date the report giving details of their role within school;
- · Cura system records when the report was passed to the DSL and emails an alert to the DSL to say a concern has been raised.
- · Understand the importance of intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- · The DSL must ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into consideration when deciding on next steps.

4.8.   We have a robust system in place for monitoring attendance and will act to address absenteeism with parents/carers and pupils promptly and identify any safeguarding issues arising. **First day absence** without a given reason is investigated by the School Office, initially by telephone call.

4.9.   All children attending our school are required to have a minimum of two identified emergency contacts.

4.10 Any pupil whose absence is causing concern and where it has not been possible to make contact with a parent/carer, will be reported as a Child Missing in Education (CME) using the **Buckinghamshire CME Protocol**.

4.11. Any absence of a pupil who is currently subject to a child protection or child in need plan is immediately referred to their social worker.

4.12. Parents/carers must inform school if there are any changes to a pupil's living arrangement. Bledlow Ridge School has a mandatory duty to inform the local authority, via the First Response Team, if a child under the age of 16 years old lives with someone other than their parent, step-parent, aunt, uncle or grandparent for a period of more than 28 days. This is defined as being a private fostering arrangement.

4.13. All staff, parents/carers and children are made aware of the school's escalation process which can be activated in the event of concerns not being resolved after the first point of contact.

4.14. Our lettings policy reflects the ongoing responsibility the school has for safeguarding those using the site outside of normal school hours, ensuring the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time. The school must have sight of the up to date **Child Protection Policy** of any organisation hiring the school's facilities.

4.15. Safer Recruitment (see Safer Recruitment policy) Bledlow Ridge School recognises the importance of following recruitment and selection procedures on the appointment of employees and volunteers which help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Recruitment procedures are carried out in accordance with guidance given in 'KCSIE (September 2022). To ensure safer recruitment, the procedures are designed to:

- Scrutinise applicants
- Verify identity. (Best practice is with the use of birth certificates (where available) to check identity). Further identification checking guidelines can be found here
- Verify academic or vocational qualifications
- Obtain professional and character references
- Check previous employment history
- Ensure that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job
- Incorporate a face-to-face interview
- Include a barred list and Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check that can be accessed via the TRA's prohibition, restriction and barred list checks. See Teachers' Services Website
- Applicants from overseas must be subject to a DBS check and also include an overseas check equivalent to the DBS check for staff appointed directly from overseas see Page 72 KCSIE 2022
- Verify the applicant's right to work in the UK
- Include a prohibition order check (for those who undertake 'teaching work'*) and also an EEA prohibition check for staff appointed to do teaching work from the EEA other than England (see Safer Recruitment guidelines and checklist for further detail)
- Include a prohibition from management check (s 128) (For any staff taking up a management position in an independent school, academy, or in a free school as an employee; a trustee of an academy or

free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body of an independent school; or a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibility.
- Include, when required, a self-declaration in respect of the Childcare Disqualification Regulations.
- An online search of shortlisted candidates will be carried out.
- A CV on its own will not provide adequate information in the school's safer recruitment process.

4.16. Allegations against members of staff, supply staff, governors, including volunteers and contractors are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

4.17. Our procedures are reviewed and updated annually as a minimum, or as there are changes to legislation.

5. Record-Keeping and Retention of Records

5.1. When a disclosure of abuse or an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer has been made, our school must have a record of this. These records are maintained in a way that is confidential and secure, in accordance with our **Record Keeping Policy** and **Data Protection Legislation.**

5.2. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

5.3. There is a statutory requirement for our school to pass any child protection records to the pupil's next school. This must take place within 5 days of the 1st day of term or within 5 days of an in-year transfer. There must be an auditable system in place to evidence this has taken place. Safeguarding records will be sent separately from the general files using a secure method. No records should be maintained within the school once the files have been transferred.

5.4. The last statutory school maintains child protection files until a pupil reaches the age of 25 years, therefore if the transfer school is unknown, or a pupil is going to be electively home educated, any child protection files will remain at our school in a secure location. Child protection files will only be destroyed when the pupil reaches their 25th birthday.

5.5. We have a robust system for reviewing our archived information held. Our files are stored and disposed of in line with GDPR protocols.

6. Confidentiality

6.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

6.2. The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead must only disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

6.3. Staff must not keep duplicate or personal records of child protection concerns. All information must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and securely stored in the designated location within the school, separate from the pupil records.

6.4.   All staff are aware they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another as they have a duty to share. Staff must, however, reassure the child that information will only be shared with those people who will be able to help them and therefore need to know.

6.5.   We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care (First Response) with their parent/carer's consent, unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with First Response on this point. We recognise that GDPR must not be a barrier for sharing information regarding safeguarding concerns in line with **'Working Together'**.

7. **Dealing with a disclosure and recognising abuse**

    In the event of a child disclosing abuse staff must:

    Refer to the following guidance:

    "What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused" **Stat guidance template (publishing.service.gov.uk)**

In the event of a child disclosing abuse staff must:

7.1.   Listen to the child, allowing the child to tell what has happened in their own way, and at their own pace. Staff must not interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events.

7.2.   Remain calm. Be reassuring and supportive, endeavouring to not respond emotionally.

7.3.   Not ask leading questions. Staff are reminded to ask questions only when seeking clarification about something the child may have said or to gain sufficient information to know that this is a safeguarding concern. Staff are trained to use TED; Tell, Explain, Describe.

7.4.   Make an accurate record of what they have seen/heard using the school's record keeping processes, recording; times, dates or locations mentioned, using as many words and expressions used by the child, as possible.

 Staff must not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names used by the child.

7.5.   Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone.

7.6.   Staff must explain to the child what will happen next and the need for the information to be shared with the DSL.

7.7.   In the unlikely event that the DSL and deputy DSL are not available, staff are aware they must share concerns with the most senior member of staff.

7.8.   **If there is immediate risk of harm to a child, staff will NOT DELAY and will ring 999.**

7.9.   The child will be monitored/accompanied at all times following a disclosure, until a plan is agreed as to how best they can be safeguarded.

7.10. Following a report of concerns the DSL must:

7.10.1. Decide whether there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm, in which case a referral must be made to First Response and the police if it is appropriate, referring to the guidance, When to call the police, 2491596 C&YP schools guides.indd (npcc.police.uk)The rationale for this decision should be recorded by the DSL.

7.10.2. School should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with parents/carers and, where possible, obtain consent before making a referral to First Response. However, in accordance with DfE guidance, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk or could impact a police investigation. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with First Response or the police whether the parents/carers should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. The child's views should also be taken into account.

7.10.3. If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the DSL (or Deputy) must contact First Response by telephone immediately, in the first instance and then complete the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF).

7.10.4. If the child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police must be called. The DSL must then notify First Response of the occurrence and what action has been taken.

7.10.5. If a child needs urgent medical attention, the DSL (or Deputy) should call an ambulance via 999. DSL to contact First Response; advice to be sought from First Response about informing parents/carers.

7.11 Suspected harm from outside the school:

7.11.1. A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the school should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions (see TED questions, in a), above). A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and given to the DSL for child protection.

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

7.11.3: Pupils with SEND

Children with SEND can face additional Safeguarding challenges and there may be additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This may include

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood or injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying without showing any outward signs
- Children with SEND being unable to communicate instances of possible abuse

7.11.4: Children who are lesbian, bi, gay or trans
The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a

child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum

8. Multi-agency working

8.1. Bledlow Ridge School know what the role of schools is, as a relevant agency, within the three safeguarding partner arrangements and as required, will contribute to multi-agency working, in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

8.2. When named as a relevant agency and involved in safeguarding arrangements, Bledlow Ridge School will co-operate alongside other agencies with the published arrangements.

8.3. Bledlow Ridge School will contribute to inter-agency plans to offer children support of early help and those children supported through child protection plans.

8.4. Bledlow Ridge School will allow access for and work with children's social care to conduct or consider whether to conduct as section17 or section 47 assessment.

8.5. If, following a referral, the situation is not improving for the child, the DSL will follow the escalation process.

9. Supporting Staff

9.1. We recognise that staff becoming involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, could find the situation stressful and upsetting.

9.2. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support if necessary. This could be provided by the Headteacher or another trusted colleague, Occupational Health, and/or a representative of a professional body, Employee Assistance Programme (PAM) or trade union, as appropriate.

10. Allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors (including Governors)

10.1. Here at Bledlow Ridge School, we have our own procedures for managing concerns and/or allegations against those working in school to include staff, supply teacher, volunteers and contractors.

10.2. The school will follow the guidance in Part 4 of KCSIE (September 2022).

Part 4 of KCSIE is now separated into two sections.

Section One includes detailed guidance on allegations which meet the harms threshold, and:

Section Two includes guidance for low level concerns. Even those concerns which do not meet the harms threshold should be shared with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately.

10.3 All school staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors must take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents/carers to be conducted in view of other adults (see Lone Working Policy)

10.4 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff, member of supply staff, volunteer or contractor. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff notified of the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher or the most senior teacher if the Headteacher is not present. If the allegation is made against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors must be informed.

10.5 At Bledlow Ridge School, we recognise that an allegation may be made if a member of staff, a member of supply staff, a volunteer or a contractor has:

- · Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- · Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- · Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- · Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes behaviours both inside and outside of school.

10.6. The Headteacher/Senior Teacher on all such occasions must immediately discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

10.7. The Headteacher/Senior Teacher must:

10.7.1. Follow all advice given by the LADO throughout the investigation process, including how to manage the staff member, supply staff member, volunteer or contractor against whom the allegation is made, as well as supporting other staff, supply staff members, volunteers and contractors within the workplace.

10.7.2. Follow all advice given by the LADO relating to supporting the child making the allegation, as well as other children connected to the organisation.

10.7.3. Ensure feedback is provided to the LADO about the outcome of any internal investigations.

10.8. The school will follow the local safeguarding procedures for managing allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors, a copy of which can be found through the School Office.

10.9. If the allegation is made against a member of staff supplied by an external agency, the agency will be fully kept fully informed and involved in any enquiries from the LADO.

10.10. Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration and, if necessary, we will consult with the LADO in making this decision. Guidance will also be sought from HR.

10.11. If a suspension is made, restrictions will apply to all staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors regarding contact with them whilst they are suspended, including contact via social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.

10.12. Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will follow the Buckinghamshire Council procedures for managing allegations against staff and where necessary, the suspension of adults from school premises.

10.13. Should an individual staff member, supply staff member, governor, volunteer or contractor be involved in child protection, other safeguarding procedures or Police investigations in relation to abuse or neglect, they must immediately inform the Headteacher. In these circumstances, the school will need to assess whether there is any potential for risk of transfer to the workplace and the individual's own work with children.

11. Whistleblowing

11.1. We have a **Whistleblowing Policy** which can be found via the school office*.* Staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document during their induction period.

11.2. All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and report their concerns to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

12. Physical intervention/Positive handling

Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately, as part of our **Physical Control Policy**.

13. Anti-Bullying

Anti-Bullying is referenced within the **Anti-Bullying Policy** and measures are in place to prevent and respond to all forms of bullying, which acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. Examples of procedure and protocol can be found in the Anti-Bullying policy.

14. Discriminatory Incidents

In line with the **Equalities Act 2010**, our **Equalities Policy** addresses all forms of discriminatory incidents.

15. Health and Safety

15.1. We recognise the importance of safeguarding pupils throughout the school day. Our **Health and Safety policy** reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children, both physically and emotionally, within the school environment.

15.2. Part of the safeguarding measures we have in place include the safe dropping off and collection of pupils at the start and end of the school day. Children are welcomed into the school by a senior member of staff in the morning and go directly to their classrooms. Children arriving on the bus are met by two members of staff and escorted onto the school premises. At the end of the day, all children are collected from the external classroom door of their classroom. Year 1 and 2 pupils will be collected under the canopy outside their classroom. Children in KS2, pupils who have written permission from parents may walk directly out to the carpark outside the school gates. All other children are taken to their appropriate club, or to the school playground to be collected.

15.3. Pupils who leave the site during the school day do so only with the written permission of a parent/carer and are collected by an authorised adult where appropriate. School should be notified by the parents/carers regarding whom they have authorised for this task. A signing in and out book is kept by the School Office.

15.4. The After School Club provider gives a list of expected children each day, which is given to class teachers who organise the children attending After School Club.

15.5. In the event of a pupil going missing during the course of the school day we will carry out immediate checks to ensure the pupil is not on site, we will then make contact with the pupil's parents/carers and inform the police.

16. Prevent Duty

16.1. We are aware of the Prevent Duty under **Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015** to protect young people from being drawn into terrorism.

16.2. All school staff and governors have completed Prevent training.

16.3. We have in place and monitor appropriate web filtering systems.

16.4. The DSLs and senior leaders are familiar with their duties under The Prevent Duty Guidance: [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk)

17. Online Safety

All staff are aware of the school policy for **E-safety** which sets out our expectations relating to:

- Creating a safer online learning environment,
- Giving everyone the skills, knowledge and understanding to help children stay safe on-line, question the information they are accessing and support the development of critical thinking,
- Inspiring safe and responsible use of mobile technologies, to combat behaviours on-line which may make pupils vulnerable, including the sending of nude or semi-nude images.
- Use of camera equipment, including smart phones.
- What steps to take if there are concerns and where to go for help.
- Staff use of social media as set out in the **Staff Code of Conduct**.

17.1. Cyber-bullying by children, via texts, social media and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

17.2. School are aware of the risks posed by children in the online world; in particular non-age appropriate content linked to self-harm, suicide, grooming and radicalisation.

17.3. Pupils, staff and parents/carers are supported to understand the risks posed by:

- the CONTENT accessed by pupils

- their CONDUCT on-line

- who they have CONTACT within the digital world

- COMMERCE - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. (further information can be found in the school's E-Safety policy)

17.4. Bledlow Ridge School has online filtering and monitoring systems in place to ensure children are safeguarded from potentially harmful online material.

17.5 Bledlow Ridge School will follow the advice as given by the government, to advise and support children with any online learning taking place at home to ensure this is done so safely.

17.6 Children do not use mobile phones on site.

17.7 Visitors to our school are respectfully requested to keep mobile phones in their bags and not to be used in school unless necessary.

17.8 Staff use of mobile technology whilst on site is set out in the **Staff Code of Conduct.**

17.9 All staff receive awareness training in order to understand the risks children are exposed to.

17.10 The school is aware of the need to communicate regularly with parents, carers and guardians about the importance of children being safe online whilst outside of school.

18. Sending nude or semi-nude images

Sending nude images or semi-nude images, is one of a number of 'risk-taking' behaviours associated with the use of digital technologies, social media or the internet. It is accepted that children experiment and challenge boundaries and therefore the risks associated with 'online' activity can never be completely eliminated.

Further advice and guidance can be found using the link below:

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes](#)

18.1. Staff, pupils and parents/carers are supported, via training, to understand the creation and sharing of sexual imagery, such as photos or videos, of under 18s is illegal. This includes images of pupils themselves if they are under the age of 18.

18.2. Any youth produced sexual imagery disclosures will follow the normal safeguarding practices and protocols for our school. We will also use the guidelines for responding to incidents, as set out in:
[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

18.3. If the incident meets the threshold it may be necessary to refer to the police in a timely manner.

19. Child on Child Abuse (see Child on Child abuse policy)

With regard to sexual violence and sexual harassment, the school pays due regard to Part 5 of KCSIE (September 2022).

19.1. Bledlow Ridge School believes that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment free from harm by both adults and other pupils. We recognise that some safeguarding concerns can occur via child on child abuse.

19.2. The school holds and promotes a clear view that sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. Additionally, all staff operate a zero-tolerance policy to child on child abuse and will not pass off incidents as 'banter' or 'just growing up'.

19.3. All staff recognise that child on child issues may include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Racial abuse
- Physical abuse, such as hitting, hair-pulling, shaking, biting or other forms of physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Abuse related to sexual orientation or identity
- Sending nude or semi-nude images (consensual & non-consensual)
- Upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Emotional abuse
- Abuse within intimate partner relationships

19.4. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

19.5. The following will be considered when dealing with incidents:

- Whether there is a large difference in power between the victim and perpetrator i.e. size, age, ability, perceived social status or vulnerabilities, including SEND, CP/CIN or CLA
- Whether the perpetrator has previously tried to harm or intimidate pupils
- Any concerns about the intentions of the alleged perpetrator

19.6. In order to minimise the risk of child on child abuse taking place, school must:

- Deliver RE/RSE/PSHE to include teaching pupils about how to keep safe and understanding what acceptable behaviour looks like
- Ensure that pupils know that all members of staff will listen to them if they have concerns and will act upon them
- Have systems in place for any pupil to be able to voice concerns
- Develop robust risk assessments if appropriate
- Refer to any other relevant policies when dealing with incidents, such as the **Behaviour Policy** and/or the **Anti-Bullying Policy**

19.7. We recognise that 'Upskirting' involves taking a photograph under an individual's clothing without their knowledge. We understand that it causes the victim distress and humiliation and that any gender can be a victim. Staff recognise that 'Upskirting' is a criminal offence and must promptly report any such incidents to the Headteacher, DSL or most senior member of staff.

19.8. Reference will be made to the following government guidance and part 5 of the **Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022** to ensure that all staff have an understanding of the serious nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools. [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (publishing.service.gov.uk)](publishing.service.gov.uk)

19.9 All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic). The four scenarios are:

1. Manage internally - see [Behaviour Policy](#) and [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

2. Early help assessment.
The school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from an early help assessment. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. More information on Early Help is set out in Part one on Page 17 of KCSIE 2022 with full details of the early help process in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

3. Referrals to children's social care.
Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, schools and colleges should make a referral to local children's social care. At the point of referral to children's social care, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.

4. Reporting to the Police.
Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above). It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.

20. Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment

20.1. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any age and sex**. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. This can occur online, face to face (both physically and verbally) and can take place inside or outside of school. As set out in Part five of the KCSIE 2022, all staff maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** and it is never acceptable. All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

20.2. All staff have a responsibility to address inappropriate behaviour in a timely manner, however seemingly insignificant it may appear.

20.3. All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. No child will ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or that they are creating a problem for our school.

21. Cultural Issues

21.1. As a school we are aware of the cultural diversity of the community around us and work sensitively to address the unique culture of our pupils and their families as they relate to safeguarding and child protection. This includes children at risk of harm from abuse arising from culture, ethnicity, faith and belief on the part of their parent, carer or wider community.

21.2. Staff must report concerns about abuse linked to culture, faith and beliefs in the same way as other child protection concerns.

22. So-Called 'Honour' Based Abuse

22.1. Staff at our school understand there is a legal duty to report known cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and So Called 'Honour' Based Abuse to the police and they will do this with the support of the DSL. [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK](#)

22.2. Our school is aware of the need to respond to concerns relating to forced marriage and understand that it is illegal, a form of child abuse and a breach of children's rights. We recognise some pupils, due to capacity or additional learning needs, may not be able to give an informed consent and this will be dealt with under our child protection processes. Bledlow Ridge School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact 020 7008 0151 fmu@fco.gov.uk

22.3. We are aware of the signs of FGM [Female genital mutilation (FGM) | NSPCC](#)

22.4. We recognise both male and female pupils may be subject to honour-based abuse.

22.5. We promote awareness through training and access to resources, ensuring that the signs and indicators are known and recognised by staff.

22.6. Any suspicions or concerns for forced marriage are reported to the DSL who will refer to First Response or the police if emergency action is required.

23. Contextual Safeguarding and extra-familial harms

23.1. Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, children's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that children form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers may have little influence over these contexts, and children's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent/carer-children relationships.

23.2. At Bledlow Ridge School, all staff recognise that pupils may encounter safeguarding incidents that happen outside of school and can occur between children outside of this environment. We will respond to such concerns, reporting to the appropriate agencies in order to support and protect the pupil.

23.3. All staff and especially the DSLs, will consider the context of incidents that occur outside of school to establish if situations outside of their families may be putting the pupil's welfare and safety at risk of abuse or exploitation, including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.

23.4. Children who may be alleged perpetrators will also be supported to understand the impact of contextual issues on their safety and welfare.

23.5. In such cases the individual needs and vulnerabilities of each child will be considered.

Further guidance can be found at: https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/

24. Serious Violence

24.1. All staff are aware of signs and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or significant change in well-being or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Staff are aware that 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.

24.2. At Bledlow Ridge School we are aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery. Bledlow Ridge School will take appropriate measures to manage any situations arising. [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges (publishing.service.gov.uk)](#)

25. Domestic Abuse

All staff recognise that children who experience domestic abuse, including intimate partner abuse, referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse' KCSIE 2022 p.144, can suffer long lasting emotional and psychological effects. Staff must report any concerns using the school's safeguarding procedures.

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

Staff at Bledlow Ridge School recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm.

26. Children who need a social worker (Child Protection and Child In Need Plans)

26.1. Staff recognise that children may have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs and this can cause them to have barriers with attendance, behaviour, learning and mental health.

26.2. Bledlow Ridge School will share information with a social worker for any child whom they are supporting to ensure decisions are made in the best interests of the child.

26.3. Informed decisions will be made by staff with regards to safeguarding for those children who are being supported by a social worker.

26.4. The Virtual School lead the support for this cohort of children and Bledlow Ridge School will work in partnership with them and the Local Authority to improve outcomes for these children

27. Mental Health

27.1. At Bledlow Ridge School we are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or may be at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

27.2. Staff recognise that traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have lasting impact throughout a child's life and this can impact on mental health, behaviour and education.

27.3. Staff will report any mental health concern that is linked to a safeguarding concern to the DSL.

27.4. Where there are concerns for a child's mental health Bledlow Ridge School will seek advice from a trained professional, who would be able to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

[Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)](#)

28 Looked After Children

28.1 Bledlow Ridge School has a named Designated Teacher - Natasha Harrison (DT), who is responsible for promoting the education achievement and well-being for Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children   children.

28.2 The DT works closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are responded to quickly and effectively and are shared with the appropriate agencies.

28.3. The Virtual School, who is responsible for overseeing the progress of this group of children, work in partnership with the DT and other agencies, supporting them to promote better outcomes for these children.

29. Use of Photography

29.1. We will often use photographs and film to capture achievements, monitor a child's development and help promote successes within our school. Consent is gained from parents to do this.

30. Policy Review

The Governing Body of our school is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy. The date the next review is due is on the front cover of this policy.

Appendix 1

Definitions (taken from KCSIE 2022)

Everyone who works with children has a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. They should be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and know what to do and to whom to speak if they become concerned about a child or if a child discloses to them.

The following is intended as a reference for school staff and parents/carers if they become concerned that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

The Children Act 1989 defines abuse as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer 'significant harm'. Harm means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development. Four categories of abuse are identified:

Categories of Abuse

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

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

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate 11 expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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

Exploitation

Exploitation is a form of child abuse and may take a number of forms:

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved(commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child-on-Child Abuse (Child on child)

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Sexual violence and harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence,such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment,such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

The following document contains further detailed information:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges

Serious Violence and County Lines

The school ensures that all staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in, 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 well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts of new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity; drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:
- can affect any child or young person, male or female, under the age of 18
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

For further information about sexual harassment see Annex B.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines.
Some more specific indicators for county lines include children who:
-go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
-have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence
-are involved in receiving requests for drugs, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
-are exposed to techniques such as "plugging", where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
-are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a "trap house" or "cuckooing" or hotel room where there is drug activity
-owe a "debt bond" to their exploiters
-have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.
Further information can be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines

FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)

FGM is a crime committed usually within the scope of honour-based abuse. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The

procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and, therefore, girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk. FGM is illegal in the UK. On the 31 October 2015, it became mandatory for teachers to personally report known cases of FGM to the police. Please refer to section 5, above for information on this mandatory duty and to Appendix 2 for relevant contact information.

For cases where it is believed that a girl may be vulnerable to FGM or there is a concern that she may be about to be genitally mutilated the staff will inform the DSL who will report it as with any other child protection concern.

Honour-Based Abuse (HBV)

Honour-based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. It is often linked to family or community members who believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with their unwritten rule of conduct. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV

Honour based violence might be committed against people who:
- · become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- · want to get out of an arranged marriage
- · want to get out of a forced marriage
- · wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture
- · convert to a different faith from the family

Women and girls are the most common victims of honour-based violence. However, it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' do not always include violence. Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include:
- · domestic abuse
- · threats of violence
- · sexual or psychological abuse
- · forced marriage
- · being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go
- · assault

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the DSL or deputy. As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. However, if it is clear that a crime has been committed or the pupil is at immediate risk, the police will be contacted in the first place. It is important, if honour-based violence is known or suspected, that communities and family members are NOT spoken to prior to referral to the police or social care as this could increase risk to the child.

Children Missing From Education

The school views absence as an issue related to both safeguarding and educational outcomes. Measures have been taken to adopt the additional admissions and attendance requirements which came into force on 5th September 2016 with a view to minimising the occurrence of children missing from education. Relevant staff have received training from the school's safeguarding governor in the implications and implementation of these measures. The school liaises with and reports to the Local Authority, as required, on these matters and may take steps that could result in legal action for attendance, or a referral to children's social care, or both. In accordance with the requirements of KCSIE 2018, the school holds, so far as is reasonably possible, more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

Patterns of children missing education, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to

conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures. It is essential that they are assiduous in their prompt completion of attendance registers, liaise closely with the school office to resolve any unexplained absences, and report any concerns about absence to the DSL. A relatively short length of time a child is missing does not reduce risk of harm to that child, and all absence or non-attendance is considered with other known factors or concerns. On a day-to-day basis administrative staff monitor registers for patterns of absence and the DSL/a member of SLT undertakes a regular review of attendance records to analyse for patterns and trends.

The DSLs and staff consider the following, as appropriate:
Children missing lessons:
- Are there patterns in the lessons that are being missed?
- Is this more than avoidance of a subject or a teacher?
- Does the child remain on the school site?
- Is the child being sexually exploited during this time?
- Is the child late because of a caring responsibility?
- Has he or she been directly or indirectly affected by substance misuse?
- Are other pupils routinely missing the same lessons, and does this raise other risks or concerns?
- Is the lesson being missed one that would cause bruising or injuries to become visible?

Children missing single days:
- Is there a pattern in the day missed?
- Is it before or after the weekend suggesting the child is away from the area?
- Are there specific lessons or members of staff on these days?
- Is the parent informing the school of the absence on the day?
- Are missing days reported back to parents to confirm their awareness?
- Is the child being sexually exploited during this day?
- Do the parents appear to be aware?
- Are the pupil's peers making comments or suggestions as to the whereabouts of the pupil?

Children with continuous days of absence:
- Has the school been able to make contact with the parent?
- Is medical evidence being provided?
- Are siblings attending school (either our or local schools)?
- Did we have any concerns about radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage, honour based violence, sexual exploitation?
- Have we had any concerns about physical or sexual abuse?

Elective Home Education (EHE)
Home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. Schools must inform their LA of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll, except if the name is deleted after they have completed the final year at the school. Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we recommend that LAs, schools, and other key professionals work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

[Home Office – Serious Violence Strategy, April 2018 (publishing.service.gov.uk)](publishing.service.gov.uk)

County Lines: County lines County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion,

intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.
Taken from **"Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022"**

Extremism
Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

"Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022"

Use of school or college premises for non-school/college activities
Where governing bodies or proprietors hire or rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the governing body or proprietor, under the direct supervision or management of their school or college staff, their arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The governing body or proprietor should therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. The governing body or proprietor should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Appendix 2
Assessment Framework
(from Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018)

Every assessment should draw together relevant information gathered from the child and their family and from relevant practitioners including teachers and school staff, early years workers, health practitioners, the police and adult social care.

Every assessment of a child should reflect the unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context.

Each child whose referral has been accepted by children's social care should have their individual needs assessed, including an analysis of the parental capacity to meet those needs, whether they arise from issues within the family or the wider community.

Frequently, more than one child from the same family is referred and siblings within the family should always be considered.

Allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors (including Governors)

Low-level concerns
As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
We work hard to create a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. This should:
- encourage an open and transparent culture
- enable us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
- minimise the risk of abuse, and
- ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school

What is a low-level concern?
The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils.

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

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

Low level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the head, or a member of the senior leadership team. Staff are also encouraged to self-refer where, for instance, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or on reflection feel they may have compromised the School's expected professional standards. Reports about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

The Head will investigate the concern, speaking to the person who raised the concern, the individual involved, and any witnesses. The action to be taken will be determined by and proportionate to the nature of the incident, whether the report can be substantiated and whether any pattern of behaviour appears to be emerging. Support will be offered where appropriate and where needed to enable the member of staff in question to correct their behaviour in future.

The Head must record all low level concerns in writing, including details of:

- The concern,
- The context of the report,
- The name of the individual sharing the concern (requests for anonymity should be respected as far as reasonably possible);
- Action taken and the rationale for this