

## Norton Sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



### Review

| Review Cycle | Date of Current Policy | Author(s) of Current Policy | Review Date    |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Annual       | September 2023         | Mr J Caswell                | September 2024 |

### Ratification

| Role   | Name   | Signature | Date |
|--|--|-----------|------|
| Chair of Governors   | Mrs S Staple   |           |      |
| Safeguarding Governor                                      | Mrs S Bailey   |           |      |
| Head Teacher*  | Mr J Caswell   |           |      |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*                        | Mr J Caswell (West Chinnock)<br>Mrs E Jaggard (Norton sub Hamdon)  |           |      |
| Deputy DSL (s)*<br><i>Insert additional rows if needed</i> | Mrs L O'Grady (West Chinnock)<br>Mrs D Donovan-Lowe (West Chinnock)<br>Mrs H Byrne (Norton sub Hamdon)<br>Mr J Caswell (Norton sub Hamdon) |           |      |

*\*Any changes to key personnel/holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies.*

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## 1.1 Definitions

**Safeguarding** is defined as:

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

**Child Protection** is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

## 1.2 Introduction

At Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who encounters children, their families, and carers, has a role to play.
- In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals must make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they must always consider what is in the **best interests** of the child.
- The schools take an '**it can happen here**' approach where safeguarding is concerned.
- **Everyone** who encounters children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.
- Victims of harm must **never** be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.
- Acting immediately on concerns about a child's welfare.
- Fulfilling their legal responsibilities to identify children who may need early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

All action taken by Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must be in accordance with current legislation and guidance. The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- [Education Act 2002 Section 175 \(maintained schools only\)](#)
- [Education Act 2002 Section 157 \(Independent schools incl Academies and CTC's\)](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Teachers' Standards \(Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguarding Children](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Information Sharing 2018](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)
- [Filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges \(DfE\)](#)
- [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Local Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership: [Policies and Procedures - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

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

- Recruitment and Selection
- How to report Low Level Concerns
- Whistleblowing and Public Interest Disclosure
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety
- Policy on Supporting Children in Care
- Attendance Policy (including the safeguarding response to children who are absent or are missing from education)
- Health and Safety Policy

The Head Teacher must ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body are accessible, understood and followed by all staff.

## 1.3 Equalities Statement

With regards to safeguarding both schools must consider their duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and their general and specific duties under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#). General duties include:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Details of such specific duties are published under Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools' equality statement and measurable objectives. These are available on the schools' website via this link: [Equality Objectives](#)

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock schools adhere to Somerset Children and Young Peoples plan 2022-2024 [Somerset Children and Young Peoples Plan 2022 - 2024 - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Staff are aware of the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This will be in line with the schools' Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, available via this link: [SEND Information](#)

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools also adhere to the principles of anti-oppressive practice in line of the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) and actively promote those principles.

## 1.4 Overall Aims

This policy is designed to contribute to the safeguarding of children at Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools by:

- Clarifying safeguarding expectations for members of the schools' community, staff, governing body, learners, and their families.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture in the schools, built on shared values; ensuring that learners are treated with respect and dignity, are taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.
- Supporting contextual safeguarding practice recognising that the schools' two sites can be locations where harm can occur.
- Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within the schools' communities (staff, learners, parents/carers) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them.
- Early identification of need for vulnerable learners and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety.
- Working in partnership with learners, parents, and other agencies in the Local Safeguarding Partnership including Early Help.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools are named as a relevant agency in the Local Safeguarding Partnership (Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership). This policy sets out its statutory duty to co-operate, follow and comply with published arrangements as set out by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership's professional expectations, roles, and responsibilities.

## 1.5 Professional expectations, roles and responsibilities.

### 1.5.1 Role of all staff

- All staff must read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023). Those working directly with children must also read Annex B. Those who do not work directly with children have the option of reading Annex A instead.
- In addition to this all staff must be aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including reading this Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy; the Behaviour Policy; the Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct); safeguarding response to children who go missing or are absent from education; and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- All staff must know who and how to contact the DSL and any deputies, the Chair of Governors and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.
- All staff must be able to identify vulnerable learners and take action to keep them safe. Information or concerns about learners will be shared with the DSL where it includes those:
  - who may need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect.
  - requiring mental health support.
  - may benefit from early help.
  - where there is a radicalisation concern.
  - where a crime may have been committed.
- All staff must be clear as to the schools' policy and procedures about [child on child abuse](#), children missing or absent from education and [those requiring mental health support](#), and the [impact of technology in relation to online safety](#) including online filtering and monitoring processes.
- All staff must be involved, where appropriate, in the implementation of individual plans to further safeguard vulnerable learners and understand their academic progress and attainment and must maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- All staff must record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using the schools' safeguarding systems.
- All staff must be aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the school.

### 1.5.2 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies (DDSL)

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023, Part 2)

Details of the DSL and Deputy DSL are available on the Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools' website, in newsletters, on notice boards in each school's reception area and on posters throughout both schools.

- The DSL at each school is a senior member of staff who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within that setting.
- The DSL at each school has undertaken the **SSCP** training to ensure they are compliant with the Local Authority requirement for DSLs.
- The DSL works with the headteacher, and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that learners in need are experiencing or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on any such learner's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.
- Responsibilities include the management of work undertaken by any Deputy DSLs.
- The DSL manages early identification of vulnerability of learners and their families from staff through cause for concerns or notifications and ensures detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals are made and kept.
- The DSL manages referrals to local safeguarding partners where learners with additional needs have been identified. These can include those –
  - who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect.
  - requiring mental health support.
  - who may benefit from early help.
  - where there is a radicalisation concern.
  - where a crime may have been committed.

#### **The DSL will also:**

- Work with others – acting as a point of contact for outside agencies about safeguarding.
- Support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies.
- When required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- Coordinate safeguarding training and raise awareness and understanding with the school community around policies and practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable learners with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
  - know who these children are,

- understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
  - Are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face.
  - Provide additional academic support or make reasonable adjustments to help children who have **or have had** a social worker to reach their potential.
- 
- Ensure the successful transfer of the Safeguarding/Child Protection File when a learner moves on to a new setting within 5 days for in-year transfer or the first 5 days of the start of a new term.
  - Ensure appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time/ any out of hours/out of term activities managed by the school.
  - Take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

### 1.5.3 - Role of the Governing Body

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022, Part 2)

There is a senior board level lead who oversees the schools' safeguarding responsibility to ensure that safeguarding and child protection practice, process, and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance, and Local Safeguarding Partnership arrangements.

#### **The appointed Safeguarding Governor will:**

- Liaise with the Head Teacher/Principal and the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the S. 175/S. 157 (annual safeguarding) audit for the Somerset Education Safeguarding Leads.
- Ensure that the school remedies without delay any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention.
- Ensure that this document is updated annually (or when there are significant updates)
- Ensure that the DSLs are appropriate senior members of the schools' senior leadership team and ensure that they have adequate time, funding, training, resources, and support to carry out their role effectively.
- Ensure that they attend Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership training and that safeguarding learning for the community at both schools is robust and effective.
- Ensure that learners are taught about safeguarding on the curriculum including online safety in compliance with statutory guidance [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/relationships-and-sex-education-rse) and [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-foundation-stage-e-yfs)



- Ensure that teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors have appropriate checks carried out in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023, Part 3).
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors who may not be suitable to work with or pose a risk to learners, this includes having a process to manage low level concerns.
- Ensure that systems are in place for learners to share effectively a concern about a safeguarding issue they are experiencing, express their views and give feedback.
- Ensure that both schools have systems in place to prevent, identify and respond to child on child harm (including sexual abuse and sexual harassment) and mental health concerns, and review the effectiveness of the schools' online safety practices.
- Ensure that a designated teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement for children in care and other care arrangements.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the governing body will ensure that effective arrangements are in place, to limit, so far as is reasonably practicable, children's exposure to the above risks from the schools' IT system. As part of this process, the governing body will ensure the schools have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. The governing body must ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, are able to manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. The governing body will consider the age range and number of children involved, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs verses safeguarding risks.

## 1.6 Safeguarding training for staff

### 1.6.1 - All staff:

- The governing body will ensure that all staff members undergo the Somerset Safeguarding Child Partnership (SSCP) safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) training at induction and that they will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) refresher training at least annually (via formal training, email e-bulletins and staff meetings).
- All staff must complete FGM awareness training and will understand their legal duty under the Mandatory Reporting Duty.
- All staff must complete PREVENT awareness training. This is to ensure that they can comply with the legal expectations under the PREVENT duty.
- Staff training must include clear reference to internal whistleblowing policy and guidance for escalating concerns.

- All staff must receive training on the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

### **1.6.2 - Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies:**

- Must undergo formal training provided by the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP) to provide them with the knowledge and skills (including online safety) training required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years.
- Deputies must be trained to the same level as the DSL.
- The DSL and any deputies must liaise with the SSCP and Somerset Education Safeguarding Service to ensure that their knowledge and skills are updated via e-bulletins, must attend DSL network meetings, and must take time to read and digest safeguarding bulletins.

### **1.6.3 - Other training considerations:**

- The governing body must ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training, in line with School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.
- Members of the senior leadership team must make themselves aware of and understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. This will ensure that those who have responsibility for the management of behaviour, inclusion, Special Educational Needs, attendance, and exclusions will carry out their duties with a safeguarding consideration.
- The Designated Teacher for Children in Care must undergo appropriate training to fulfil their role to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are in care.
- The mental health lead must have access to appropriate training.
- Training around safeguarding topics in Annex B (including online safety and filtering and monitoring) must be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of a whole school safeguarding approach.
- Appropriate colleagues must receive appropriate training in relation to use of reasonable force and positive handling.
- Governors and trustees must receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction

## **1.7 Safeguarding in the curriculum**

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools are dedicated to ensuring that learners are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. It is recognised that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all learners, and a more personalised or

contextualised approach for more vulnerable learners, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

This includes:

- Working within statutory guidance in respect to [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education); and [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-statutory-framework)
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying.
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that 'over-blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what learners can be taught about online teaching and safeguarding.
- Shaping the curriculum to respond to safeguarding incident patterns in the schools, identified by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team (e.g., to respond to an increase in bullying incidents).
- Providing engagement opportunities with parents and carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum.
- Enabling learners to inform the curriculum via discussions with the school council and other opportunities for pupil voice.

## 1.8 Safer recruitment and safer working practice

### 1.8.1 - Safer recruitment

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must pay full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023)

- This includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. References are always obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- It also includes undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the barred list checks and prohibition checks (and overseas checks if appropriate), dependent on the role and duties performed, including regulated and non-regulated activity.
- Applicants must provide an application form. A Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted as a stand-alone.
- The schools must conduct online searches as part of due diligence checks on short listed candidates and must inform them of this.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools' commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of learners.

### 1.8.2 - Use of reasonable force

'Reasonable force' refers to the physical contact to restrain and control children using no more force than is needed.' The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances. The vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) must be considered.

- The use of reasonable force must be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation and must follow government guidance ([Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013; Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention, 2019](#)).
- There is robust recording of any incident where positive handling or restraint has been used. Further review of the incident must be carried out to reflect on how the incident could have been avoided, this will involve the child and their family.

The process around how the schools manage concerns where a professional may pose a risk to learners and the schools' response to low level concerns can be accessed in section [2.8 Allegations of abuse made against professionals](#).

### 1.8.3 - Whistleblowing procedures

Staff are made aware of the following whistleblowing channels for situations where they feel unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed:

- General guidance can be found at: Advice on whistleblowing <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available [here](#) 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](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).
- The above channels are readily accessible to all staff (they are included in the staff handbook, code of conduct and are displayed on staff notice boards).
- The Whistleblowing policy.

## 1.9 Key safeguarding areas

These topics are themes that can impact on children and families and there are specific areas of safeguarding that the schools have statutory responsibilities to address which are hyperlinked:

- Children in the court system
- Children affected by parental offending/imprisonment.
- [Children missing or absent from education](#) – including persistent absence.

- [Child Exploitation](#) (including both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation and county lines, modern day slavery and trafficking)
- Cybercrime
- [Domestic Abuse](#)
- Homelessness
- So-called Honour based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage),
- [Online Safety](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Child on child abuse:](#)
  - Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
  - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
  - Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
  - Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;(this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
  - Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
  - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
  - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
  - Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
  - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- [Preventing Radicalisation \(The Prevent Duty\)](#)
- [Serious Youth Violence](#)
- Substance Misuse
- [Private Fostering](#)
- [Young Carers](#)

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023; Annex B); the [NSPCC website - Types of Abuse](#).

Localised resources for education settings can be accessed through Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership

## PART 2: Procedures

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### 2.1 Reporting concerns

All staff must be clear about recording and reporting concerns to the DSL/DSL deputies in a timely way. In the case of a learner being in immediate danger, staff should phone the police.

All staff must be aware of and follow the procedures to respond to a concern about a child detailed in [Appendix A](#). This includes responses to child-on-child harm and learners who present with a mental health need ([Appendix B](#)).

At Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools, learners can raise their concerns pupils can raise their concerns (suggest omit this duplication) by speaking with a member of staff. School staff must recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, they are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and must include such observation as a part of their day-to-day duties. Any concerns, however they are raised, will be treated seriously.

### 2.2 Information Sharing

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools are committed to (suggest omit and replace with) must have due regard to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the Data protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations. This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Staff at both schools must be aware that:

- 'Safeguarding' and 'individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data.
- Practitioners must seek consent to share data where possible in line with [Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2018](#).

Staff must be aware that there may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent such as:

- to gain consent would place the child at risk,
- by doing so would compromise a criminal investigation,
- where it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent,
- or if, by sharing information, it would enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

Staff must be aware that there are also times when Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools will not provide pupil's personal data where the serious harm test under legislation is met, (by sharing the information the child may be at further risk). When in doubt Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must seek legal advice.

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

## 2.3 Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable learners.

The DSL and Deputy DSL must regularly review and monitor those students who have been identified as vulnerable. This can include reviewing attendance data, behaviour data, attainment data and safeguarding records. This is to ensure that:

- Proportionate and early interventions are taken to promote the safety and welfare of the child and prevent escalation of harm.
- Information about vulnerable learners is shared with teachers and school leadership staff to promote the best possible educational outcomes.
- Learners who currently have, or have had, a social worker must have their academic progress and attainment reviewed. Additional academic support must be provided as required to help them reach their full potential.
- Reasonable adjustments are made in relation to school-based interventions – for example responding to behaviour.

## 2.4 Multi-agency working

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including identifying and responding to their needs. This is in compliance with statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

Occasions requiring a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989:

- If the child is in need under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 (including when a child is a young carer and or subject to a private fostering arrangement).
- Or if the child needs protection under s.47 of the Children Act 1989 where they are experiencing significant harm, or likely to experience significant harm.

Referrals in these cases must be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSLs) to Children's Social Care in the Local Authority in which that child resides.

Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service must be made immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager. If the child is a child in care, notification must also be made to Somerset's Virtual School.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must co-operate with any statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: this includes ensuring representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings, initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

#### **2.4.1 Additional considerations:**

- Where a learner and/or their family is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan or a multiagency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, the setting must contribute to the preparation, implementation, and review of the plan as appropriate.
- In situations where a child in care may be put on to part time timetable, the school must consult with relevant agencies and the virtual school.
- If a crime has been suspected or committed that involved the bringing of an offensive weapon on to the school site, the school must liaise with the Police who will consider a proportionate response.
- If there is a risk of harm, the police must be called via 999. For other concerns of criminality, the non-statutory guidance ['When to Call the Police' from the NSPCC](#) can be helpful or contact the local PCSO/School Police Beat Officer/School Officer.
- In the rare event that a child death occurs, or a child is seriously harmed, Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must notify the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership as soon as is reasonably possible.

## **2.5 Suspensions, permanent exclusions and commissioning of Alternative Provisions.**

(To be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy.)

When either of the schools is considering suspending or permanently excluding a learner where additional vulnerability is identified, it is important that the learner's welfare is a paramount consideration. The head teacher must consider the school's legal duty of care when sending a learner home.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must exercise their legal duties in relation to their interventions. This includes:



- whether a statutory assessment should be considered in line with the principles of [Children Act 1989](#),
- that decisions are made in an anti-discriminatory manner in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#) (including having regard to the [SEND Code of Practice](#))
- and takes into consideration the learner's rights under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).
- that interventions are consistent with statutory guidance [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 

#### **2.5.1 - Actions to take**

- An assessment of need must be undertaken with multi-agency partners with a view to mitigate any identified risk of harm. This in line with [2.3 Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable learners](#).
- If the child is subject to a child protection plan or where there is an existing child protection file, the school must call a multiagency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude.
- In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, the risk assessment *must* be completed prior to convening a meeting of the governing body.

#### **2.5.2 - Commissioning Alternative Provisions**

When commissioning Alternative Provision, Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must have regard to statutory guidance:

[Alternative provision - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock schools must ensure there is a clear agreement of roles and responsibilities to maintain safeguarding and daily monitoring of attendance arrangements for learners who are not taught on site.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that learner and must make necessary checks on the provider to meet the needs of the learner. Written confirmation from the Alternative Provider of the checks on staff must be obtained by the schools. Such checks must be the same as those checks that are carried out by the schools on their own staff.

## **2.6 Children Missing or Absent from Education**

(To be read in conjunction with the Attendance Policy.)

A learner missing or absent from education is, potentially, an indication of abuse or neglect, or maybe an indication of need for early help support. Staff must follow procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing or are absent from

education, particularly on repeat occasions. These must be reported to the DSL and reviewed in line with [2.3 Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable learners](#).

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools follow the guidance detailed in [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#) and Somerset Education Engagement Policy for Children Missing Education.

This includes notifying the local authority in which the child lives:

- of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly,
- or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

### **2.6.1 - Elective Home Education**

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must notify the Local Authority of every learner where a parent has exercised their right to educate their child at home. Safeguarding concerns must be shared with the Education Engagement Service (EES) and consideration must be given of whether additional support from children's services should be provided in line with the Children Act 1989.

## **2.7 Responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse/harm.**

(There is flow diagram in [Appendix B](#) that illustrates this section)

All staff must recognise that children can abuse their peers (including online). It is important that Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock schools treat incidents of abuse and harm under the safeguarding policy in conjunction with the behaviour policy. However, concerns regarding the welfare of learners require process and records to be kept on the child's safeguarding/child protection file.

Further examples of child-on-child harm can be found under section [1.9 Key Safeguarding Areas](#). It is recognised that peer on peer abuse can happen inside and outside of school or online.

At Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools:

- We adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach to abuse and take incidents seriously. Such incidents must never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter,' just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up.' Banter and teasing can and must be acknowledged and recognised as bullying behaviour that requires proportionate intervention.
- Staff must take steps, even with a zero-tolerance approach, to educate and take action to mitigate the risk of creating a culture of unacceptable behaviours or a culture that normalises abuse.
- Staff must understand that child on child harm may reflect equality issues in terms of those who may be targeted are more likely to have protected characteristics.

- Staff must make early identification of vulnerability to child-on-child harm by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.

There are clear systems in place (which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for learners to confidently report abuse knowing their concerns will be treated seriously as reflected in section [2.1 Reporting a concern](#) of this policy. Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must handle initial reports of harm by:

- Securing the immediate safety of learners involved in an incident and sourcing support for other young people affected.
- Listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc.
- Ensuring that victims are never given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. They must never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Ensuring the child's wishes are taken into consideration in any intervention and that action is taken to ensure the safety of the target and other members of the wider peer cohort.
- Not promising confidentiality as it is highly likely that information will need to be shared with others.

### **2.7.1 Actions to take in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment.**

Reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) guidance must be made in relation to taking protective action. Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools will take the following actions when responding to incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Incidents must be reported immediately to the DSL/ Deputy DSL who must undertake further assessment of what action should be taken proportionate to the factors that have been identified. [The Brook - Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Assessment Tool](#) must be utilised to inform assessment of risk and what subsequent actions to take. This may include seeking specialist advice and guidance from the education psychology team, the DSL Consultation Line or the Education Safeguarding Leads.
- Support and undertake GIFT work as an early intervention when requested.
- DSLs/Deputies must take **proportionate** action and consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with the section [2.4 - Multi-Agency Working section](#).
- When an incident involves an act of **sexual violence** (rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault) the starting point is that this must be passed on to police **regardless** of the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old). This must be reported directly via 101 for recording purposes and accountability. A concurrent referral to social care must also be made.

- When the children involved require a statutory assessment either under s.17 or s. 47 of the Children Act 1989 a referral to social care must be undertaken.
- Where the report includes an online element, the schools must follow [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). The key consideration is that staff must not view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
- A risk assessment and or safety plan must be developed for each child who has been involved in an incident. They must be reviewed regularly or every time there is an occurrence of an incident and must involve the child and parents/carers and address contextual risks.
- It is important that schools consider Sexual harassment in broad terms and staff must be aware that sexual harassment (as set out above), if not challenged, creates a culture that can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

### **2.7.2 - Contextual safeguarding approach to child-on-child harm:**

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by taking a contextual approach to safeguarding by increasing safety in the contexts in which harm can occur – this can include the school environment itself, peer groups and the neighbourhood.

Following any incidents of child-on-child harm, the DSL/Deputies must review and consider whether any practice or environmental changes can be made in relation to any lessons learned. This can include making changes to staffing and supervision, making changes to the physical environment and considering the utilisation and delivery of safeguarding topics in the curriculum.

## **2.8 Responding to allegations of abuse made against adults working in the setting.**

Staff must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises) where they may have:

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

### **2.8.1 - Immediate action must be taken:**

- Speaking to the individual concerned is not permitted.
- Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Head Teacher who will follow guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023, Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff).
- If the concern relates to the Head Teacher it must be reported to the Chair of Governors, who must liaise with the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) and they will decide on any action required.
- If there is a conflict of interest which inhibits this process of reporting, staff can report directly to the LADO.
- If allegations are regarding a member of supply staff, the school must take the lead and progress enquiries with the LADO, whilst continuing to engage and work with the employment agency.
- Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children must be referred to the LADO on the day that the allegation is reported. The allocated social worker must also be informed on the same day. The school must not undertake any investigation unless the LADO advises this.

### **2.8.2 - Low level concerns**

This should be read in conjunction with the staff code of conduct and Keeping children Safe in Education (2023). A low-level concern is not insignificant. This process must be used in events where a concern about professional conduct does not meet the threshold set out at the beginning of this section.

The schools have a clear procedure for sharing low level concerns and have a policy for Low Level Concerns. Concerns must be shared with the DSL or Head Teacher.

- Reports must be made to the DSL/Deputy DSL (or the head teacher if it is regarding the DSL). Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation.
- The DSL must address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage and provide a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- The DSL must review and correct any deficits in the schools' safeguarding system.

## **2.9 Mental health and wellbeing.**

(A flow diagram is available in [Appendix B](#) to illustrate this section)

Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their learners. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, and or may require early help support.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools have committed to undertake the following.

- The appointment of a senior mental health lead who can support the development of knowledge and act as a point of expertise to promote the wellbeing and mental health of learners. This colleague will have sufficient training in mental health **and** safeguarding for them to carry out their role effectively.
- Early identification of vulnerability to mental health problems by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.
- Ensure that learners can report and share concerns in line with section [2.1 Reporting a concern](#) of this policy.
- Staff must follow a safeguarding process in terms of reporting concerns outlined in [Appendix B](#) so the DSL/Deputy DSLs (and wider members of the safeguarding team such as the SENDCo) can assess whether any other vulnerabilities can be identified and proportionate support considered.
- Staff must ensure the immediate health and safety of a learner who is displaying acute mental health distress. This may require support from emergency services via 999 if the learner is at risk of immediate harm.
- DSLs/Deputies must consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with section [2.4 - Multi-Agency Working](#).
- The schools must communicate and work with the learner and parents/carers to ensure that interventions are in the best interests of the child.
- DSLs must liaise with staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and to develop ways to support achieving positive educational outcomes.
- Only appropriately trained professionals are permitted to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem – DSLs and the senior leadership team must access specialist advice through targeted services.

### **2.9.1 - Contextual safeguarding approach to mental health**

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must ensure that preventative measures in terms of providing safeguarding on the curriculum will provide opportunities for learners to identify when they may need help, and to develop resilience.

The schools must take a 'whole school approach' to:

- delivering high quality teaching around mental health and wellbeing on the curriculum.
- having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- making sure pupils and staff are aware of and able to access a range of mental health services;

- supporting staff wellbeing
- And being committed to pupil and parent participation

## 2.10 Online Safety

Online safety is an integrated and interwoven theme with other safeguarding considerations. The DSL must take a lead on ensuring that interventions are effective. This means coordinating support and engaging with other colleagues in the schools who may have more technological expertise such as the IT manager.

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools must address online safety issues around content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes:

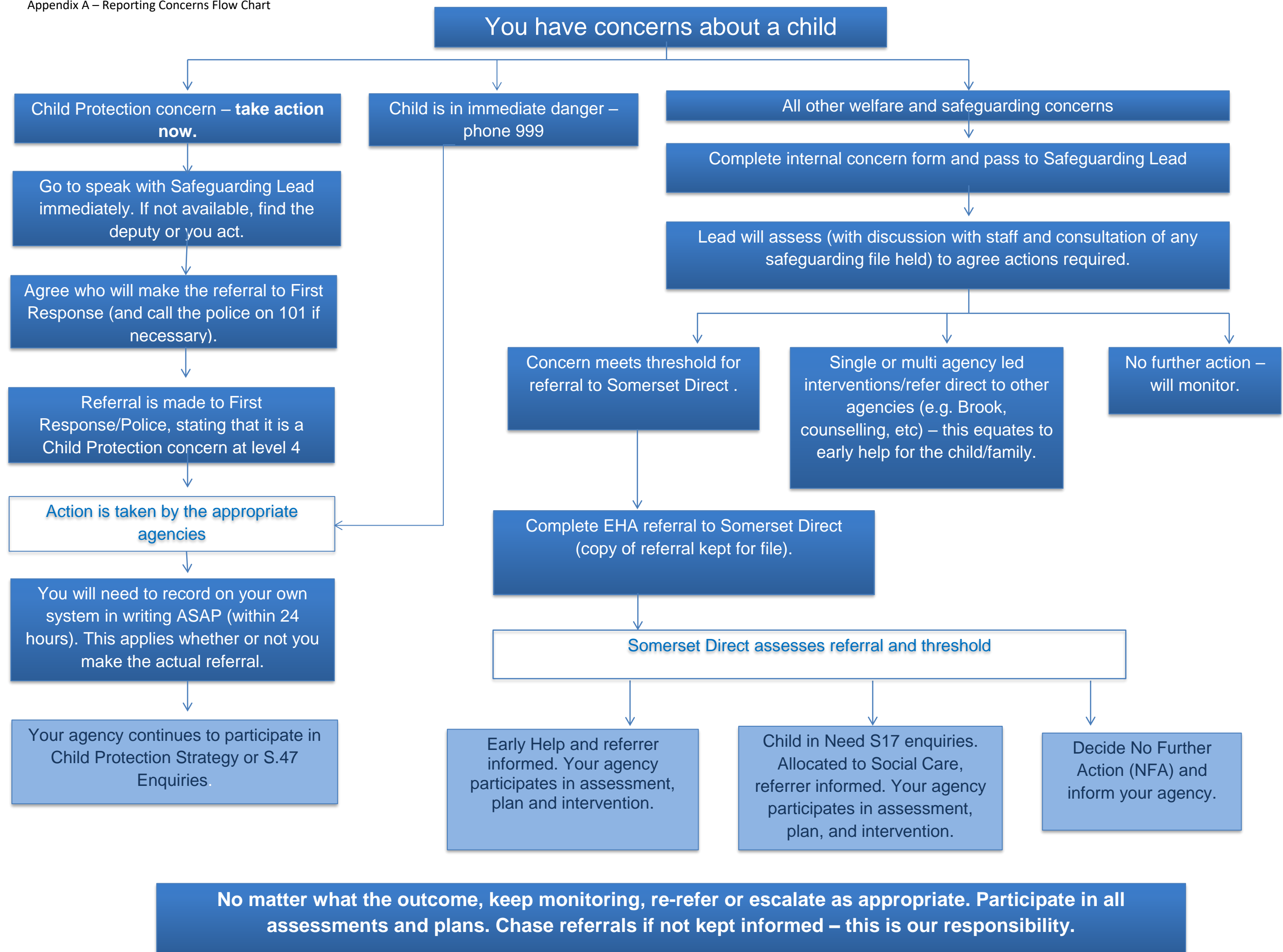
- Ensuring that online safety is included in relevant policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that online safety is interwoven in safeguarding training for staff and that all aspects of safeguarding are on the curriculum for learners.
- Acknowledging that child on child abuse can happen via mobile and smart technology between individuals and groups. This must be approached in the same way as the process outlined in section [2.7 Responding to incidents of child on child harm](#) **and read in conjunction** with Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools' policy on the use of mobile smart technology.
- Ensuring the provision of education via remote learning is compliant with governmental advice [Safeguarding and remote education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/safeguarding-and-remote-education)
- Carrying out an annual review of the schools' effectiveness for safeguarding learners in respect of filtering and monitoring, together with an annual review of information security and access management.
- Preparing children with information for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and where to get help.

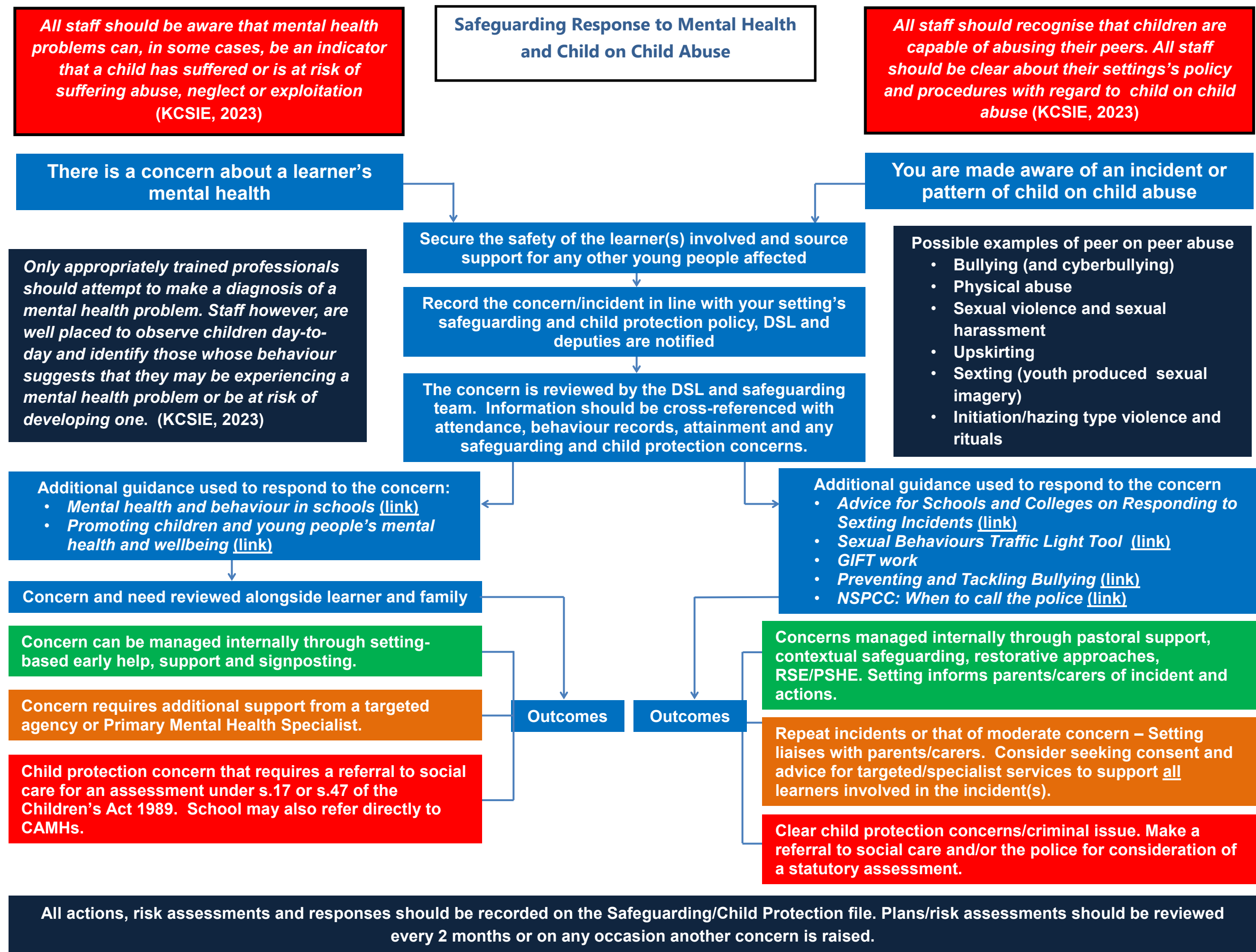
## Summary of changes since September 2022

| Date       | Details  |
|------------|--|
| 07/08/2023 | <p><b><i>Much of the policy content has remained the same as the previous year 2022, the changes below largely reflect the changes to KCSIE 2023.</i></b></p> <p>Page 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Table now updated to include Deputy DSL and Safeguarding Governor</li> <li>- "Details of Policy Updates" now moved to back of document titled "Summary of changes since September 2022".</li> </ul> <p>Page 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Updated guidance and legislation</li> <li>- Added "absent" to attendance bullet point</li> </ul> <p>Page 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- updated hyperlink to new 2022-2024 Children and Young Peoples Plan</li> </ul> <p>Page 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.5.1 Added "absent" to bullet point 2.</li> <li>- Added "including online filtering and monitoring processes" to bullet point 5.</li> </ul> <p>Page 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Added "Take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place" to bullet point 3.</li> </ul> <p>Page 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.6.1 Added bullet point "All staff should receive training on the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring."</li> </ul> <p>Page 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "filtering and monitoring" added to bullet point 5.</li> </ul> <p>Page 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.7.1 – bullet point 4, updated to say "inform candidates that online searches will be carried out".</li> </ul> <p>Page 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.7.3 Added bullet point to insert hyperlink to own policy.</li> <li>- 1.9 added "absent" to bullet point 3.</li> </ul> <p>Page 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2.6 added "absent" to title and in paragraph.</li> <li>- 2.6.1 Service changed to Education Engagement Service (EES).</li> </ul> |



|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>Page 18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2.7.1 updated services in bullet point 1.</li> </ul> <p>Page 20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2.8 Added "those from organisations or individuals using the school premises".</li> <li>- 2.8.2 Best practice to have separate policy for Low Level Concerns.</li> </ul> <p>Appendix C – Agency information updated.</p> |
|--|---|





## Multi-Agency Contacts for Safeguarding in Education.

**If you have concerns about a child/young person in Somerset:**

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| If a child is at immediate risk call the POLICE   | <b>POLICE</b> 999   |  |
| To make an URGENT referral to Children's Social Care                                      | i.e., a child is likely to suffer or is suffering significant harm, call Somerset Direct.<br><b>Somerset Direct 0300 122 2224</b>   |  |
| To make a NON-URGENT referral to Children's Social Care.                                  | Complete an Early Help Assessment and send to <b>SD Inputters</b><br><b>SDinputters@somerset.gov.uk</b>   |  |
| To raise concerns and ask for advice about radicalisation (also contact Somerset Direct). | <b>Police Prevent Team</b> - 01278 647466<br><a href="mailto:PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk">PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk</a><br><b>Local Authority Prevent Lead</b> <a href="mailto:prevent@somerset.gov.uk">prevent@somerset.gov.uk</a> |  |
| To liaise with the specialist Safeguarding Police Unit                                    | <b>Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit – Avon and Somerset Police</b><br><b>01278 649228</b>   |  |
| <b>DSL Consultation Line</b><br>0300 123 3078   | <b>Early Help Hub</b><br>01823 3555803  | <b>Critical Incident Support</b><br>EPS 01823 357000 |

**If you have concerns about a professional working with a child:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to the conduct of someone who works with children. | <b>Local Authority Designated Officer - (LADO)</b><br><b>Anthony Goble/Stacey Davis</b><br><a href="#">Allegations Management - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership</a> |
|---|--|

**For information, advice, and guidance in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures:**

**Education Safeguarding Leads** [Educationsafeguardinglead@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Educationsafeguardinglead@somerset.gov.uk)

Katherine Hollinghurst (East) [Katherine.hollinghurst@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Katherine.hollinghurst@somerset.gov.uk)

Beth Ollive (West) [Beth.ollive@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Beth.ollive@somerset.gov.uk)

**For advice and support in relation to attendance, provision and inclusion:**

**Education Engagement Service** [Educationengagementservice@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Educationengagementservice@somerset.gov.uk)

[www.somerset.gov.uk/ees/resources](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/ees/resources)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Child sexual exploitation & child criminal exploitation | <b>Operation Topaz (Avon and Somerset Police)</b><br><a href="https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul">https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul</a>                                       |
| Child Missing from Education                            | <a href="#">Notify us of a Child Missing from Education (CME) - Somerset Council</a>   |
| Children affected by Forced Marriage                    | <b>Forced Marriage Unit</b><br>020 7008 0151 <a href="mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk">fmu@fco.gov.uk</a>  |
| Online Safety Advice                                    | <b>Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline</b><br>T: 0344 381 4772<br>E: <a href="mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk">helpline@saferinternet.org.uk</a>  |
| Reporting online sexual abuse and grooming              | <b>Child Exploitation and Online Protection command</b><br><a href="https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/">https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/</a>   |
| FGM advice  | <b>NSPCC FGM Helpline</b><br>0800 028 3550 <a href="mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk">fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk</a>  |
| Domestic Abuse Helpline                                 | 0808 2000 247  |
| Young Carers – advice and support.                      | 0300 123 2224 <a href="mailto:YoungCarersmailbox@somerset.gov.uk">YoungCarersmailbox@somerset.gov.uk</a>   |
| CAMHS   | <b>Single Point of Access</b> <a href="#">CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) - CAMHS (somersetft.nhs.uk)</a><br>0300 1245 012 <a href="mailto:camhsspa@somersetft.nhs.uk">camhsspa@somersetft.nhs.uk</a> |
| Whistleblowing professional policy                      | <b>NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline</b><br>0800 028 0285 <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>  |
| Advice around harmful sexualised behaviour.             | DSL consultation line 0300 123 3078<br><b>Brook Traffic Light Tool</b><br><a href="#">Sexual Health &amp; Wellbeing - Brook – Fighting for healthy lives</a>   |

## Appendix D: Dealing with a disclosure of abuse.

### When a child tells me about abuse they have suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell them you are pleased that they are speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure them that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information. Use 'Tell Me, Explain to me, Describe to me' (TED) questioning.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that they have a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what they have told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

- "The 5 R's" are helpful in understanding what professional's duties are in relation to responding to an incident.

### **Recognise – Respond – Reassure – Refer – Record**

## Appendix E: Types of abuse and neglect

The Department for Education's Tackle Child Abuse campaign has accessible videos to watch

<https://tacklechildabuse.campaign.gov.uk/>

Abuse and neglect are defined as the maltreatment of a child or young person whereby someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. For children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect, these include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children.
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges, schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND (KCSIE, 2023).

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

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

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

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

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.



## Appendix F: Specific actions to take on topical safeguarding issues.

General or national guidance will not be included here. A summary of specific duties are in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Annex B](#) and Access to local guidance can be found in [Appendix A](#) of this document.

In recognition that the threshold of child protection is 'likely to suffer' significant harm, Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools may need to make a referral to children's social care. Where possible, this will involve notifying the parent/carer if it does not place the learner at further risk of harm. In all other circumstances information will be shared in line with section [2.2 Information Sharing](#).

It is also important to recognise the importance of liaising with other education settings who may have siblings attending. It is likely that they may hold additional information which will support early identification of harm and in turn develop your assessment of need.

### **Child Exploitation – both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools will ensure that early help intervention is provided as soon as a concern of exploitation is identified. Discussion and advice will be sought from targeted services to consider what support may be available. The learner and their families will be part of any planning and interventions.

- If the learner is at risk of CSE or there is intelligence which indicates that the learner or peer group are at risk of CSE, Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock Schools will share information with Operation Topaz (the police). This information will support proactive activity to disrupt criminal activity in relation to sexual exploitation.
- If the learner is at risk of CCE information should be shared with Somerset's Violence Reduction Unit - The VRU can advise and support settings to manage risk. Targeted support maybe available to disrupt learners from getting involved with criminality.
- Agencies will share 'Missing persons' notifications (which a learner is reported missing from home or care) with education settings with a view to support them to take proactive action and reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes. These should be stored securely on the learner's Safeguarding/Child Protection file.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Operation Encompass is a national operation where local police forces notify when the police are called to an incident to domestic abuse. Avon and Somerset have their own version of this and will notify education settings through the Education Engagement Service (EES) whenever they have responded to a domestic abuse incident. This will enable the education setting to take proactive action and reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes. When a setting is concerned about the amount of police notifications they

receive or disclosures of domestic abuse they should consider seeking further advice and completing an Early Help Assessment or DASH to support the family.

### Female Genital Mutilation

**Mandatory reporting duty:** [Click here for government guidance](#)

There is a legal duty for all professionals undertaking teaching work to report known cases of FGM to the police via 101. This is when they:

1. are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
2. observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on.

These cases must be referred to the DSL who will support them to carry out their duty. It is also advised any referrals made to the police under the mandatory reporting duty is followed up with children's social care, so an assessment of need and support is concurrently considered.

### Online Safety

- **Paragraph 132 and 139 of Keeping Children Safe in Education highlights additional actions schools should take to keep learners safe online.**
- For concerns around individual cases where a child has been harmed through online mediums, advice and guidance can be made through the **Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline**, T: 0344 381 4772, E: [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)
- Where there have been established cases of online abuse or grooming, the school settings should alert - **Child Exploitation and Online Protection command (CEOPS)**  
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

**Mental health** – [linked to section within main body of this policy](#)

**Child on Child Abuse** – [linked to section within main body of this policy](#).

### Serious Youth Violence

To be read in conjunction with the above section around Child Criminal Exploitation

It is important to note that should a weapon be used or there is threat of use, the police should be called immediately.

- The same day a weapon is found the school should call for a multi-disciplinary assessment of risk.
- Whilst it is acknowledged that the decision to exclude remains with the Headteacher/principal it is recommended that consultation with other agencies to ensure there is no further risks

- Alternatives to exclusions should be considered first in recognition that by doing so a learner it may be at further risk of harm out in the community.
- Police must be notified

### **Preventing Radicalisation - The Prevent Duty.**

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard<sup>109</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".<sup>110</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare).

The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes:

- risk assessment,
- working in partnership,
- staff training,
- IT policies.

### **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child:

- under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled)
- by someone other than a parent or close relative (\*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.)
- with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Cases of private fostering arrangements must be reported to children's social care to ensure that needs are adequately made.

Statutory guidance states that this should be done at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start or as soon as you are made aware of the arrangements. Not to do so is a criminal offence.

Further support and reasonable adjustments should be made by the education setting to promote achievement of positive educational outcomes.

### **Young Carers**

A young carer is a person under 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell or who misuses substances. Support for Young Carers can be accessed by completing an EHA.