The Orchard Nursery

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

July 2026

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
2.0	July 2020		CAST Board All Plymouth CAST Staff	Updated in light of KCSiE 2020
3.0	Sept 2021		CAST Board All Plymouth CAST Staff	Substantial re-write to improve clarity and reflect KCSiE Sep 2021
4.0	June 2022		CAST Board All Plymouth CAST Staff and Schools	Updated to reflect changes to KCSiE 2022
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Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Board	Chair	CEO	Date Approved	Version	Date for Review

*	Yes	Yes	September 2021	3.0	September 2022
*			July 2022		
*			July 2023		July 2024
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*			July 2026	10.0	July 2027

National/Local Policy

☐ This policy must be localised by Academies

☒ This policy must not be changed, it is a CAST Policy (However, schools must change logo, contact details and review and revise in light of the highlighted and red text to reflect school context)

Position with the Unions

Does the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, the policy status is: ☐ Consulted and Approved ☐ Consulted and Not Approved ☐ Awaiting Consultation

Distribution

This draft document has been distributed to:

Position	Date	Version
All staff and committee members at The Orchard Nursery	**September 2022**	**4.0**
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All staff and committee members at The Orchard Nursery	**July 2026**	**10.0**

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Governor:	**Mike Carter**
Designated Safeguarding Lead:	**Emma Middleton**
Status & Review Cycle:	Annual
Next Review Date:	Summer 2027

Safeguarding Statement

The Orchard Nursery recognises our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities. The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy underpins and guides The Orchard Nursery's procedures and protocols to ensure its pupils and staff are safe.

The Orchard Nursery will ensure that the DSL or a trained deputy DSL is available in person during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. In exceptional circumstances, should the DSL or DDSL not be available in person, they will be contactable via telephone or a shared confidential mailbox to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay. Appropriate and robust cover arrangements will be in place for any extended and out-of-hours activities such as trips and clubs.

Key Personnel

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Trust Safeguarding Lead	Craig Follett	craig.follett@plymouthcast.com	07513 136390
Trust Safeguarding Officer	Leah Paiano	lpaiano@plymouthcast.org.uk	07590 881431
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*	**Emma Middleton**	Emma.middleton@plymouthcast.com	**01202 582228**
Deputy DSL(s)* Deputy DSL	**Jo Martin** **Kelsie Moss**	Jo.martin@plymouthcast.com **Kelsie.moss@plymouthcast.com**	**01202 582228**
Manager	**Emma Middleton**	theorchardnursery@plymouthcast.com	**01202 582228**
Chair of Governors*	**Angela Prieur**	**angelaeprieur@gmail.com**	
Designated Governor for Safeguarding	**Mike Carter**	**mikegcarter@yahoo.com**	
Education Standards Manager (ESM)	**Charlotte Targett**	**Charlotte.targett@plymouthcast.com**	**07754 853047**
LADO	**Hayley Cowmeadow and Carline Benoit**	**lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk**	**01202 817600**
Other contacts	**Children's First Response**	**childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk** **childrensoohs@bcpcouncil.gov.uk**	**01202 123334** **01202 738256**

*Out of hours contact details will be made available to staff

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Staff includes employees, agency workers, supply staff, volunteers, Governors, Directors, contractors, trainees and anyone working on behalf of the school.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents and LA corporate parents.

1. Introduction

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Information Sharing 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2026

2. Policy Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount.

At **The Orchard Nursery** we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and effective safeguarding relies upon timely information sharing, professional curiosity and effective multi-agency working. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.

The school recognises that children may experience multiple and interacting safeguarding risks across different contexts. Decisions will therefore be informed by the child's wishes and feelings, their lived experience and an understanding of the protective and risk factors within their family, peer relationships, school and wider community.

We will always act in the best interest of the child.

- All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.
- We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff[1], trainee teachersl, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- Trust and school leaders recognise that safeguarding work can affect staff and pupils emotionally.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.
- All staff are to promote relationships which are warm compassionate forgiving and non-judgmental. In line with our inclusive catholic ethos and relational approach as detailed in the Plymouth CAST behaviour model policy.

3. Policy Aims

- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school/college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school this will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies and Local Authority, especially the Police and MASH.
- To ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, an online search, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance)[2], and a single central record is kept for audit.

4. Values

Supporting children.

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that a child may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems.

- We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education when experiencing difficulties, abuse and/or neglect.

Our school will support all children by:

- encouraging self-esteem, self-assertiveness, consent, respect and responsibility through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying;
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school;
- responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress and anxiety;
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support;
- liaising and working together with all other settings, support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- notifying Children's First Response as soon as there is a significant concern;
- providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority;
- children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and Relationship and Sex Education and through all aspects of school life. This includes online safety; and
- by accessing and utilising the necessary resources, guidance and toolkits to support the identification of children requiring mental health support, support services and assessments and the subsequent systems and processes.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.

Prevention / Protection

- We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are always listened to and respected;
- include regular consultation with children e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children to report whether they have had happy/sad lunchtimes/playtimes;
- ensure that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; in particular this will include anti-bullying work, online-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training; provide focused activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages e.g. more personal safety/independent travel;
- be aware of the specific vulnerabilities and needs of individual children, and provide support and communication strategies and enhanced vigilance as necessary;
- respond quickly and sensitively to school, local, regional, national and international events by providing support etc as required; and
- ensure all staff, pupils and parent are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks have been shared.

5. Safe School, Safe Staff

We will ensure that:

- all staff and volunteers read KCSIE Part 1 annually and sign to say they read and understood it;
- all staff receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, the school's safeguarding statement, staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)[3], child protection and safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, the role and names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy(ies), and sign to say they have read, understood and will abide by it;
- all staff receive mandatory safeguarding and child protection training at **induction,** this includes: the child protection policy; behaviour policy, staff code of conduct/behaviour policy; the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and, the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)
- all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, in line with advice from Plymouth CAST, SSS online safeguarding training, and our Local Authority which is regularly updated (for example, via email, e- bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually;
- all members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns;
- all staff and governors have annual Level 2 child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse;
- DSLs attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills are refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.
- Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is made available via the school website or other means and that parents/carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy via the school handbook/newsletter/website. All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and reference to it in the school's handbook;
- the school provides a coordinated offer of universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help when additional needs of children are identified and contributes to early help arrangements and inter-agency working and plans.
- our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time, for example, by having evidence of DBS checks having been undertaken;
- community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, guidelines and procedures;
- The name of the designated members of staff for child protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy(ies), are clearly advertised in the school with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse; and
- all Governors will be given a copy of Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and will sign to say they have read, understood and will abide by the information contained.

Lone Working and Home Visits

Plymouth CAST recognises that lone working, particularly during home visits or 1-to-1 pupil/student interactions, presents unique risks to both pupil/student safety and staff professional vulnerability.

- All staff undertaking home visits or working in isolation with pupils must do so in strict accordance with the Plymouth CAST Health & Safety Policy (Section 4.21).
- No home visit should take place without a prior risk assessment that considers the environment, the history of the family/pupil, and the communication methods available to the staff member.
- Staff must ensure that a "check-in/check-out" procedure is followed and that they remain within visible or commutable range of other adults wherever possible. Any safeguarding concerns arising during a lone-working activity must be reported via the standard CPOMS/Staff Safe process immediately upon completion of the task.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- Plymouth CAST Safeguarding Policy principles and procedures apply in full, at all times to all off-site visits and educational trips. All off-site activities will be planned, risk assessed, and approved in line with the Plymouth CAST Health and Safety Policy, the Outside Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities (OEVOSA) Policy, and the Plymouth CAST Off-Site Visits Policy (Primary/Secondary).
- All members of The Local Governing Board (LGB) understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that there is a Child Protection and Safeguarding policy together with a staff code of conduct
- The LGB should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff code of conduct are consistent with Plymouth CAST and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publically available on the school website or by other means.
- Ensures that all staff including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy and staff Code of Conduct.
- All staff have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) Part 1 and that mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance.
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children. disqualification and barring regulations, following updated DBS processes, and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have had they not resigned.
- The school's Education Standards Manager will liaise with the LA on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Governing Body/Board who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that the role is explicit in the role holder's job description.
- On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by the LA, the Trust/ SSS Training, or other provider every two years.
- All other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate; but at least annually.
- All staff undertake specific focus training relevant to the context of the school and its local area.
- The DSL will ensure that individual members of staff and the school staff group as a whole have a wide base of specific safeguarding/child protection training.
- Governors receive safeguarding training at induction and at least annually thereafter appropriate to their role.
- At least one member of the local CAST board has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal social health and economic education (PSHE) and/or for maintained schools through relationship and sex education (RSE).

- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
- Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges
- Enhanced DBS checks (without barred list checks, unless the governor is also a volunteer at the school) and S128 checks are in place for all Governors.
- Enhanced DBS checks with barred list checks are carried out for any volunteer who frequently teaches, trains, instructs or supervises children as they are now legally in regulated activity. 'Frequently' meaning overnight or more than 3 days in a 30 day period.
- Where there are concerns about the way in which safeguarding is carried out, staff should refer to the school's Whistleblowing Policy.
- Any identified weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.
- The LGB is responsible for ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness and that staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- The headteacher will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or appropriately trained deputy is always available during school hours. Availability means that staff can access safeguarding advice and decision-making without delay. Where the DSL is not physically on site, they will be immediately contactable by phone or other agreed means such as a shared confidential mailbox. In such cases, a senior leader on site will take responsibility for initial safeguarding actions to ensure concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay.
- The headteacher will ensure robust arrangements for cover, including for educational visits, extended school provision and periods outside normal term time. If support cannot be accessed through the above methods, the school's SIO, the DoE, or the Trust Safeguarding Officer should be contacted using contact information in the Key Personnel section of this Policy.
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff;
- in line with Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026, an appropriately experienced person has the lead responsibility for Filtering and Monitoring, ensuring all staff understand their role;
- there are at least 2 Designated Safeguarding Leads, and these are named within this policy, along with their contact details.
- there is a named governor for safeguarding who is named in the policy, along with appropriate contact details.
- The headteacher will ensure that: sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy(ies) DSL(s) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings; as outlined in apprendix 1
- where there is a safeguarding concern that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide;
- systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback which operate with the best interest of the child at heart;
- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures;
- that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online;
- they liaise with the school's Education Standards Manager (ESM) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), before taking any action and on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer; and
- anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

- Ensure that there are staff on site who are appropriately qualified in First Aid and/or Paediatric First Aid.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- holds ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school and is a member of the SLT;
- Will ensure their training is consistent and maintained with the training areas outlined in Appendix 1 of this Policy;
- has lead responsibility for *Filtering and Monitoring*, and has received appropriate training and support to enable her/him to understand and fulfil this role
- acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole school community;
- will have the necessary knowledge and understanding to recognise possible children at risk of contextual and/or familial abuse or exploitation;
- will take a lead in assessing the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its pupils
- will ensure that all staff are familiar with the contextual safeguarding issues that pose a risk to all children in the school, and specifically to groups or individuals.
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings;
- is appropriately trained with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals but at least annually;
- must refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the MASH[4], and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Enquiries must be followed up in writing, if referred by telephone;
- Must keep detailed, accurate records on the school's CPOMs system/ written records as appropriate, of all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- The Trust expects that safeguarding information will be transferred in a way that ensures there is **no break in safeguarding oversight or support for the child;**
- will ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to enable them to use and maintain the CPOMs system effectively.
- Must provide oversight of the CPOMs system to ensure that it is used appropriately and effectively.
- Must ensure that all such records are kept confidential, stored securely and are separate from pupil records, until the child's 25th birthday;
- Must ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional file is marked on the pupil records;
- Must ensure that when a pupil leaves the school, relevant child protection information is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file) as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit and that confirmation of receipt is obtained;
- in addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL of 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. All transfers should be made securely and to support the the pupil's safety, welfare and continuity of care;
- The transfer of safeguarding information **must not be delayed**, and arrangements must ensure that **information is shared in a timely manner** to protect the child, within 5 days of an-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of the new term.
- The school must ensure that **records are complete, up to date, factual and clear**, so that they can be understood and used effectively by the receiving setting and other safeguarding professionals.
- Particular care should be taken to distinguish between current safeguarding concerns and historic information, ensuring that past issues are presented with appropriate context e.g. where a file contains extensive historical

information, a concise summary of current risk and relevant context is likely to support more effective safeguarding than the transfer of unstructured records alone;

- will ensure that when a pupil joins the school, relevant children protection information is requested from the previous school (separately from the main pupil file) as soon as possible, and recording any requests for this information are logged;
- will liaise with the Local Authority, its safeguarding partners[6] and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- has a working knowledge of local authority child protection and safeguarding procedures;
- will ensure that either they, or another staff member, attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report where required which has been shared with the parents;
- will ensure that any pupil currently with a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their social worker; The Orchard Nursery will contact on day one of absence.
- will ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the School's child protection policy, behaviour policy, staff Code of conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and ensure that the policies are used appropriately;
- will organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all school staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences;
- will contribute to and provide, with the Headteacher and Chair of LCB, the "Audit of Statutory Duties and Associated Responsibilities" (S175/157 audit) to be submitted annually to the Education Safeguarding Team working on behalf of **BCP council**
- DSL has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help and intervention and will support members of staff where Early Help and/or Safer Me (concerns around exploitation) is appropriate. The DSL will work in alignment with Children's First Response Hub to ensure that Early Help/Family Help action is taken to support a child, young person, or their family early in the life of a problem, as soon as it emerges. The school will create a clear plan with parents and provide updates on progress through regular meetings and information. The DSL will ensure that the school will work together with parents and carers, with their permission, to access the right support for families and achieve positive ways forward
- https://www.fid.bcpcouncil.gov.uk/send-local-offer/information/crisis-and-early-help-support-services/bcp-council-early-help-services
- ensure that all Safeguarding forms (SG Forms) are completed and returned to the Trust as required
- endeavour to attend and contribute to Trust Safeguarding Network meetings
- engage with Trust safeguarding reviews, and contribute to Trust Peer safeguarding reviews as required.
- engage with Trust peer supervision for DSLs; and
- will ensure that the name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies, are clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- be aware of pupils who have a social worker; communicate this information to appropriate members of staff who work with the pupils; maintain effective communication with the LA Virtual Headteacher.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

- are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

All School Staff:

- understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action;

- Staff are expected to exercise professional curiosity whenever concerns arise about a child's welfare
- Understand their role in Filtering and Monitoring.
- consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child;
- will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect both familial and contextual; and recognise that contextual harm can take a variety of different forms;
- know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse through delivery of 'Working together to Safeguard Children', and 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused';
- Complete CPOMS entries and any other necessary recording as required by the school, Trust or local authority as soon as possible depending on the nature of the incident and always within 24 hours. The need to enter details on CPOMS should never delay informing the DSL or equivalent.
- will refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary, where the child is at immediate risk to the police or MASH;
- will be aware of the Case Resolution protocol (steps outlined in Section 34 Escalation Pathway) or the duty to report concerns if the DSL fails to do so without reasonable cause;
- are aware of the universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help, process and understand their role within it including identifying emerging problems for children who may benefit from an offer of Early Help/Family Help, liaising with the DSL in the first instance and supporting other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment through information sharing. In some cases, staff may act as the Lead Professional in Early Help/ Family Help cases; will work with the DSL in the first instance and supporting other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment through information sharing. In some cases, staff may act as the Lead Professional in Early Help/Family Help cases;
- will provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- will ensure that all mobile phones, wearable technology, cameras, and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are used safely and appropriately only in designated areas as identified by the Headteacher
- will adhere to and follow expectations regarding professional boundaries and behaviour including social media, in line with the Code of Conduct; and
- The Statutory Framework for EYFS requires the school to inform you that you are expected to disclose any convictions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect your suitability to work with children (whether received before or during your employment at the school). Plymouth CAST requires all employees in nursery, First or Primary schools to complete the disclosure form, and inform the headteacher of any changes immediately:
  This is not exhaustive but would include:

    - If you were banned from working with the children by the DBS.
    - If you were cautioned or convicted of any violent or sexual offences against children.
    - If you were cautioned or convicted of any violent or sexual offences against adults.
    - If you were disqualified from caring for children.
    - If you have been issued a care order for a child in your care.
    - If you have had a registration that has been refused or cancelled in realtion to childcare of children's homes.
    - If you have been disqualified from private fostering.
    - To the best of your knowledge you are living or working in the same household as someone who has been disqualified from working with children under the Childcare Act 2006, ie. would answer yes to any of the above statements.
    - If any of these apply to you it is your responsibility to inform the headteacher immediately.

7. Confidentiality

- **The Orchard Nursery** recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018[8] and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (collectively known as "data protection laws")
- is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm. . See Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to MASH with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will contact the MASH consultation line.

8. Child Protection Procedures

- Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate off line abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- Abuse and Neglect may also take place outside of the home, contextual safeguarding, and this may include (but not limited to), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, radicalisation.
- Further information about the four categories of abuse; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in appendices 1 and 2.
- Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "It could happen here".
- Any child in any family in any school could cause harm to other family members, referred to as child-to-parent or care-giver abuse.
- A child may require support through Family Help, Child in Need or Child Protection processes simultaneously with support provided by school.
- There are also a number of specific safeguarding concerns that we recognise our pupils may experience;

    - child missing from education
    - child missing from home or care
    - child sexual exploitation (CSE)
    - child criminal exploitation (CCE)
    - bullying including cyberbullying
    - domestic abuse
    - drugs
    - fabricated or induced illness
    - faith abuse
    - female genital mutilation (FGM)
    - forced marriage
    - gangs and youth violence

- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation
- youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking
- child on child abuse
- upskirting
- serious violence

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse.

We also recognise that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

If staff are concerned about a child's welfare

Staff must follow The Orchard Nursery arrangements and procedures –

Appendix 1 ***Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures***

- If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record these concerns on the CPOMs system in the agreed way. They may also discuss their concerns in person with the DSL but the details of the concern must be recorded on the CPOMS system.
- inform the DSL that a concern has been raised
- There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.
- **The Orchard Nursery** recognises that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.
- In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.
- Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and record on the school's CPOMs system..
- If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a pupil making a disclosure.
- Every member of staff has both the authority and responsibility to act immediately where they believe a child may be at risk.
-

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff

- We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.
- A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

- The wishes, feelings and lived experiences of children will be central to safeguarding decision-making.
- All adults working within our schools are required to work in a way that reflects the trust's trauma-informed relational approach to behaviour management and professional interactions

During their conversation with the pupil staff will;

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely;
- remain calm and not overreact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if she/he feels that she/he are upsetting the listener;
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone;
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk;
- take what the child is disclosing seriously;
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions;
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations;
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused;
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong; and
- tell the child what will happen next.

If a pupil talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible on the school's CPOMs system. Staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should include the name of the member of staff; the date, and should also detail where the disclosure was made and who else was present. The record should be forwarded to the DSL.

Notifying Parents

The School will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and normally the DSL/DDSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's MASH e.g. familial sexual abuse.

Where there are concerns about forced marriage or honour based abuse, parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk. In some circumstances it would be appropriate to contact the police.

A disclosure from the child of a Trust employee attending a Plymouth CAST setting will be dealt with in line with all other pupils. This will mean that the parents will be informed in line with the policy and will not be given any further information that may be available within the school. Any member of staff having a concern regarding the child of another employee should disclose this information to the relevant DSL/DDSL without discussing with the parent. Members of staff that have access to all levels of CPOMS should not access the records of their own children unless they followed the same process set out to all parents. The purpose of this is to ensure that all pupils have the same level of privacy and confidentiality within their school setting.

Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to children's MASH or other support is appropriate in accordance with Local Authority protocols.
- If a referral is needed, the DSL should make this rapidly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made they can and should

consider making a referral themselves.

- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves.
- Where necessary, concerns should be escalated to the LA in line with the relevant Resolution or Escalation Policy, using the stages and timescales outlined in the policy.
- Where the DSL/Headteacher is concerned about the LA response, the DSL/Headteacher should contact the school's ESM for further advice.
- Where necessary the ESM/Trust DSL will liaise with the LA to help resolve the situation.
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's MASH and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

Supporting our Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.
- The Trust provides peer supervision for DSLs with all DSLs to engage in Peer Supervision once per half term, and to access supervision from the Trust Safeguarding Officer once per term.
- Safeguarding is an integral part of school improvement, and as such will be supported and challenged by the work of the Trust's School Improvement Officers and the Director of Education.

Safeguarding records should clearly distinguish between fact, professional observation and opinion and safeguarding practice will be continually reviewed through learning from serious child safeguarding incidents, local safeguarding reviews, national reviews and emerging safeguarding themes.

Reflective Safeguarding Practice
The school is committed to fostering a culture of reflective safeguarding practice and continuous improvement. Safeguarding leaders and staff will regularly reflect upon safeguarding concerns, decisions and interventions to consider what has worked well, whether different approaches may have achieved better outcomes, and what can be learned to strengthen future practice. Reflection will be informed by the views and lived experiences of children, feedback from families where appropriate, learning from local and national safeguarding reviews, professional supervision, and emerging safeguarding themes. The purpose of reflective practice is not to apportion blame, but to promote professional learning, strengthen decision-making and continually improve safeguarding outcomes for children.

Post-Incident Debrief and Learning
Following significant safeguarding incidents, the school will, where appropriate, undertake a structured debrief to review the effectiveness of its response and identify any learning. This will include consideration of the actions taken, decision-making, communication, information sharing, multi-agency working, record keeping and support provided to the child, family and staff. The purpose of the debrief is to promote reflection, identify good practice, recognise any areas for improvement and strengthen future safeguarding practice. Debriefs will be conducted in a supportive and professionally respectful manner, recognising that safeguarding practice should continually evolve through learning and reflection. The school will seek to learn not only from safeguarding incidents but also from near misses and examples of effective practice.

Creating a Positive Safeguarding Culture
The school is committed to fostering a positive safeguarding culture in which every member of the school community understands that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff are encouraged to act with professional curiosity, share concerns promptly, respectfully challenge where necessary, reflect on safeguarding practice and learn from experience. Leaders will promote openness, transparency and continuous improvement, recognising that effective safeguarding depends upon strong relationships, shared responsibility and a relentless focus on the best interests of every child including:

- contextual safeguarding;
- ACEs;
- protective factors;

- attendance as safeguarding;
- digital resilience;
- professional curiosity; amd
- professional challenge.

9. Children who are particularly vulnerable

The Orchard Nursery recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children.

We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances.

In some cases possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.

Some children may also find it harder to disclose abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

Any child may benefit from universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- has a social worker
- is a looked after child, or has been previously looked after
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is a privately fostered child;
- has an imprisoned parent;
- is experiencing mental health, wellbeing difficulties.
- has a medical condition including any allergies
- has experienced multiple suspensions
- Is on a part-time timetable
- Is repeatedly removed from classrooms
- At risk of permanent exclusion

At **The Orchard Nursery** we recognise that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. The DSL works with the SENCo and SLT to

ensure that all staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. Staff should maintain a professional curiosity

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- recognising the caring responsibilities of young carers can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing
- children or young people might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition/allergy. This might occur where relevant information about a medical condition is not provided to the school or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the child at risk. Supporting Pupils At School with Medical Conditions and Allergy Safety in Schools

At **The Orchard Nursery** we provide extra support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

Attendance and Safeguarding
The school recognises that attendance is a key safeguarding indicator and that children who are persistently absent, frequently absent, or whose attendance patterns change significantly may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, poor mental health or other safeguarding concerns. Whilst poor attendance does not in itself indicate that a child is at risk of harm, staff will always consider whether there are underlying safeguarding issues affecting a child's attendance. The school will work proactively with children, families and partner agencies to identify barriers to attendance, provide appropriate support through Family Help where required, and take timely action where safeguarding concerns are identified.

10. Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying

Our school policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying such as misogyny or misandry. We keep a record of known bullying incidents which is shared with and analysed by the Local CAST board. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse.

The Headteacher and the DSL consider the individual circumstances of each case of bullying, and will implement child protection procedures if appropriate.

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PHSE/R(S)E, throughout the school curriculum, and in liturgies and assemblies. At the Orchard Nursery we implement Golden Rules and address these through stories and group times.

11. Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately, and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of racist incidents and report them in line with LA and Trust protocols.

12. Radicalisation and Extremism

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into

terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

School staff receive training to help identify early signs of radicalisation and extremism. Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in detailed in Appendix 6.

Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014)[11].

The school governors, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include, the use

of school premises by external agencies, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent then **Dorset Police** must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

13. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse represents one quarter of all violent crime. It is actual or threatened economic physical, emotional, psychological or sexual abuse. It involves the use of power and control by one person over another. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, and religion, mental or physical ability. Domestic abuse can also involve other types of abuse.

We use the term domestic abuse to reflect that a number of abusive and controlling behaviours are involved beyond violence.

Slapping, punching, kicking, bruising, rape, ridicule, constant criticism, threats, manipulation, sleep deprivation, social isolation, and other controlling behaviours all count as abuse.

Living in a home where domestic abuse takes place is harmful to children and can have a serious impact on their behaviour, wellbeing and understanding of healthy, positive relationships. Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of significant harm and staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of a child suffering or witnessing domestic abuse (See Appendix 5).

14. Serious Violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL (or a deputy). The DSL should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns (contextual safeguarding), and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Schools play a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending. Schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school). Further information on indicators, risk factors, and protective actions relating to serious violence is provided in Annex A of KCSiE 2026.

Early, evidence-based support for those considered at risk, as well as at critical points when concerns emerge, is vital. This includes access to trusted adults, social and emotional skill support, and, where available, targeted interventions such as mentoring or therapeutic support (practical guidance on evidenced support is available from the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) (the "what works" centre for preventing violence).

Designated safeguarding leads can find further guidance on referrals and when to contact the police in KCSiE 2026 Annex B (Manage Referrals).

15. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This power imbalance could be due to age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and /or access to economic or other resources. The abuse could be linked to an exchange for something the victim perceives that they need or want and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increase status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It may involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. CCE and CSE can affect both male and female children and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery.

Examples of CCE:

- Forced into transporting drugs or money through County Lines
- Working in cannabis factories
- Shoplifting/pickpocketing
- Vehicle crime
- Violence against others
- Financial exploitation

Examples of CSE:

- Sexual abuse involving physical contact
- Production of sexual images
- Forcing children to look at sexual images/watch sexual activities
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet

Children should be recognised as victims as it is not possible for a child to consent to being exploited, abused or trafficked and they may not recognise it is happening to them.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited should be passed without delay to the DSL. **The Orchard Nursery** is aware there is a clear link between regular school absence/truanting, CSE and CCE. Staff should consider a child to be at potential CSE/CCE risk in the case of regular school absence/truanting and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents to assess this risk. In accordance with KCSiE 2026, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE and CSE is identified. Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance

The DSL will use the Pan Dorset Child Exploitation Strategy

The DSL will use the *Devon Children and Families Partnership Adolescent Safety Framework Safer Me Assessment*
https://pdscp.co.uk/up_content/uploads/2020/04/FINAL - Pan-Dorset–Child-Exploitation-Strategy-14.04.20.pdf
on all occasions when there is a concern that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited, or where indicators have been observed that are consistent with a child who is being or who is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited. The 'Partner Information Sharing and Request Form' will be completed and sent to Dorset Police. It should include details of any concerns about individuals or groups who pose a risk to children and young people through exploitation, targeting and abusing sexually or through other criminal means such as county-lines, druglines and drug supply. The form focuses specifically on the behaviours or actions of alleged, suspected or know perpetrators. If the DSL is in any doubt, she/he will contact MASH for consultation.

In all cases if the assessment identified any level of concern, the DSL should contact their local MACE[13] (Missing & Child Exploitation) and email the completed Safer Me Early Help/Family Help assessment along with a MASH enquiry form. If a child is in immediate danger the police should be called on 999. Concerns must also be recorded on the school's CPOMs system.

The Orchard Nursery is aware that a child often is not able to recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and does not see themselves as a victim. As a consequence, the child may resent what they perceive as interference by staff. However, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other type of abuse.

The Orchard Nursery includes the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation in the PHSE/SRE and wider school curriculum. Pupils will be informed of the grooming process and how to protect themselves from people who may potentially be intent on causing harm. They will be supported in terms of recognising and assessing risk in relation to CSE/CCE, including online, and knowing how and where to get help. Throughout our curriculum children are taught about **CONSENT RESPONSIBILITY RESPECT and DIGNITY**

16. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police[14] .

The duty applies to all persons in **The Orchard Nursery** who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, however the DSL should be informed.

If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101. The report should be made by the close of the next working day.

The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases

School staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators of FGM which are set out in Appendix 4. Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported to the DSL as a matter of urgency. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

All concerns relating to FGM or suspected FGM must be recorded on CPOMS.

17. Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has been a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage which is common in several cultures. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 32-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of a forced marriage, they must contact the DSL as a matter of urgency. All concerns must be recorded on CPOMS.

School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with MASH.

18. Honour-based Abuse

Honour based abuse (HBA) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code.

Honour based abuse 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.

It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of honour-based abuse, they must contact the DSL as a matter of urgency. All concerns must be logged on CPOMS.

19. One Chance Rule

All staff are aware of the 'One Chance' Rule' in relation to forced marriage, FGM and HBV. Staff recognise they may only have one chance' to speak to a pupil who is a potential victim and have just one chance to save a life.

The Orchard Nursery is aware that if the victim is not offered support following disclosure that the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBA cases.

20. Mental Health

Staff will be aware that mental health problems may be both a safeguarding issue and an indicator that a child has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Whilst **The Orchard Nursery** recognises that only appropriately trained professionals can diagnose mental health problems; staff are able to make day to day observations of children and identify such behaviour that may suggest they are experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns such as self-harm, suicidal ideation, or risk of suicide. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise.
These could include:
• significant changes in behaviour,
• ongoing difficulty sleeping,
• withdrawing from social situations,
• not wanting to do things they usually like, and
• physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, education staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. Schools and colleges should ensure that any interventions they offer are evidenced as safe and effective and appropriate for the need and phase of education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Follow up with a record on CPOMS. If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
The school recognises that some children may have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, parental mental ill-health, bereavement or other significant trauma. While ACEs do not determine a child's future outcomes, they may increase vulnerability and impact on behaviour, relationships, learning, attendance, emotional wellbeing and physical health. Staff should remain professionally curious, adopt a trauma-informed and child-centred approach, recognise each child's strengths and protective factors, and work with families and partner agencies to provide appropriate support at the earliest opportunity.

How traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), including experiences of abuse and neglect can impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education through to adolescence and adulthood will be covered in safeguarding awareness training and updates. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern they will share this with the DSL or deputy. (Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) encompass various forms of physical and emotional abuse, neglect and household dysfunction experienced in childhood. ACEs have been linked to premature death as well as to various health conditions, including mental health issues)

Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) are NHS teams that work in local schools and colleges to help young people offering one-to-one support, group sessions, and whole school support.

Protective Factors and Building Resilience
While some children may experience significant safeguarding risks, many also have protective factors that promote resilience and positive outcomes. These may include having a trusted adult, secure and positive relationships with family members, friends or school staff, a strong sense of belonging within school, regular attendance, engagement in education, participation in extracurricular activities, positive peer relationships and access to appropriate support services. The school is committed to recognising and strengthening these protective factors, ensuring that every child feels safe, valued, listened to and supported. Staff should seek to identify and build upon each child's strengths alongside responding to safeguarding concerns, recognising that

protective relationships and early intervention can significantly reduce vulnerability and improve outcomes.

21. Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

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

Due to the close working relationship that schools have with children, families, the Diocese and the wider community, they are uniquely placed to identify these arrangements

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff must notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of or suspect private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

22. Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and neglect. **The Orchard Nursery** ensures there is an appointed designated teacher for looked after children who has the appropriate training and that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after/previously looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the Devon County Council's virtual school head for children in care.

The designated teacher for looked after children works with the virtual school head to discuss how Pupil Premium Plus funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher will follow the statutory guidance. 'Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked- after children.

The term *Looked After Child* includes children who are care experienced children having been adopted having previously been in overseas state care (referred to as IAPLAC) i.e a child who has been adopted having previously been in overseas state care/ in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in 'state care outside of England' if he/she was in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care

whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

23. Children Missing Education

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contact methods for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
   a)leave school to be home educated
   b)move away from the school's location
   c)remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
   d)are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
   e)are persistently absent, or
   e)are permanently excluded

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.
When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

The DSL will monitor pupil attendance, and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities.

Schools must consider pupils/students, who have moved to Elective Home Education (EHE), that could potentially become considered Children Missing Education (CME). Schools must notify the Trust DSL and Safeguarding Officer of any pupils/students moving to EHE.

See The Orchard Nursery's attendance policy.

Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
Where staff are concerned about the attendance of a pupil, they should contact the DSL in the normal way.

24. Children with a Social Worker

at **The Orchard Nursery**, we recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils.

This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health.

The school's DSL will ensure that all staff are aware of children that they work with who have a social worker, and will support them in meeting their needs.

We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

Our DSL works closely with social workers to ensure children receive the best possible support in Nursery.

25. Online Safety

The setting recognises the growing use of AI in education. Leaders will undertake appropriate training to understand the opportunities and risks associated with AI and will ensure staff receive guidance on its safe, ethical and appropriate use. Any use of AI must comply with safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection and acceptable use requirements.

The setting does not use AI to make decisions about children's welfare, learning or development. Professional judgement by suitably trained practitioners remains central to all assessment, safeguarding and decision-making processes.

Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social media sites such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and ooVoo.

Unfortunately, some adults and other children use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts or emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexual behaviour such as webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material such as pornographic websites or those which promote extremist behaviour, criminal activity, suicide or eating disorders.

Our schools are mobile-phone / Smart Watch free environments, in line with the Plymouth CAST Mobile Phone Policy and the statutory guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools

Pupils should not have access to mobiles during lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes. The Headteacher will decide how best to achieve this within their own school.

School staff are aware of the risks of misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories when using digital sources of information to create teaching plans or to support discussions with pupils, pupil research etc.

Within the school curriculum, pupils are taught to be aware of the existence of, and ways of mitigating, the risks of misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories

At **The Orchard Nursery** we manage the risk by:

- when the pupils use the school's network to access the internet they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. However many pupils are able to access the internet using their own devices and data plans. To minimise inappropriate use, as a school we:

The Orchard Nursery has an online safety policy which explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and how we respond to online safety incidents.

The Orchard Nursery will also provide advice to parents when pupils are being asked to learn online at home and consider how best to safeguard both pupils and staff.

Pupils are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum and all staff receive online safety training which is regularly updated. The school online safety co-ordinator is **Emma Middleton.**

At **The Orchard Nursery** pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

At The Orchard Nursery we use Smartie the Penguin resources and stories to promote online safety for EYFS **https://www.childnet.com/resources/smartie-the-penguin**

Remote Teaching/ Learning is a powerful tool for supporting children's learning away from the classroom, but brings with it increased safeguarding risks.

When planning, delivering and monitoring remote education, school staff will have due regard to the school's online safety policy and remote learning protocols.

During periods, episodes or individual activities of remote teaching all staff must remain fully cognisant of the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection policies and protocols; operate within them, and remain alert to signs of risk or potential harm to children.

Mobile phones are not allowed to be carried by staff in the setting. All personal phones must be put away with personal possessions and kept in the staff room.

With the increase in Generative AI technology, all staff must use their professional judgement when using these tools. Staff must complete the DfE/National College training materials and must take great care to ensure they are abiding by their legal responsibilities, including those related to data protection, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, intellectual property law, and filtering and monitoring requirements.

Guidance to support schools and colleges to understand safety considerations and legal responsibilities if they choose to use Generative AI (either teacher-facing or pupil-facing) can be found at Generative artificial intelligence in education.

To complement this, the Department of Education, in partnership with the Chiltern Learning Trust and Chartered College of Teaching, have published online resources to help school and college staff to use AI safely and effectively. Module 3 provides important information on identifying and mitigating key risks associated with safeguarding, ethics, data protection, and intellectual property.

The key risks associated with AI are:

- Pupil or student exposure to, and creation of, inappropriate or harmful content
- Pupil or student exposure to, and creation of, inaccurate, misleading, or biased content
- AI-generated indecent images
- Deepfakes
- Image manipulation
- Coercion using AI
- Data protection breaches
- Intellectual property infringements
- Academic integrity challenges.

Developing Digital Resilience

The school is committed not only to protecting children whilst they are online but also to developing their digital resilience. This includes equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence to use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully, to recognise and respond appropriately to online risks, to think critically about online content, and to seek help from a trusted adult whenever they feel worried or unsafe. Through the curriculum and wider pastoral support, the school will promote safe digital behaviours, respectful online relationships and responsible use of technology, enabling children to participate positively and safely in an increasingly digital world.

At **The Orchard Nursery** we keep pupils safe when they are accessing online learning whilst out of school by:

Educating the parents and providing resources, guidance and the knowledge to support the children at home.

26 Filtering and Monitoring Requirements

The importance of meeting the standard

Schools and colleges should provide a safe environment to learn and work, including when online. Filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

Clear roles, responsibilities and strategies are vital for delivering and maintaining effective filtering and monitoring systems. It's important that the right people are working together and using their professional expertise to make informed decisions.

How to meet the standard

Local CAST Boards and proprietors have overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and need assurance that the standards are being met.

To do this, they should identify and assign:

- a member of the senior leadership team and a governor, to be responsible for ensuring these standards are met

Member of School SLT: ***Name: Emma Middleton***
LCB Member: ***Name: Mike Carter***
Member of Trust SELT: ***Name: Rose Colpus-Fricker***
Board Director: **Name:** ***Graham Briscoe***

- the roles and responsibilities of staff and third parties, for example, external service providers

IT Service Provider: **Xerox/ITEC/Open DNS/AUX IT**

We are aware that there may not be full-time staff for each of these roles and responsibility may lie as part of a wider role within the school, college, or trust. However, it must be clear who is responsible and it must be possible to make prompt changes to your provision.

Technical requirements to meet the standard

The school's senior leadership team are responsible for:

- procuring filtering and monitoring systems
- documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why
- reviewing the effectiveness of the system at least once every academic year
- ensuring that the records of these effectiveness reviews are kept
- overseeing reports

They are also responsible for making sure that all staff:

- understand their role
- are appropriately trained
- follow policies, processes and procedures
- act on reports and concerns

Senior leaders should work closely with Governors, the Trust, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and IT service providers in all aspects of filtering and monitoring.
Day to day management of filtering and monitoring systems requires the specialist knowledge of both safeguarding and IT staff to be effective. The DSL should work closely together with IT service providers to meet the needs of the school. School leaders may need to ask filtering or monitoring providers for system specific training and support.

The DSL should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which could include overseeing and acting on:

- filtering and monitoring reports
- safeguarding concerns
- checks to filtering and monitoring systems at least once every academic year to review effectiveness
- ensuring that the records of these effectiveness reviews are kept

The IT service provider should have technical responsibility for:

- maintaining filtering and monitoring systems
- providing filtering and monitoring reports
- completing actions following concerns or checks to systems

The IT service provider should work with the senior leadership team and DSL to:

- procure systems
- identify risk
- carry out reviews
- carry out checks

You should review your filtering and monitoring provision at least annually

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges

27 Child on Child Abuse including Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment/Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

Harmful sexual behaviour exists on a continuum and should always be considered within the context of the child's age, stage of development, understanding and the circumstances in which the behaviour occurred. Not all sexualised behaviour is harmful or indicative of abuse; however, all concerns should be taken seriously, discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and responded to proportionately in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Professional judgement should be exercised when determining the most appropriate response, recognising that some behaviours may require education and support, whilst others may indicate significant safeguarding concerns requiring immediate intervention and referral.

At **The Orchard Nursery** we recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. Staff must remain vigilant at all times to signs of child on child abuse and recognise 'it could happen here'.

At **The Orchard Nursery** we have a zero tolerance approach to abuse, and it must never be passed off as banter.

We recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and taken seriously.

Staff are trained to recognise the different forms that child on child abuse may take, such as:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) can occur between two or more children of age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable.

The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally

inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found in

Sexual development and behaviour in children - NSPCC Learning

When assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical. Sexual behaviour between children may be considered harmful if there is a significant age difference, typically more than two years' difference or if one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child may also abuse an older child, especially if they hold power over them, e.g., due to a disability or physical size. Advice on responding to children who display sexualised behaviour is available in Responding to children who display sexualised behaviour Links to confidential specialist support are listed in Annex A of KCSiE 2026.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny or misandry can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. Children who display HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Research indicates that young people rarely disclose child on child abuse and that if they do, it is likely to be to their friends. Therefore, **The Orchard Nursery** will also educate pupils in how to support their friends if they are concerned about them, that they should talk to a trusted adult in the school and what services they can contact for further advice. Staff recognise that a pupil's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. Staff should always act on any concerns about a child's welfare.

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations of child on child abuse in any form should be referred to the DSL. Where a concern regarding child on child abuse has been disclosed to the DSL(s), advice and guidance may be sought from MASH and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed the police will be contacted.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Effective safeguarding practice includes:

- If possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, preferably one of them being the DSL or DDSL
- Careful management and handling of reports that include an online incident. Staff must not view or forward illegal images of a child.
- Not promising confidentiality as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further such as DSL or LA children's social care. It is important the victim understands the next steps and who the report will be passed to.
- A child is likely to disclose to someone they trust. That person should be supportive and respectful of the child.
- Certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone such as vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.

- Staff must listen carefully to the child, using the child's language, be non-judgemental, clear about boundaries, and how the report will be progressed. Staff must not ask leading questions but can ask if the child has been harmed and the nature of what that harm was.
- Inform the DSL as soon as practically possible if the DSL was not involved in the initial report.

Working with external agencies the school will respond to the unacceptable behaviour. If a pupil's behaviour negatively impacts on the safety and welfare of other pupils, then safeguards will be put in place to promote the well-being of the pupils affected and the victim and perpetrator will be provided with support.

Where a child has been harmed, or is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, the school should make a referral to the LA's children's social care. At the point of referral, the school will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, such as placing the child at additional risk. Any report to the Police will generally be made in parallel with the referral to the LA. It is important that the DSL and DDSLs are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process. All concerns, discussion, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded.

Following the report of sexual violence, the DSL or DDSL should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. This should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support
- Whether there may have been other victims
- The alleged perpetrator(s)
- All the other children (and if appropriate, staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms
- The time and location of the incident, any action required to make the location safer.

Risk assessments should be recorded, and kept under review. The school should be actively considering the risks posed to all pupils and put adequate measures in place to protect and keep them safe.

Any detailed assessments of expert professionals should be used to inform the school to support and protect their pupils and to update their own risk assessment.

Staff should always act in the best interests of the children. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s), and any other children involved or impacted.

The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victims and the parents or carers of the alleged perpetrator(s). The exception to this rule is if informing a parent or carer will put the children at additional risk. It is good practice for the DSL to meet with the victim's parents or carers to discuss arrangements that are being put in place to safeguard the victim and to understand their wishes in terms of support they may need. It is also good practice to meet with the parents or carers of the alleged perpetrator(s) to discuss arrangements that are being put into place that may impact the alleged perpetrator(s). Support should also be discussed. The DSL should consider signposting all parents and carers to external support agencies.

All arrangements and risk assessments should be regularly reviewed by the DSL with clear record keeping to evidence all decisions made, the reasons why, and action taken.

In a children's nursery, minimizing the risk of child-on-child abuse (sometimes referred to in safeguarding guidance as peer-on-peer abuse) comes down to strong safeguarding systems, close supervision, and creating an environment where inappropriate behaviours are identified and addressed early. In an early years setting, this is often less about deliberate abuse in the way it may present with older children, and more about recognising harmful, concerning, or developmentally inappropriate behaviours and responding properly.

Key areas to focus on:

Robust supervision
Children should always be appropriately supervised, especially during:

- Toileting and nappy changing transitions
- Outdoor play

- Quiet or less structured areas
- Any spaces where children could be briefly out of sight

Carry out regular risk assessments of the environment to identify blind spots or poorly supervised areas.

Clear safeguarding and behaviour policies
Your nursery should have clear written policies covering:

- Child-on-child abuse / harmful sexual behaviour
- Appropriate touch and boundaries
- Behaviour management
- Reporting and recording concerns
- Escalation procedures

All staff should know exactly what constitutes a safeguarding concern and what action to take.

Staff training
Ensure all staff receive regular safeguarding training that includes:

- Recognising age-appropriate vs concerning sexualised behaviour
- Understanding developmental stages
- How to respond calmly and appropriately
- Recording factual observations
- When to report to DSL / external agencies

In nursery settings, it's especially important staff don't dismiss behaviours as "just curiosity" without considering context, frequency, coercion, secrecy, or distress.

Sexual Harassment refers to the 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and offline and inside and outside of school or college. In this context is specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment and such behaviour can:

- Violate a child's dignity
- Make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and
- Create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment

Examples of sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothing or appearance, and using sexualised names,
- Physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with someone's clothes
- Displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature,
- Upskirting,
- Online sexual harassment and may include consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, sharing of unwanted explicit content, and coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

Sexual violence can and does occur both inside and outside of school/college. This refers to the specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as listed below:

- Rape
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity.

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16 and
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment: Procedure

1. Principle

The school adopts a **zero-tolerance approach** to sexual violence and sexual harassment.
Such behaviour is never acceptable and **must not be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up" or "just having a laugh"**.

All concerns will be taken seriously, recorded, and responded to in a way that:

- Protects the victim
- Safeguards all pupils
- Ensures fair and proportionate processes

2. Immediate Safeguarding Response

Upon receiving a report:

- The member of staff **must record on CPOMS and report immediately** to the DSL
- The DSL **must assess immediate risk** and take action to:
    - Ensure the victim is safe
    - Prevent further contact between pupils where

necessary This may include:

- Separation of pupils
- Increased supervision
- Immediate safeguarding measures

Where there is a risk of:

- Significant harm
- Sexual assault or rape

The DSL **must contact Children's Social Care and/or Police immediately**

3. DSL Initial Assessment and Decision-Making

The DSL must:

- Consider:
    - Nature of the incident
    - Age and developmental stage
    - Power imbalance
    - Previous concerns or patterns
    - Wishes of the victim (where appropriate)

- Determine:
    - Safeguarding response
    - Whether to refer to:
        - Children's Social Care (MASH)
        - Police

- Ensure that **safeguarding and disciplinary processes are clearly separated**, although they may run in parallel

4. Written Risk Assessment (MANDATORY)

A **written risk assessment must be completed** for all cases of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

This must:

- Be completed by the DSL (or delegated senior leader)
- Be recorded on CPOMS
- Be **regularly reviewed and**

updated The risk assessment must

consider:

- **Risk to the victim**
  - Ongoing safety
  - Emotional wellbeing
  - Risk of further harm
- **Risk to other pupils**
  - Pattern of behaviour
  - Wider safeguarding concerns
- **Risk posed by the alleged perpetrator**
  - Behaviour history
  - Need for intervention/support

5. Measures to Protect the Victim

The school **must implement proportionate measures** to safeguard the victim, which may include:

- Separate teaching groups or classes
- Adjusted timetables
- Supervised movement between lessons
- Changes to seating arrangements
- Staggered break/lunch times
- Transport arrangements
- Exam arrangements (where applicable)
- Sharing of information and risk assessment with EVC and trip leader for educational visits
- Ensuring that safety measures are implemented on the trip if victim and perpetrator are both

attending The **victim should not be disadvantaged** by these arrangements

6. Managing the Alleged Perpetrator

The school must:

- Consider:

- Safeguarding needs
- Behavioural intervention
- Risk to others

- Implement:
  - Appropriate supervision
  - Behaviour support
  - Disciplinary action (where appropriate)

Safeguarding support and disciplinary action **must remain distinct processes**

7. Parental Engagement

The school must:

- Inform parents/carers of:
  - The victim
  - The alleged perpetrator

- Do so:
  - As soon as it is safe and appropriate
  - In consultation with:
    - Social care
    - Police (where involved)

Information sharing must be **lawful, proportionate and child-centred**

8. Multi-Agency Working

The DSL must:

- Liaise with:
  - Children's Social Care (MASH)
  - Police
  - Health or other relevant agencies

- Follow:
  - Local safeguarding partnership procedures
  - Professional escalation processes where needed
  -

9. Ongoing Review and Monitoring

The DSL must ensure that:

- The risk assessment is:
  - **Reviewed regularly (at least weekly initially, then as appropriate)**
  - Updated following any change in circumstances

- Safeguarding measures are:
  - **Monitored for effectiveness**

Criteria for Lifting Safeguards

Safeguards must only be reduced or removed where:

- Risk assessment indicates:
  - Risk has reduced
  - No ongoing threat to the victim or others

- The decision is:
  - **Recorded clearly within CPOMs**
  - **Approved by the DSL**
  - **Reviewed with senior leadership where appropriate**
  - **Discussed with victim**
  - **Discussed with parents**

10. Record Keeping (MANDATORY)

Safeguarding records should clearly distinguish between fact, professional observation and opinion.

The school must:

- Record all concerns on CPOMS
- Maintain a **clear, chronological record** including:
  - The report
  - DSL decisions
  - Risk assessments
  - Actions taken
  - Reviews and outcomes

- Record:
  - Who made decisions
  - When decisions were made
  - Rationale for decisions

Storage and Retention

- Records must be:
  - Kept securely
  - Stored in the child protection file/CPOMS

- Retention must be in line with:
  - Trust data retention policy
  - Safeguarding requirements
  -

11. Review and Oversight

The school must ensure:

- Cases are reviewed by:
  - DSL
  - Senior leadership (where appropriate)

- Patterns are:
  - Identified
  - Acted upon

- The Trust may:
  - Review cases
  - Provide challenge and oversight

The needs and safety of the victim must be the primary consideration in all decision-making.

28 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) questioning (LGBTQ+)

Children who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other children and in some cases, a child who is perceived by others to the LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ+. Children may also be targeted by adults, or because of the LGBTQ+ status of a parent/carer.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBTQ+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. Therefore, **The Orchard Nursery** staff endeavour to provide a safe space for them to speak out or to share concerns with members of staff. Staff should avoid making assumptions regarding a child's gender identity or sexual orientation.

Schools and colleges should not initiate any action regarding social transition; the guidance applies where a child or their parent has requested that the school make changes or put support in place in order to facilitate the child presenting as the opposite biological sex ("social transition"). Members of staff should not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by a school or college and a child's parents or carers have been involved as set out in the guidance.

If a child or parent indicates a desire to transition, schools must follow local and national guidance and discuss the matter immediately with their SIO.

Updated RSHE guidance, and guidance for gender questioning pupils in schools is expected from the DfE and the Diocese in summer/autumn 2025. Schools must be mindful of these documents as soon as they are published.

29 Single-Sex Sport and Requirements Around School Premises

As children get older, some sports are typically taught and played in single-sex groups. The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception in relation to single-sex sport. It applies to participation in any sport or game, or activity of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). This means that schools and colleges can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances without discriminating unlawfully against them on the basis of their sex.

Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety, and where this is the case there must be no exceptions. In other cases, schools or colleges may have adopted a policy of single-sex sports for reasons related to fairness.

Where there are no safety concerns and a child makes a request relating to how they participate, schools and colleges will need to consider the request in light of the advice on "considering requests for support with social transition". This means that the school or college would need to take into account all the relevant factors, including whether supporting social transition is overall in the best interests of the child, as well as considering the impact on other children and the aim of creating safe and fair environments for children to participate in PE.

Schools must provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over (apart from where individual toilets are in a room that can be locked from the inside, intended for use by one pupil at a time). This is required by the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 which apply to both maintained schools, academies and independent schools and reflects schools' safeguarding obligations.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, schools and colleges should consider whether they can provide an alternative toilet facility, for example self-contained individual toilets, without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child, or of any other children. It is important that schools and colleges keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly. Where a school or college provides mixed-sex toilets in addition to singlesex toilets, schools and colleges should assess safeguarding risks and plan accordingly, for example, mixed-sex toilets should be in individual, lockable rooms and open directly onto public areas (e.g. a corridor).

Schools must not allow a child, aged 11 years or older at the start of the school year, to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. This is required by the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education

(Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which require maintained schools, academies and independent schools to provide suitable changing accommodation and showers for pupils who are aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year. This means that the changing accommodation and showers must be suitable for the pupils they are provided for, having regard to their ages, numbers, and sex and any special requirements they may have and is informed by the school's safeguarding obligations. When responding to a request to support any degree of social transition, a school must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms and showers designated for their sex, schools and colleges should consider whether they can provide an alternative changing or washing facility without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. This could be a fully enclosed room – for use by one child at a time that can be secured from the inside – or by allowing access to facilities at an alternative time. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other children.
It is important that schools and colleges keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly

30 Making or sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes Image Altered or Wholly Generated by Artificial Intelligence (Deepfakes)

In cases where nudes or semi nudes have been shared, we follow the guidance given to schools and colleges by the Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes (March 2024)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-how-to-respond-to-an-incident-overview

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/947546/Sharing_nudes_and_semi_nudes_how_to_respond_to_an_incident_Summary_V2.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008443/UKCIS_sharing_nudes_and_semi_nudes_advice_for_education_settings__Web_accessible_.pdf

What is *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes*?

In the latest advice for schools and colleges (UKCIS, 2024), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.
The consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes also includes images digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence (AI), also known as 'deep-fakes' and 'deep-nudes'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated.

This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency.

If an incident comes to the attention of a member of staff, he/she must inform the DSL immediately:

- Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL and seek support

- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- Do not ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL
- Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent)..

The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff and subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate). Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm. At any point in the process if there is concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to MASH or the Police as appropriate.

Immediate referral at the initial review stage should be made to MASH/Police if;

a. The incident involves an adult;
b. There is good reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special education needs);
c. What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the child's development stage or are violent;
d. The imagery involves sexual acts;
e. The imagery involves anyone aged 12 or under;
f. There is reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example the child is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

If none of the above apply then the DSL will use her/his professional judgement to assess the risk to pupils involved and may decide, with input from the Headteacher, to respond to the incident without escalation to MASH or the police. Such decisions will be recorded on the school's CPOMS system.

In applying judgement the DSL will consider if;

g. there is a significant age difference between the sender/receiver;
h. there is any coercion or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver;
i. the imagery was shared and received with the knowledge of the child in the imagery;
j. the child is more vulnerable than usual i.e. at risk;
k. there is a significant impact on the children involved;
l. the image is of a severe or extreme nature;
m. the child involved understands consent;
n. the situation is isolated or if the image been more widely distributed;
o. there other circumstances relating to either the sender or recipient that may add cause for concern i.e. difficult home circumstances;
p. the children have been involved in incidents relating to youth produced imagery before.

If any of these circumstances are present the situation will be escalated according to our child protection procedures, including reporting to the police or MASH. Otherwise, the situation will be managed within the school.

The DSL will record all incidents of youth produced sexual imagery, including both the actions taken, actions not taken, reasons for doing so and the resolution in line with safeguarding recording procedures.

31 Allegations against staff

Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other

staff, volunteers or contractors.

We would follow the policy in the link below – Allegations against staff and low level concerns.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/16zFjXVSDqM-LtzetJjgEH7IZGYEkph6A/view?usp=drive_link

At **The Orchard Nursery** we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, trainee teachers, supply teachers and agency staff.

All concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Education Standards Manager/Chair of Governors who can be contacted by email on **mikegcarter@yahoo.com**

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment.

All concerns about adults working with children, including allegations that may meet the harm threshold and low-level concerns, will be **taken seriously, recorded, and responded to promptly, proportionately and transparently**.

Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors:

- that have behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and /or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes behaviour outside of school, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk.

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

- Looking after the welfare of the child. The DSL or DDSL is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the LA children's social care.
- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation. The case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree on a course of action. The role of the LADO is not to investigate but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, LA children's social care, the school, or a combination of these. In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school staff. The school must consider suspension/alternative duties, safeguarding risks, and fair treatment of the adult.Decisions must be risk-based, recorded and reviewed.
- All allegations must be discussed with the SIO at the point the allegation is made.

Allegation Against a Member of Staff

- Follow Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Inform SIO, COO and Trust HR Manager immediately
- SIO will inform Director of Education immediately

- The Headteacher (or appropriate senior leader) must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay. No investigation must commence before consultation with the LADO and agreement on next steps.
- Director of Education will inform Diocese Safeguarding Lead – Martin Christmas-Nelson martin.christmas-nelson@prcdtr.org.uk
- A decision will be made by the Trust HR Manager and Director of Education as to whether suspension is an appropriate action.
- HT to carry out risk assessment and instigate identified control measures
- If the local authority holds a *Strategy Meeting*, when asked whether the member of staff works or volunteers in any capacity with children or young people, the HT/SIO should disclose any information that they are aware of, but state clearly that there may be other roles that he/she is not aware of.
- Any referral regarding a member of supply staff should also be reported to the supply agency immediately..

Allegations/social service investigation re a member of staff's own child/children who are pupils of the school

- Follow Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy including notification of LADO
- Inform SIO, COO and Trust HR Manager immediately
- SIO will inform Director of Education immediately
- Director of Education will inform Diocese Safeguarding Lead – martin.christmas-nelson@prcdtr.org.uk
- A decision will be made by the Trust HR Manager and Director of Education as to whether suspension is an appropriate action. Suspension is not an automatic response to an allegation.
- SIO and Director of Education to undertake risk assessment to support management of situation
- Remove member of staff's access to CPOMs records of their own children.
- Obtain member of staff's agreement not to access CPOMs records for their own children.
- Ensure that member of staff is not involved in the management of the safeguarding case
- Consider removing email access to restrict sight of communications from LA or police.
- Consider application of staff disciplinary policy if necessary
- Ensure member of staff's children have full protection and support as per other children

Allegation Against a Headteacher

- Follow Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Report allegation to the SIO, COO and Trust HR Manager immediately.
- SIO will inform Director of Education and relevant LADO on the same day they have learned of the allegation.
- Director of Education will inform Diocese Safeguarding Lead – Martin Christmas-Nelson martin.christmas-nelson@prcdtr.org.uk
- A decision will be made by the Trust HR Manager and Director of Education as to whether suspension is an appropriate action. Suspension is not an automatic response to an allegation
- If the local authority holds a *Strategy Meeting*, when asked whether the Headteacher works or volunteers in any capacity with children or young people, the SIO should disclose any information that they are aware of, but state clearly that there may be other roles that he/she is not aware of.

When dealing with allegations, the school should:

- Apply common sense and judgement
- Deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently
- Provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

Schools should promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This culture should:

- Enable schools 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 in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

A low level concern is any concern that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and does not meet the harm threshold to consider a referral to LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include being over-friendly with children, having favourites, engaging with a child one-on-one behind a closed door, or humiliating children. It is essential that all low level concerns are shared with the right person, recorded, and dealt with appropriately. The purpose of reporting low-level concerns is to identify patterns of behaviour that may indicate emerging safeguarding concerns and to promote a culture of openness and accountability.

All concerns about adults must be:

- Reported **immediately** to the **Headteacher** and the **School Improvement Officer**
- Where the concern involves the Headteacher, reported to the **School Improvement Officer/Director of Education**
- Discussed with the child's parent as soon as possible within 24 hours

All low-level concerns and allegations will be added to CPOMS Staff Safe at the point of reporting.Records must include details of the concern, context, action taken, and outcome.

The Headteacher (or delegated safeguarding leader) must:

- Review low-level concerns regularly
- Identify patterns and repeated behaviours. Any concern must be re-evaluated against the harm threshold should a pattern emerge.

The Trust will:

- Maintain **appropriate confidentiality**
- Share information on a **need-to-know basis only**

However, Information must be shared where:

- Necessary to safeguard children
- Required by law

The school must maintain:

- A clear and comprehensive record on CPOMs Staff Safe and Student Safe of:
- All allegations
- LADO referrals
- Strategy discussions
- Decisions and rationale
- Outcomes

Records must:

- Be factual and accurate
- Include dates, times, and decision-makers
- Be retained in line with safeguarding and data retention requirements

The school must ensure:

- Concerns are:
- Reported **immediately**
- Referred to LADO **without delay**

- Cases are:
- Reviewed regularly

- Progressed without unnecessary delay

The Trust provides:

- Oversight
- Challenge
- Support where required

The welfare of the child is paramount. All concerns about adults must be taken seriously, acted upon promptly, and recorded appropriately.

Any allegations or low level concerns will be managed in line with the Plymouth CAST Allegations Against Staff and Low Level Concerns Policy.

The school will follow the **BCP Council** procedures for managing allegations against staff, procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures, and will work with school's Education Standards Manager at all times.

32 Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

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

Whistle-blowing re the Headteacher should be made to the Education Standards Manager/Chair of the Local CAST board whose contact details are readily available to staff.

33 Physical Intervention

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

Physical intervention must only be used in accordance with the school's behaviour Policy and Physical Intervention Policy

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff have been given 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about professional boundaries and responsibilities.

Following any incident involving restrictive physical intervention, the welfare of the child and any staff involved should be considered and appropriate support offered.

34 Use of School for Non-School Activities

Where the school is used for non-school activities, providers are expected to meet the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings

All contracts/Hire agreements for out-of-hours lettings etc include a statement that the organisation working with children meets the expectations in Keeping Children Safe in Out-of-schools Settings. These are checked by the Site Manager, headteacher or person with designated responsibility for out of hours non-school activities/lettings.

If the school receives allegations related to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, the school will follow our own safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Contractor Oversight and Student-Occupied Areas

To maintain a "culture of vigilance," all contractors working on Trust premises during term time or when children are present for wrap-around care must adhere to the following supervision and behaviour standards:

- Verification of Suitability: In line with the Health & Safety Policy (Section 2.10), schools must verify the DBS status of contractors. Contractors without an enhanced DBS check must be escorted at all times and are strictly prohibited from entering student-occupied areas (e.g., toilets, changing rooms, or classrooms) while children are present.
  - In the instance of contractors instructed by the Plymouth CAST Central Team, the Trust must obtain written confirmation that contractors have received safeguarding training.
  - In the instance of contractors instructed by the school, the school must obtain written confirmation that contractors have received safeguarding training.
- Supervision Ratios:
  - Unvetted Contractors: Must maintain a 1:1 supervision ratio with a designated member of school staff if working in the vicinity of pupils.
  - Vetted/Regular Contractors: May work under "general supervision," provided a member of staff performs a physical spot-check at least once every 60 minutes to ensure work remains within the agreed-upon zone.
- Behaviour Expectations (Code of Conduct):
  - Identification: Contractors must wear a school-issued "Visitor" or "Contractor" lanyard at all times.
  - Communication: Contractors must not engage in personal conversation with pupils, exchange contact details (including social media), or offer gifts/food to children.
  - Environment: The use of personal mobile phones or cameras is strictly prohibited in student-occupied areas. Contractors must use designated "staff-only" welfare facilities and stay within the pre-defined "work zone" established by the relevant Plymouth CAST managers (either school-based or those working within the Trust's central team).
- Breach of Conduct: Any contractor found in breach of these expectations will be asked to leave the site immediately, and a formal report will be made to the Plymouth CAST Estates and Facilities Manager and the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

35 Confidentiality, sharing information and GDPR

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

School staff should be proactive in appropriately sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess

and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Headteacher or Education Standards Manager as appropriate. The Headteacher, in consultation with DSL, ESM and LA as necessary, will then decide who else needs to have the information, and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school have failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) emphasises that any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child. The contact details are contained within this document.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 [22] and HM Government Information Sharing and Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018.

Information being shared with schools under the temporary accommodation notification duty placed on local housing authorities when relocating children is strictly subject to the household's consent. In this event, early help pastoral support can be coordinated to support the child and family.

Information will be stored securely on the school's CPOMs system, and where written records/documents are necessary, in securely locked and protected cabinets etc.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles:

- necessary and proportionate
- Lawful
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Confidentiality should never prevent information being shared where a child may be at risk.

Documents should be retained with reference to the Trust's Data Retention Schedule.

36 Escalation Pathway (Safeguarding Concerns and professional challenge)

Escalation of Safeguarding Concerns

The school is committed to ensuring that safeguarding concerns are acted upon **promptly, appropriately and without delay**, and that all staff understand how to escalate concerns where there is disagreement, inaction or insufficient response.

Safeguarding is a shared, multi-agency responsibility. In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, staff must be prepared to **challenge decisions and escalate concerns** where they believe a child is not being adequately protected. Professional challenge is recognised as a positive safeguarding responsibility rather than criticism of colleagues or partner agencies.

Step 1: Classroom / Frontline Staff

- All staff must:
  - Record concerns **immediately** on the school's safeguarding system (e.g. CPOMS)
  - Report concerns **without delay** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy

Timescale:

- **Immediately / same day**

Step 2: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- Review the concern and all available information
- Assess risk and determine next steps
- Take appropriate action, which may include:
  - universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help
  - Referral to Children's Social Care
  - Contact with police or other agencies

Timescale:

- **Same day decision-making for all concerns**
- **Immediate action** where risk of harm is identified

Step 3: Headteacher / Senior Leadership Oversight

Where concerns are:

- Complex
- High risk
- Disputed
- Or involve professional disagreement

The DSL will escalate internally to the **Headteacher (or most senior leader on site)**. The

Headteacher will:

- Provide oversight and challenge
- Ensure appropriate action is taken
- Support escalation where necessary

Timescale:

- **Same day escalation**

Step 4: Trust Safeguarding Escalation (Trust DSL / SIO)

Where there remains:

- Disagreement about threshold or action
- Concern regarding decision-making
- Repeated concerns or patterns
- Insufficient response from external agencies

The matter must be escalated to the **Trust Safeguarding Lead / Director of Education / School Improvement Officer (SIO)**.

The Trust will:

- Provide professional challenge
- Review the case
- Support further escalation to external agencies if required

Contact Points:
DSL: Emma Middleton
Headteacher Emma Middleton
Director of Education: craig.follett@plymouthcast.com; Tel: 07513 136390
Safeguarding Officer: lpaiano@plymouthcast.org.uk; Tel: 07590 881431
SIO Name: Charlotte Targett

Timescale:

- **Within 24 hours**

Step 5: Escalation to Safeguarding Partners

Where concerns remain unresolved, or where there is disagreement with multi-agency decisions, the school (supported by the Director of Education or Trust Safeguarding Officer) will escalate concerns through the **local Safeguarding Partners' escalation / professional disagreement procedures**.

This includes:

- Contacting the relevant **Local Authority Children's Social Care team**
- Using the **formal escalation route set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership**
- Seeking resolution at a more senior level within partner agencies

Contact Points:

- Local Authority Children's Social Care: Childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
- Safeguarding Partnership escalation route (as published locally)
- Police (where immediate risk is identified) Tel: 999

Timescale:

- **Immediate escalation where risk is high**
- Otherwise **within 24 hours of unresolved concern**

Professional Challenge and Escalation Duty

All staff have a responsibility to:

- **Challenge decisions** where they believe a child is not being adequately safeguarded
- **Escalate concerns without delay**
- **Persist until concerns are resolved**

No member of staff should assume that another professional or agency will take action.

Key Principle

If a child is at risk of harm and action is not being taken, staff must escalate concerns until they are satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to safeguard the child.

37 Disclosures During Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Lessons

The school recognises that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education may increase the likelihood of pupils making disclosures or asking questions that raise safeguarding concerns.

Staff must therefore teach RSE in a way that is safe, calm, age-appropriate and trauma-aware. They should be alert to signs that a pupil may be describing abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, domestic abuse, self-harm, suicidal ideation, or other welfare concerns, whether relating to themselves or to another child. Staff should also be aware that some pupils may not be ready to disclose, may not recognise their experiences as harmful, or may communicate concerns indirectly through questions, behaviour, distress or partial information.

In line with KCSiE 2025, and consistently reflected in the KCSiE 2026 consultation text, staff must never promise a pupil confidentiality if a safeguarding concern is raised. Staff should listen carefully, respond calmly, avoid leading questions, reassure the pupil that they have been taken seriously, and explain that the information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to help keep them safe, normally the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy. Any safeguarding concern arising in or following an RSE lesson must be passed to the DSL or deputy without delay and recorded in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Teachers should not attempt to investigate, resolve or manage disclosures alone within the lesson. Where appropriate, they may use a brief "holding" response, bring the lesson to a safe close, and ensure the pupil is supported discreetly after the lesson. The statutory RSE guidance also expects schools to be clear in advance how difficult questions will be handled, how confidentiality will be explained to pupils, and how external visitors will report any safeguarding concern in line with the school's policy. When planning RSE lessons staff will anticipate triggers for difficult questions or statements, and include how they will be handled. This will include availability of other staff to support the child outside the classroom etc if required.

Where a disclosure is made, or sensitive information disclosed, the member of staff should support the other children in the maintenance of sensitivity and care, and where necessary provide a supportive debrief.

The DSL should ensure that all staff and visitors delivering RSE receive appropriate safeguarding briefing. This will include, but not be limited to, planning for anticipated disclosures or questions, preparation with children (cohort and individuals) for specific lessons, how to deal with sensitive questions and disclosures within a lesson, what to *look out for in specific sessions*, and how to make.record /report a disclosure or concern.

Staff must ensure that pupils are helped to understand, before sensitive teaching begins, that adults in school cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and that concerns about safety will be acted upon in their best interests. This section should be read alongside the Trust's RSE Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Online Safety arrangements, and the procedures set out in this Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy.

38 This policy also links to our policies on

a. Behaviour
b. Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct
c. SEND
d. Staffing
e. Accidents and Emergencies
f. Whistleblowing
g. Anti-bullying
h. Health & Safety

i. Curriculum Policy EYFS
j. Medication and sickness policy
k. E-Safety, including staff use of mobile phones
l. Risk Assessment
m. Data Protection/GDPR Guidance
n. Manual Handling/Positive handling
o. Lone working policy
p. Safe Touch Policy
q. Physical Intervention Policy
r. Missing and lost child
s. Nappy changing policy/ Intimate Care policy
t. Non-mobile baby policy
u. Keyperson Policy
v. Outdoor Education, visits and off-site activities policy
w. Prevent Duty polic

Appendix 1

DSL Competency Framework

The DSL and DDSL should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years including Prevent awareness training.

Training should provide DSLs and DDSL with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- understand and provide early help and pastoral support to children and families to address the high rates of educational disruption, school absence, and mental health challenges homeless children face, when notified by a local housing authority under the statutory temporary accommodation notification duty
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Knowledge and skills should be refreshed at regular intervals and at least annually by reading e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, and reading safeguarding developments relevant to their role.

Appendix 2

Recognising signs of child abuse and neglect

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

Categories of Abuse:

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

ii. **Emotional Abuse** (including Domestic Abuse): the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child 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.

iii. **Sexual Abuse** (including child sexual exploitation): 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 (also known as child on child abuse) in education and all staff are made aware of it and of our school's policy and procedures for dealing with it

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

Signs of Abuse in Children:

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

v. Significant change in behaviour
vi. Extreme anger or sadness
vii. Aggressive and attention-needing behaviour
viii. Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
ix. Lack of self-esteem
x. Self-injury
xi. Depression and/or anxiousness
xii. Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
xiii. Child Sexual Exploitation
xiv. Criminality
xv. Substance abuse
xvi. Mental health problems
xvii. Poor attendance

Risk Indicators

Risk indicators should not be viewed in isolation. Staff should exercise professional curiosity, consider the child's lived experience and seek advice from the DSL where concerns arise. Staff must record the child's voice when completing safeguarding records.
The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Requires staff to be professionally curious and alert to potential signs
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Family Help /Children's Services

- The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not

  occurred. In an abusive relationship the child may:

  - Appear frightened of the parent/s
  - Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

- The parent or carer may:

  - Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
  - Have unrealistic expectations of the child
  - Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
  - Be absent or misusing substances

- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

o Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements

- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.
There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

o Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child’s age

- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and irresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

Protective Factors
When assessing safeguarding concerns, staff should consider not only indicators of risk but also the protective factors that may reduce a child's vulnerability and promote resilience. Understanding a child's strengths, trusted relationships, sense of belonging, engagement in education and access to support can help inform effective safeguarding assessments and interventions.

Safeguarding assessments should therefore seek to answer two equally important questions: What is placing this child at risk? and What is helping to keep this child safe?

Appendix 3

Sexual Abuse & Sexual Harassment

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children. Staff should be vigilant to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- upskirting

Developmental Sexual Activity

Encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour

Can be inappropriate socially, in appropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed. If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base. In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies

Consent – agreement including all the following:

- Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
- Knowledge of society’s standards for what is being proposed
- Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
- Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
- Voluntary decision
- Mental competence

Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide. Further information and advice is available in the Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership https://www.devonscp.org.uk/document/a-guide-to-supporting-young-people-who-present-with-harmful-sexual-behaviour/

Appendix 4

Exploitation (including Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.
Signs include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include: (although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.
- More information can be found in: Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): CCE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;

- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County Lines: County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in the exporting of illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line.'

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults being exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. The same grooming models used to coerce, intimidate and abuse individuals for sexual and criminal exploitation are also used for grooming vulnerable individuals for county lines.

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

Other risks children face can also include forced theft, organised shoplifting, cannabis cultivation, online exploitation, and fraud.

Appendix 5

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM: Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM. If a member of staff, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, the member of staff must report this to the Police.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Section 5B of the 2003 Act1 introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. The duty came into force on 31 October 2015.

What is FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. 4 types of procedure:
Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris
Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

Why is it carried out?
Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

- **Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening are:**

  - Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
  - Family taking a long trip abroad

- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

- **Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:**

  - difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
  - spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
  - spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
  - frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
  - prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
  - reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
  - confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
  - talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

The 'One Chance' rule

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges take action **without delay** and make a referral to the LA social care. However, teachers MUST report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work, directly to the police.

Appendix 6

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse: The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:
(a) physical or sexual abuse;
(b) violent or threatening behaviour;
(c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
(d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
(e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person. (The definition can be found https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

How does it affect children?

Children can be traumatised by seeing and hearing violence and abuse. They may also be directly targeted by the abuser or take on a protective role and get caught in the middle. In the long term this can lead to serious long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases children may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

What are the signs to look out for?

Children affected by domestic abuse reflect their distress in a variety of ways. They may change their usual behaviour and become withdrawn, tired, start to wet the bed and have behavioural difficulties. They may not want to leave their house or may become reluctant to return. Others will excel, using their time in your care as a way to escape from their home life. None of these signs are exclusive to domestic abuse so when you are considering changes in behaviours and concerns about a child, think about whether domestic abuse may be a factor.

What should I do if I suspect a family is affected by domestic abuse? Contact:
Pan Dorset SCP who are linked to BCP EmailL pan-dorsetcp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Telephone 01305 221196 45
If you are concerned about a child or young person in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, please contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Childrens First Response MASH) on 01202 735046
If you are concerned about an adult (aged 16+) in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole please complete the form https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/p-report-concerns.html
To identify the level of risk and which support service to refer them too, follow the advice on the PanDorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) Policies and Procedures Manual for all levels of risk.

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult, please contact Adult Social Care Contact Centre
The (BCP Council) Adult Social Care Contact Centre strives to hold open conversations with individuals from the very first point of contact, to discover unique options, possibilities and solutions that will enable adults and carers to live their lives as fully as possible, doing things that matter to them right now, in communities they feel connected to.
The Contact Centre is open Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm.
Telephone lines and emails are monitored during these times.
Phone 01202 123654
Email: childrensOOOS@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
In an emergency, please contact the Emergency Duty Service

Phone 0300 123 9895 – Adult Social Care Phone 01202 738256 – Children

SAFE (Stop Abuse For Everyone) is a charity based in Exeter providing help and support to children and families who have experienced domestic abuse and violence. Telephone 030 30 30 0112 or email hello@safe-services.org.uk (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, available 24hour a day 0808 2000 247 and its website offers guidance and support for potential victims.
Refuge: https://www.refuge.org.uk/

Key adults are:

Emma Middleton – Manager/DSL
Jo Martin – Deputy Manager and DDSL
Kelsie Moss – Third in charge and room supervisior

Appendix 7

Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis – the student / pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / pupil’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations – the student / pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
- Special Educational Need – students / pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

Being in contact with extremist recruiters;

- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

The Prevent duty ensures schools and colleges have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being draw into terrorism.
Channel is the voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to individuals that have been identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation. Prevent referrals may be passed to the multi-agency Channel panel to determine whether individuals require support.

The Prevent Duty can be accessed via this link.

Summary of The Prevent Duty for Schools and Childcare Providers (June 2015)

The Prevent Duty, for Further Education Institutions

Guidance on Channel https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance

Further information can be obtained from the Home Office website

Appendix 8 - Resources

Further advice on child protection is available from: NSPCC: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/
Childline: http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx

Anti-Bullying Alliance: http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

Beat Bullying: http://www.beatbullying.org/

Childnet International –making the internet a great and safe place for children. Includes resources for professionals and parents http://www.childnet.com/

Thinkuknow (includes resources for professionals and parents) https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

Safer Internet Centre http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

Transgender http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/

Schools transgender toolkit

Intercom trust transgender guidance

Appendix 8

BCP Council Safeguarding Contact Details

This document gives contact information that you can use if you are concerned about a young person's safety or welfare, or you require support in agreeing an Early Help offer.

First Response Hub

The Children's Services First Response Hub is the first point of contact for everyone, providing access to all services for children and families living in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

The Children's Services First Response Hub provides the public and professionals with information and support for children who are vulnerable and at risk and is made up of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Early Help Team.

Telephone: 01202 123334
Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5.15pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.45pm.
Email: childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Out of Hours Service

You should only call if the safety and/or welfare of a child or young person is at serious risk of significant harm, and the situation cannot wait until 9am the next working day.

You can call our out of hours service on 01202 738 256:

- Monday to Friday, from 5pm to 9am
- all day Saturdays and Sundays
- all bank holidays, including Christmas Day and New Year's Day

In an emergency, or if you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm, call the police on 999.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO - known as Designated Officer (DO) at BCP Council - must be informed of accusations made against staff. It may be appropriate to contact the LADO / DO if an allegation is made against someone who is closely associated with a staff member / practitioner / childminder.

BCP Designated Officers: Hayley Cowmeadow and Carline Benoit
Telephone: 01202 817600
Secure email: lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Appendix 9

Working Together to Safeguard Children April 2026

Overview for Schools

1. Executive Summary (WTSC 2026)

is the statutory framework for multi-agency safeguarding in England, replacing the 2023 version.

Core themes (unchanged but strengthened):
- Safeguarding is a **shared, multi-agency responsibility**
- **Child-centred, whole-family approach**
- Early help, protection, and outcomes are **integrated**
- Schools are **central safeguarding partners,** not peripheral

2. Key Changes from 2023 → 2026

1. Much stronger multi-agency accountability model

- Clearer roles for:
  - **Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs)** (LA, Police, ICB)
  - **Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs)**
- Explicit **shared accountability and joint decision-making expectations**

Shift:
From "working together" → "**joint ownership, challenge and accountability**"

2. Major strengthening of information sharing expectations

This is one of the **most important changes**.

- Stronger language:
  - "**Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible"**
- Explicit rejection of myths:
  - Data protection is **NOT a barrier**
- Greater emphasis on:
  - **timeliness**
  - **professional responsibility to share**

Shift:
From "information sharing is important" → "**failure to share = safeguarding failure"**

3. Clearer expectations for education settings

- Schools explicitly identified as:
  - **relevant agencies**
  - **critical intelligence sources**
- Stronger expectation to:
  - contribute data
  - engage in strategy and operational safeguarding

Shift:
From "schools contribute" → "**schools are integral to the system"**

4. Greater emphasis on data, patterns, and intelligence

- Multi-agency systems must:
  - **analyse patterns across children and contexts**
  - **identify emerging risks and cohorts**

Shift:

From individual case focus → **system-wide intelligence-led safeguarding**

5. Stronger learning culture and scrutiny

- Mandatory:
  - learning from reviews
  - impact tracking
- Emphasis on:
  - **rapid reviews**
  - **continuous improvement**

6. Operation Encompass strengthened (now statutory)

- Police must notify schools of domestic abuse incidents

Direct implication:

Schools must be ready to **receive, record, and act immediately**

3. CRITICAL: Record Keeping & Information Sharing Requirements for Schools

This is the most important section for schools/the trust

A. Core Principle

"No single practitioner can have a full picture... effective sharing of information is essential"

AND critically:

Missed opportunities to record, understand, and share information can have severe consequences

B. What Schools MUST Now Do (Record Keeping)

1. Record EARLY and CONTINUOUSLY

Schools must record:

- Emerging concerns (not just thresholds)
- Patterns over time
- Contextual information (peers, locations, adults)

This aligns directly with:

- CPOMS expectations
- "early help → protection" continuum

2. Record WITH ANALYSIS (not just description)

Records must enable:

- Understanding of risk
- Identification of patterns

- Multi-agency interpretation

Weak descriptive logs = non-compliant in practice

3. Record INFORMATION ABOUT ADULTS

A key strengthening:

Information about adults connected to the child must be recorded and shared

This is often missed in schools.

4. Record FOR SHARING (NOT JUST INTERNAL USE)

Records must be:
- Structured
- Clear
- Timely
- Include in CPOMs Student Safe/Staff Safe when information is shared; with whom, why and with what outcome.

So they can be shared with:
- Social care
- Police
- Health

This is a major cultural shift.

5. Record MOVEMENT / TRANSITION RISKS

Explicit requirement:
- When children move LA / school
- Information must follow the child

Weak transfer = safeguarding risk

C. Multi-Agency Information Sharing Expectations FOR SCHOOLS

1. Proactive sharing (not reactive)

Schools must:
- Share concerns **early and record you have done so**
- Not wait for thresholds

If in doubt → share"

2. Do NOT assume others will share

Practitioners must not assume someone else will pass information on
This is a **personal professional duty**

3. Lawful basis = NOT a barrier

Schools must understand:
- You **do NOT need** consent to share safeguarding concerns

- Lawful bases include:
    - legal obligation
    - public task

This is critical for staff confidence

4. Share SPECIAL CATEGORY DATA when required

Including:

- Health
- SEND
- Family context

Safeguarding condition explicitly allows this

5. Transparency (where safe)

- Inform parents where appropriate
- But **do not delay sharing if risk exists**

6. Contribute to multi-agency intelligence

Schools must contribute:

- Attendance data
- Behaviour concerns
- Safeguarding logs
- Contextual risks

This feeds system-wide analysis

D. What Will Be Judged (Ofsted /Trust Safeguarding Reviews)

Based on WTSC 2026, schools will now be judged on:

1. **Quality of recording**
    - Is it analytical?
    - Does it show risk awareness?
2. **Timeliness**
    - Was information shared early enough?
3. **Professional curiosity**
    - Were patterns identified?
4. **Multi-agency contribution**
    - Did the school add value to the system?
5. **Escalation**
    - Did staff act or assume others would?

4. What This Means for the Trust

We need to ensure:

1. CPOMS standardisation

- Mandatory fields:
    - antecedents
    - analysis
    - risk
    - action

- Not just narrative logs

2. **Staff training shift**

   Staff must understand:
   - "Recording = safeguarding action"
   - "Sharing early = protection"

3. **DSL triage systems**
   - Clear thresholds:
     - Early Help/Family Help
       - early help
       - referral
       - LADO

4. **Trust-level intelligence**
   - Patterns across:
     - schools
     - pupils
     - staff

This aligns directly with WTSC 2026 expectations

5. **One-line summary**

WTSC 2026 shifts safeguarding from individual case recording to proactive, intelligence-led multi-agency information sharing — where the quality, timeliness, and purpose of school records are critical to protecting children.

Appendix 10

Concern about a child
• Abuse, neglect, safeguarding concern, or uneasy feeling • Disclosure, behaviour change, injury, contextual concern

🟦 STEP 1: STAFF ACTION
Record and Report • Record on CPOMS • Report to DSL / Deputy DSL immediately
⏱ Timescale: Same day (immediately where urgent)

🟪 STEP 2: DSL RESPONSE
Assess and Decide • Review information and history • Assess risk and threshold • Take action: ✓ Early Help/Family Help ✓ Referral to Children's Social Care ✓ Contact Police (if immediate risk)
⏱ Timescale: Same day decision / immediate if high risk

🟫 STEP 3: HEADTEACHER / SENIOR LEADER
Oversight and Challenge Used where: • High-risk or complex case • Disagreement about action

- **Escalation required**

⏱ **Timescale: Same day**

⬇

🟥 **STEP 4: TRUST ESCALATION**

Trust DSL / Director of Education / SIO Used where:

Ongoing concern or disagreement

Pattern of concern

Insufficient response Trust will:

Review case

Provide challenge

Support escalation

⏱ **Timescale: Within 24 hours**

⬇

⬤ **STEP 5: SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS**

Multi-Agency Escalation

- 01202 123334 – childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
- Safeguarding Parntership Escalation Route
- Police (where immediate risk is identified) Tel: 999

Used where:

- **Disagreement remains**
- **Response is insufficient**
- **Risk remains**

⬇

⏱ **Timescale: Immediate (if high risk) or within 24 hours**

⚠ **PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE DUTY**

- **Do not assume someone else will act**
- **Escalate concerns if you are not satisfied**
- **Persist until the child is safe**

🔑 **KEY TEST**

- **Are you confident this child is safe?**

☞ **If NO → ESCALATE**

📞 **Contact Points**
DSL: Emma Middleton Headteacher: Emma Middleton Director of Education: craig.follett@plymouthcast.com ; Tel: 07513 136390 Safeguarding Officer: lpaiano@plymouthcast.org.uk; Tel: 07590 881431 SIO Name: Charlotte Targett LA Social Care: Police: Tel: 999

Myth	Reality
"GDPR prevents us sharing safeguarding information."	**No.** Data protection legislation does **not** prevent appropriate information sharing where there are safeguarding concerns. The safety and welfare of the child must always be the overriding consideration.
"Children always tell someone if they are being abused."	**No.** Many children never disclose abuse. Others delay disclosure for months or years because of fear, shame, loyalty, coercion or not recognising that what is happening is abuse.
"No disclosure means no abuse."	**No.** Safeguarding decisions are based on the whole picture, including observations, changes in behaviour, attendance, presentation, professional curiosity and information from other agencies—not solely on what a child says.
"Attendance is separate from safeguarding."	**No.** Poor attendance, persistent absence or sudden changes in attendance may be indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental ill health or other unmet needs. Attendance should always be considered within the wider safeguarding context.
"If Children's Social Care don't take the referral, there isn't a safeguarding concern."	**No.** A threshold decision does not remove safeguarding concerns. Schools should continue to support the child, monitor the situation, consider Family Help and re-refer if risks increase or new information emerges.
"Someone else will probably report it."	**No.** Every member of staff has an individual responsibility to report safeguarding concerns. Never assume that someone else has already done so.
"The child seems happy, so everything must be fine."	**No.** Children experiencing abuse or exploitation may appear settled, successful or cheerful. Presentation alone should never determine safeguarding decisions.
"Abuse always leaves physical injuries."	**No.** Emotional abuse, neglect, coercive control, online abuse and exploitation often leave no visible injuries but can have profound and lasting effects.
"Safeguarding is the DSL's job."	**No.** The Designated Safeguarding Lead provides leadership and expertise, but safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every adult in school has a duty to identify, record and report concerns promptly.
"Professional curiosity means being suspicious of families."	**No.** Professional curiosity means respectfully seeking to understand a child's lived experience, asking appropriate questions, avoiding assumptions and remaining open to new information.
"Good behaviour means a child is safe."	**No.** Children experiencing abuse may present as quiet, compliant or high-achieving. Safeguarding concerns should never be dismissed because a child appears well behaved.
"If we followed the procedure, we've done enough."	**Not always.** Following procedures is essential, but effective safeguarding also requires reflection, professional judgement and continual consideration of whether the child's needs have been fully understood and addressed.

Key Message
Safeguarding is rarely about certainty—it is about recognising concerns, remaining professionally curious, sharing information appropriately and taking timely action in the best interests of the child

Appendix 14 – Section 3 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026

Appendix 11

The Orchard Nursery – Safeguarding Procedures and Arrangements

The Orchard Nursery – Safeguarding Procedures and Arrangements

1. Policy Statement

The Orchard Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in our care. We recognise our responsibility to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which children can learn and develop free from harm, neglect, or abuse. This policy applies to all staff, students, volunteers, and visitors.

Our Nursery will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB: Poole and Bournemouth, the Dorset DSCB and Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership).

The Orchard Nursery recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff have a responsibility to identify concerns, act immediately, and contribute to creating a culture where children feel safe, valued, listened to and respected.

Safeguarding practice will be child-centred, ensuring that the views, wishes and feelings of children are considered in decisions affecting them, in a way that is appropriate to their age, stage of development and individual needs.

The nursery recognises that safeguarding risks continue to evolve, including risks linked to online activity, artificial intelligence (AI), digital technologies, social media, and changes within children's family or wider circumstances. Staff receive appropriate updates to ensure they understand emerging safeguarding risks and how to respond.

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2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – September 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR

The policy reflects the expectation that safeguarding arrangements are reviewed regularly, remain effective, and consider local safeguarding priorities, emerging risks and changes to statutory guidance.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

- DSL: Emma Middleton
- Deputy DSL: Jo Martin and Kelsie Moss

Responsibilities:

- Ensure safeguarding procedures are followed.
- Liaise with LSP, social care, and other agencies.
- Keep detailed, secure records.
- Provide advice and support to staff.
- Undertake formal DSL training at least every 2 years.

- Ensure safeguarding records are accurate, timely, factual and securely maintained, with clear evidence of decision-making, actions taken and outcomes.

- Monitor safeguarding concerns to identify patterns, trends or recurring concerns, ensuring appropriate support or intervention is provided where required.

- Ensure safeguarding information is shared appropriately with relevant professionals, recognising that data protection legislation does not prevent information sharing where there is a safeguarding concern.

- Maintain oversight of emerging safeguarding risks, including online safety, harmful content, misuse of images, AI-generated content and other digital risks affecting children.

3.1 All Staff, Students, and Volunteers

- Must read and understand this policy and Part one KCSIE, What to do if you are worried a child is being abused.

- Are responsible for raising concerns immediately.

- Must attend level 2/Foundation safeguarding training every 2 years and annual updates.

- Must follow CAST safeguarding policy and The Orchard safeguarding procedures and arrangements, and code of conduct.

- Staff must maintain a professional curiosity and should not assume that information provided by others is complete or accurate. Staff should ask appropriate questions, seek clarification and report concerns promptly.

• Staff understand that safeguarding concerns may arise from circumstances outside the nursery environment, including family circumstances, community influences, online experiences and wider contextual factors.

• Staff must record concerns accurately and promptly using CPOMS, ensuring records clearly separate fact, observation, professional judgement and action taken.

• Staff understand that safeguarding includes protecting children from online harm, including inappropriate content, online abuse, exploitation, misuse of images, and risks associated with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

• Staff understand their responsibility to challenge unsafe practice and report concerns about adults, colleagues, volunteers or visitors through the appropriate safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.

• Staff recognise that children with additional needs, disabilities or communication differences may require adapted approaches to ensure their voice is heard and their safeguarding needs are fully understood.

4. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Staff are trained to recognise:

• Physical abuse – hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning.
• Emotional abuse – persistent negativity, rejection, bullying.
• Sexual abuse – inappropriate touching, exploitation, grooming.
• Neglect – persistent failure to meet basic needs.
• Domestic abuse – exposure to violence or coercive control at home.
• Child-on-child abuse – bullying, harassment, harmful sexual behaviour.

Staff are trained to record on CPOMS and report any concern to the DSL/DDSL immediately.

• All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be professionally curious.

• Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age-appropriate way.

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

• We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child protection.

• At the Orchard Nursery we will ensure that children with SEND are listened to and responded to appropriately where they have concerns regarding abuse. In order to do this, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers

receive the relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child.

• When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through: significant changes in their behaviour; deterioration in their general well-being; their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure); changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.

• We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.

• We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.

• We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation, child on child abuse, Honour based violence, trafficked children, and radicalisation or extremism. (See appendix 2 for definitions)

• In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation and follow our Prevent Duty and British Values policy.

• We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.

• We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with. (See appendix 2)

• Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the LSCB procedures.

• If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

• Staff understand that safeguarding includes recognising risks associated with online activity, including exposure to inappropriate content, online abuse, exploitation, harmful communication, misuse of images, and emerging risks linked to artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technologies.

• The nursery recognises that children's online experiences can impact their wellbeing, behaviour and development. Concerns relating to online safety will be recorded, assessed and managed in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.

• Staff understand the importance of identifying contextual safeguarding concerns and considering the wider circumstances affecting a child, including family circumstances, community influences, online environments and additional vulnerabilities.

• The DSL maintains an overview of safeguarding concerns, identifying patterns, repeated concerns or emerging risks across the nursery. CPOMS is used to support accurate recording, monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding information.

• Safeguarding decisions are child-centred and proportionate, with the child's welfare and best interests being the primary consideration.

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5. Responding to Concerns

• All concerns must be reported to the DSL without delay.

• The DSL will follow procedures for reporting to Children's First Response.

• In cases of immediate danger, staff must contact emergency services or Children's First Response directly. Contact details on red safeguarding posters.

• Parents will be informed unless doing so puts the child at risk.

• Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:

-listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;

-does not question the child

• The staff member making the disclosure will record it on the nursery's online reporting system (CPOMS). This will include, if relevant, the body map.

• A 'PRE-EXISTING INJURY AT HOME' form will be completed if a child comes into nursery with any type of mark on their body that occurred outside of nursery. These forms will be signed by the parent/carer and then uploaded to CPOMS. Once uploaded to CPOMS the form will be kept in the children's file in the office.

• If the DSL deems it appropriate then a referral will be made to Children's First Response Hub or allocated social worker.

• A Referral form will be completed and emailed to Children's First Response Hub.

• It may not be possible to know whether a disclosure is being made or not. In such circumstances it is appropriate to ask the 'TED' questions, these are open ended questions that will not prejudice any future investigation: 'Tell me more about that...' Explain what you mean.....Describe what happened....

• Staff must record safeguarding concerns factually, accurately and without delay. Records should distinguish between fact, observation, professional judgement and action taken.

• Information relating to safeguarding concerns will only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard the child. Staff understand that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of safeguarding information where there is a legitimate concern for a child's welfare.

• The DSL will consider whether concerns indicate a need for early help/ family help support, referral to children's social care, or involvement from other agencies. Decisions and rationale will be recorded on CPOMS.

• Where safeguarding concerns are identified, the DSL will ensure appropriate follow-up actions are completed and reviewed, including monitoring of the child's wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, development and engagement.

• The nursery recognises the importance of regular attendance as part of safeguarding. Unexplained absence, patterns of absence or changes in attendance may be indicators of safeguarding concerns and will be followed up appropriately. See attendance policy.

6. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers and Adults in Positions of Trust

The Orchard Nursery recognises that safeguarding concerns can arise about adults working with children. All allegations, concerns or information relating to the behaviour of staff, volunteers, students, agency workers or any person working on the nursery premises will be taken seriously and managed in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**, the **Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2026**, Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures and Plymouth CAST safeguarding procedures.

- We ensure that all parents/carers know how to raise concerns or make a complaint regarding the behaviour or actions of staff, volunteers, agency staff or any person working on the premises, including where an allegation of abuse is suspected.
- All staff understand that concerns about an adult working with children must be reported immediately and never ignored, minimised or dealt with informally.
- We maintain a culture where staff feel confident to raise concerns, including concerns about colleagues, through our whistleblowing and safeguarding procedures.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteers, agency workers or any other person working with children, including:
    - inappropriate sexualised comments or behaviour;
    - excessive one-to-one attention beyond professional responsibilities;
    - inappropriate physical contact;
    - inappropriate use of technology or sharing of images;
    - behaviour that breaches the nursery code of conduct.

- All concerns about adults working with children, including low-level concerns, are recorded appropriately and reviewed by the DSL/Manager to identify any patterns or concerns.
- Low-level concerns are recorded where behaviour may not meet the threshold for an allegation but may indicate a potential issue regarding professional boundaries, conduct or suitability.

Where an allegation is made:

- The concern will be reported immediately to the DSL/Manager.
- Where the allegation relates to the DSL, it will be reported directly to the nursery committee/School Improvement Officer. Mike Carter / Charlotte Targett
- The DSL/Manager will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice within one working day, or sooner where appropriate.
- LADO advice will determine the next steps, including whether a formal allegations management process is required.
- We will not investigate allegations ourselves before seeking advice from the LADO, as this could compromise any investigation.
- We will cooperate fully with any investigation undertaken by children's social care, the police or other agencies.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

Hayley Cowmeadow and Carline Benoit
01202 817600

- Parents/carers will be informed of allegations where appropriate and in consultation with the LADO.
- Ofsted will be informed of significant events and allegations where required within the statutory timescales.
- Where an allegation results in dismissal or resignation due to safeguarding concerns, the nursery will consider whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is required.

Suspension:

Where appropriate, and following advice from the LADO or other agencies, suspension may be considered to protect children, families and the member of staff involved. Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply guilt. Suspension is not an automatic response to an allegation

Staff working with children:

- Practitioners must never work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol, illegal substances or medication that affects their ability to care safely for children.
- All staff must follow Plymouth CAST's Code of Conduct and The Orchard Nursery expectations regarding professional behaviour and boundaries.

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7. Whistleblowing

The Orchard Nursery is committed to creating a safeguarding culture where all staff, students and volunteers feel confident to raise concerns about unsafe practice, poor safeguarding practice or the behaviour of others.

- All staff are reminded that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.
- Staff must report concerns immediately and should not assume that someone else will act.
- Concerns may be raised with:
    - Nursery Manager – Emma Middleton
    - Deputy Managers – Jo Martin / Kelsie Moss
    - Committee safeguarding representative – Mike Carter
    - School Improvement Office (CAST) – Charlotte Targett

Staff can raise concerns confidentially and will be supported when doing so.

External contacts:

- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285
- Ofsted: 0300 123 4666

This procedure is supported by our Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff understand that if they believe safeguarding concerns have not been acted upon appropriately, they can seek independent advice and support.

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8. Safer Recruitment and Suitable People

The Orchard Nursery follows safer recruitment procedures in accordance with **KCSIE 2026**, EYFS 2026 and Plymouth CAST recruitment procedures.

All recruitment processes aim to ensure that adults working with children (including students over 16 years old) are suitable, safe and committed to safeguarding.

An additional criminal records check should be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.

Before appointment:

- Enhanced DBS checks are obtained and barred list checks.
- Identity checks are completed.
- Qualification checks are completed.
- References are obtained and verified.
- Employment history is checked and gaps explored.
- The reasons for leaving previous employment are established.
- A safeguarding-focused recruitment process is followed.

References:

- We do not accept open references such as “To whom it may concern”.
- References are obtained directly from the employer where possible.
- At least one reference should be from the applicant’s current or most recent employer.
- References should be completed by an appropriate senior person.
- References from family members are not accepted.
- Electronic references must be verified as coming from a legitimate source.

The Single Central Record:

- The nursery maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) containing required recruitment and vetting information.
- The SCR is stored securely and monitored regularly by management and the safeguarding committee representative.
- DBS update service checks are completed where applicable, every 6 months.

Ongoing suitability:

- All staff and volunteers must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or other information that may affect their suitability to work with children.
- Staff must notify the manager of any changes that may affect their suitability during employment, as soon as they arise.
- The nursery has procedures to respond where concerns about suitability arise.

Visitors:

- Visitors sign in and out of the nursery.
- Visitor identity is checked where appropriate.
- Visitors are never given unsupervised access to children unless appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed.
- Staff challenge unfamiliar adults within the nursery environment.

Staff ratios:

- Ratios meet the requirements of the **EYFS Statutory Framework 2026**.
- Children are supervised effectively at all times.

English Language Skills:

The Orchard Nursery ensures that all staff have a sufficient understanding and use of English to safeguard and promote children's wellbeing. Staff must be able to communicate effectively, keep records in English, liaise with other professionals, understand health and safety instructions, and summon emergency assistance when required.

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9. Staff Training, Qualifications and Support

The Orchard Nursery recognises that effective safeguarding depends upon well-trained, confident and supported staff.

All staff:

- Receive safeguarding training during induction and within their probationary period.
- Complete safeguarding refresher training at least every two years.
- Receive regular safeguarding updates throughout the year through:
    - staff meetings;
    - newsletters;
    - safeguarding briefings;
    - training updates;
    - professional discussions.

All staff must read and understand:

- The Orchard Nursery Safeguarding Policy.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused.
- Plymouth CAST safeguarding procedures.
- Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff understand:

- how to identify safeguarding concerns;
- how to record concerns accurately;
- how to respond to disclosures;
- the importance of professional curiosity;
- the importance of listening to children's voices.

DSL training:

The DSL and Deputy DSLs receive enhanced safeguarding training and maintain up-to-date knowledge of:

- local safeguarding procedures;
- child protection processes;
- early help / family help;
- online safety;
- SEND vulnerabilities;
- contextual safeguarding;
- safer recruitment expectations.

First Aid:

- At The Orchard Nursery, all staff are Paediatric First Aid trained.
- A member of staff with a current PFA certificate is available at all times when children are present and accompanies children on outings.

- PFA training is renewed every three years and is suitable for those caring for babies and young children.
- Records of staff PFA training are maintained and displayed to parents/carers.
- Staff with Level 2 or Level 3 early years qualifications (including experience-based routes) must hold a current Paediatric First Aid qualification to be included within staff-to-child ratios.

Students, apprentices and volunteers:

- Students over 16 years old must hold an enhanced DBS check
- Students and volunteers receive safeguarding induction before working with children.
- They understand reporting procedures and professional boundaries.
- They are only included in ratios where EYFS requirements are met.

Committee members:

- Committee members complete appropriate safeguarding training.
- Safeguarding remains a standing agenda item at committee meetings.
- The committee maintains oversight of safeguarding practice.

Supervision and Appraisal

The Orchard Nursery provides regular supervision for all staff at least **once each term**, with an **annual appraisal** to review performance, professional development and future objectives.

Supervision provides a confidential opportunity for staff to:

- discuss children's development, wellbeing and any safeguarding concerns;
- identify solutions and agree actions to address issues;
- receive support, coaching and guidance to enhance their practice and professional effectiveness.

Our supervision process promotes a culture of mutual support, teamwork, continuous improvement and high-quality outcomes for children.

10. Attendance and Absence Monitoring

The Orchard Nursery recognises that attendance patterns and unexplained absences can provide important safeguarding information. Regular attendance supports children’s learning, wellbeing and allows staff to identify changes in a child’s circumstances.

- The nursery has a Child Absence Policy which is shared with parents/carers when their child starts.
- Parents/carers must inform the nursery of absences by 9:00am through the eyParent app. Parents may also contact the nursery by telephone or email.
- If a child is absent without explanation, staff will follow up with parents/carers on the same day.
- Where contact cannot be made, emergency contacts will be contacted.
- A minimum of two emergency contacts are requested for each child.
- Unexplained or prolonged absences will be recorded and monitored in line with safeguarding procedures.

- Patterns of absence, frequent late collection, persistent absence or changes in attendance will be reviewed as part of safeguarding monitoring.
- Consideration will be given to:
    - the child's individual vulnerabilities;
    - additional needs or SEND;
    - family circumstances;
    - parental vulnerabilities;
    - previous safeguarding concerns.
- Where there are concerns regarding a child's welfare due to attendance, the DSL will consider whether advice or referral to Children's First Response or other agencies is required.
- Information relating to attendance concerns will be recorded appropriately on CPOMS.

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11. Safer Eating, Toileting and Intimate Care

The Orchard Nursery is committed to ensuring that children's dignity, safety and wellbeing are maintained during all personal care routines.

We follow our **Safer and Healthy Eating Policy**, Intimate Care procedures and EYFS safeguarding requirements.

Eating and Mealtimes

- Staff supervise children closely during meals and snacks. Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating.
- Adults sit at children's level wherever possible to support safe eating, positive interactions and communication.
- Babies and young children should be seated safely in a highchair/ low chair while eating
- Staff monitor children to reduce the risk of choking and respond appropriately to allergies, dietary requirements and individual needs.
- A member of staff with appropriate paediatric first aid knowledge is available when children are eating.
- Information regarding:
    - allergies;
    - intolerances;
    - dietary requirements;
    - medical needs;
    - cultural or religious dietary requirements

      is gathered during registration and kept updated.
- Allergy information is clearly communicated to relevant staff, including kitchen staff.
- The Orchard Nursery has a LifeVac device available, and all staff receive annual training on its correct use.
- Any choking incidents requiring intervention will be recorded, shared with parents/carers, and reviewed to identify any actions needed to further improve safety.
- Children requiring additional dietary support wear appropriate allergy identification (rainbow lanyards) during mealtimes.

Toileting and Nappy Changing

- Children's privacy and dignity are respected at all times. Privacy screens are in place within nappy changing areas to protect children's dignity and privacy during care routines. In addition, privacy film have been placed on some external windows to maintain children's privacy and prevent unintended viewing into the setting
- Staff support children to develop independence with toileting in a sensitive and age-appropriate way.
- Nappy changing and intimate care routines are carried out safely, respectfully and in line with nursery procedures.
- Staff maintain appropriate supervision whilst ensuring children's dignity.
- Staff follow hygiene procedures and record nappy changes appropriately.

Safe Sleep

The Orchard Nursery follows current EYFS requirements and safer sleep guidance to ensure all children sleep safely. Children under two years of age are always placed on their backs in their own appropriate sleep space, using a firm, flat mattress with suitable bedding or a correctly fitted sleep bag. Sleep spaces are kept free from pillows, toys and loose items, children's temperature is monitored, and babies under six months are supervised by an adult in the same room throughout their sleep. All sleeping children remain within sight and hearing of staff and are checked frequently in line with the nursery's Safe Sleep Policy and current NHS and The Lullaby Trust guidance.

Health and Medicines

The Orchard Nursery promotes children's health, including oral health, and follows robust procedures for managing illness, preventing the spread of infection and administering medicines. Medicines are only given with written parental consent (and where prescribed, by an authorised healthcare professional), with accurate records maintained and parents informed on the same day.

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12. Online Safety and Use of Technology

The Orchard Nursery recognises that technology is an important part of children's lives and that safeguarding practice must include protection from online risks.

Online safety is supported through our **E-Safety Policy**, Plymouth CAST procedures and EYFS safeguarding expectations.

The nursery ensures:

- Staff understand the risks associated with online safety, including:
    - inappropriate content;
    - online communication;
    - misuse of images;
    - artificial intelligence (AI) generated images and content;

- sharing of children's personal information.
- Staff understand that safeguarding concerns may arise through technology and must report concerns immediately.
- The Orchard Nursery has regard to the Department for Education guidance **"**Help for early years providers: Screen use" and ensures that children's use of screens is appropriate, purposeful and supports learning and development. Screen use is balanced with opportunities for play, physical activity, communication, social interaction and hands-on experiences. Practitioners ensure that any digital content accessed is age-appropriate, safe and used to enhance children's learning rather than replace adult interaction.

Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

- Personal mobile phones and personal cameras will NOT be used where children are present.
- Personal phones must be stored securely in the office in a designated mobile phone storage box..
- Staff may only access personal phones during breaks in the staff room.
- Staff wearing smart watches is strictly prohibited.
- Any misuse of personal devices will be managed through safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Photographs and Videos

- Only nursery-owned devices may be used to photograph children.
- Photographs and videos are only taken for legitimate educational purposes and in line with parental permissions.
- Images must only include the child/children being observed and must not include other children in the background, where possible.
- Where required, EyLog editing tools, such as blurring functions, will be used to protect children's privacy.
- Staff must never share images of children through personal devices, messaging applications or social media.
- Images must be stored and shared securely.
- The management team complete weekly checks of photos on all devices to ensure images are appropriate, securely stored and in line with the nursery's photo safety procedures.
- Internet use is monitored through Securly filtering software and regular browser history checks by the management team to ensure safe and appropriate use of online resources

The nursery recognises that restricting personal devices is an important safeguarding measure but does not replace effective supervision, professional conduct and vigilance.

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13. Prevention of Abuse Through Good Practice

The Orchard Nursery promotes a culture where children are safe, respected, listened to and supported.

Safeguarding is embedded into daily practice through effective supervision, professional relationships and consistent routines.

We ensure:

- Rooms are organised to allow effective supervision of all children.
- Children are never left unsupervised with adults where this could compromise safeguarding.
- One-to-one work takes place only when appropriate and where safeguards are in place.
- The Blossom Room may be used for targeted support; doors remain open and staff maintain awareness of activity taking place.
- Sleep areas are monitored appropriately, with staff maintaining required checks.
- Nappy changing areas allow children's privacy while ensuring appropriate supervision.
- Staff maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Relationships with children:

- Adults respect children's personal space, dignity and individuality.
- Children are encouraged to communicate when something makes them uncomfortable.
- Children's voices, wishes and feelings are valued.
- Children are supported to understand safe and unsafe situations through age-appropriate teaching.
- Physical contact is child-led, appropriate and respectful.
- Children are never forced to receive physical affection.
- Comfort and reassurance are provided sensitively when needed.

Behaviour:

- Staff follow the nursery Behaviour Policy.
- Physical intervention is only used where necessary to prevent harm and must be appropriate, proportionate and recorded.
- Staff receive support and training to manage children's behaviour positively.

Communication:

- Staff communicate clearly regarding safeguarding concerns.
- Staff must not assume another professional has taken action.
- Conversations, decisions and agreed actions must be recorded where appropriate.
- Staff check understanding with colleagues and external agencies to ensure effective safeguarding.

Risk management:

- Risk assessments are completed, reviewed regularly and shared with relevant staff.
- Safeguarding concerns, complaints and incidents are recorded appropriately.
- The DSL ensures required notifications are made to Ofsted within statutory timescales.

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14. Curriculum

The Orchard Nursery recognises that teaching children how to keep themselves safe is an essential part of safeguarding.

Safeguarding is embedded throughout our curriculum and supports children's personal, social and emotional development.

Children are supported to:

- develop confidence and resilience;
- recognise and communicate their feelings;
- understand healthy relationships;
- develop independence;
- know that trusted adults can help them when they have worries.

Safeguarding learning is delivered in a developmentally appropriate way through:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- stories and discussions;
- role play;
- everyday routines;
- safer stranger awareness;
- the Underwear Rule;
- road safety;
- online safety;
- understanding emotions and boundaries.

The nursery promotes equality, diversity and inclusion by:

- valuing every child and family;
- respecting children's heritage, language, culture and background;
- ensuring children experience an environment where they feel represented and included;
- recognising that children may have additional vulnerabilities linked to SEND, communication needs or personal circumstances.

Staff consider children's individual needs and ensure safeguarding teaching is accessible for all children, including those with additional needs or disabilities.

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15. Support to Families

The Orchard Nursery recognises that strong relationships with families are central to effective safeguarding.

We aim to build trusting, respectful partnerships with parents/carers while maintaining our responsibility to protect children.

We:

- communicate clearly with families about safeguarding responsibilities.
- explain our procedures for reporting concerns, information sharing and working with other agencies.
- encourage parents/carers to share information that may affect their child's wellbeing.
- provide support and signposting where families require additional help.
- work alongside external agencies where appropriate.

Where safeguarding concerns arise:

- The nursery will continue to welcome and support the child and family wherever appropriate.
- Information will be shared with relevant agencies when necessary to safeguard a child.
- Confidentiality will be maintained, but information will be shared where safeguarding duties require this.
- Decisions regarding information sharing will be made in line with safeguarding guidance, data protection legislation and local procedures.

Where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan:

- The nursery will contribute to meetings and agreed actions.
- The DSL will ensure relevant information is shared appropriately.
- Records of safeguarding actions, meetings and communication will be securely maintained on CPOMS.

The Orchard Nursery recognises that effective safeguarding requires partnership working with families, professionals and agencies to achieve the best outcomes for children.

16. Dogs on the Premises

In line with the EYFS statutory requirements, dogs subject to Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the XL Bully type, are not permitted on the nursery premises at any time.

Signed on behalf of the nursery……*Emma Middleton*……..Date:……July 2026……..