

# Safeguarding Policy

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## Availability

This policy is made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils via the public website and a copy will be sent to parents and prospective parents can request a copy of the policy free of charge from the school office.

## Guidance

This policy is written with regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)*, *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners (March 2015)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)*, *Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners (July 2018)*, *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (December 2023)*, *The Prevent Duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities (October 2022)*, *Making a Referral to Prevent (October 2022)*, *The use of social media for online radicalisation (July 2015)*, *Wandsworth Level of Need Framework to Multi-Agency Partners (August 2022)*, *Children missing in education (September 2016)*, *Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022)*, *UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring (UKCIS January 2018)*, *Searching, screening and confiscation (July 2022)*, *Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS December 2020)*, *Mental health and behaviour in schools (November 2018)*, *Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (September 2022)*; *Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: a whole school and college approach (March 2015)*, *Relationships and Sexual Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE 2019 - updated 2021)*, *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information (January 2020)*, *When to call the police, non-statutory guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council, Safeguarding and Protecting People for Trustees and Charities (Charity Commission 2019)*; *Working together to improve school attendance (DfE May 2022)*

## Designated Staff

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for Safeguarding is:**

Mr Richard Smith ([resmith@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:resmith@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

*Assistant Head, Pastoral Care and member of the Senior Leadership Team*

During term time school closure i.e. during lockdowns, Mr Smith can be contacted during school hours on 07342 114244. This number will be checked regularly during school hours and when possible out of school hours. A direct referral may be made to Wandsworth MASH on 020 8871 6622 (during office hours) or 020 8871 6000 out of hours or if at risk of immediate harm call 999. An online referral can be made at [Make a referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) - Wandsworth Borough Council](#)

**The Deputy Safeguarding Leads are:**

Mr Matthew Burnett ([mburnett@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:mburnett@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

*Drama, Pastoral Care and Pupil Coach*

Mrs Pollyanna Purbrick ([ppurbrick@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:ppurbrick@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

*SENDKO KS3*

Miss Claire Vainker ([cvainker@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:cvainker@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

*English Teacher*

*The trustees and the head have assigned Mr Smith, Mr Burnett, Mrs Purbrick and Miss Vainker authority over staff in safeguarding matters.*

**The Staff Member with responsibility looked after children is:**

Mr Richard Smith ([resmith@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:resmith@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

**The Staff Member with responsibility for PREVENT:**

Mr Richard Smith ([resmith@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:resmith@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

**The Proprietorial Body is:**

Thames Christian School

**The Designated Board Level Lead for Safeguarding is:**

Mrs Marie-Louise Wells ([safeguardingtrustee@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingtrustee@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

**The Designated Board Level Lead for Internet Filtering and Monitoring is:**

Mr Gareth Gerner ([filteringandmonitoringtrustee@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:filteringandmonitoringtrustee@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

**The Chair of Trustees is:**

Mrs Marie-Louise Wells ([chairoftrustees@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:chairoftrustees@thameschristianschool.org.uk))

Staff trained to Level 3 Safeguarding are Mr Smith, Mrs Purbrick, Mr Burnett, Miss Vainker and Mr Holsgrove. Pupils, parents or staff who have concerns should refer them in the first instance to **Mr Richard Smith** or in his absence **Mr Matthew Burnett, Mrs Pollyanna Purbrick** or **Miss Claire Vainker**.

Trustees trained to Level 3 Safeguarding are Mrs Marie-Louise Wells, Mrs Elisabeth Watson and Mr Gareth Gerner.

**Local Safeguarding Partnership**

The Local Safeguarding Partnership is Wandsworth (Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership). Information about the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership and local procedures which this policy aligns with can be found at:

<http://wscp.org.uk/>, email: [wscp@wscp.org.uk](mailto:wscp@wscp.org.uk) , tel: 020 8871 7401

## Related Policies

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Recruitment and Selection Policy*, *Induction Policy*, *Behaviour Policy*, *Anti-bullying Policy*, *Physical Intervention Policy*, *Electronic Devices and Internet AUP for Staff*, *Electronic Devices and Internet AUP for Pupils*, *Online Safety Policy*, *Code of Conduct*, *School Handbook*, *Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure*, *Whistleblowing Policy*, *Visiting Speaker Policy*, *Wellbeing Policy*, *Self-Harm Guidance*, *Attendance Policy* and *Relationships and Sex Education Policy*. These policies are available for inspection at the school office and copies will be sent free of charge upon request to the school office.

## Statement on Pupil Safety and Welfare

1. Thames Christian School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils including their mental health.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:
  - a. protecting children from maltreatment;
  - b. preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
  - c. ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - d. taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
3. Safeguarding and child protection underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development at Thames Christian School.
4. This policy applies during term time school closures when remote lessons are taking place.
5. This policy applies to all staff including self employed, peripatetic and volunteers working within the school and to contractors who may have regular access to pupils.
6. Volunteers who have not been through the full vetting process are not allowed to work unsupervised. Procedures are in place for recording the details of visitors to the school and security measures are in place to control who comes into the school.
7. All visiting speakers are checked for suitability with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
8. The school contracts Xselv Ltd. to conduct independent Health and Safety audits, Fire Risk Assessments and Legionella Risk Assessments.
9. The school recognises that all children, regardless of age, race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion, have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that pupils cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure.
10. Staff always have a duty to be alert and question behaviours. Child on child abuse of any sort, especially involving sexual harassment is unacceptable. Staff must understand that even if there are no reports of child on child abuse in the school, it doesn't mean that it is not happening. Pupils are capable of abusing their peers

both online and offline both inside and outside of school. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. This **can** include (but is not limited to): bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate personal relationships between peers; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos; 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; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Such abuse must never be tolerated or passed off as *banter, just having a laugh, part of growing up or boys being boys* as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. It should be made clear that it can be criminal in nature (e.g. upskirting). It is rarely isolated and is often linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces they spend their time in. In all cases of child on child abuse a power imbalance will exist within the relationship. This inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the child abused and the child responsible for the abuse. Child on child abuse is often gendered, that is, it is more likely for girls to be abused and boys to be responsible for the abuse. Child on child abuse must **never** be tolerated. If a member of staff thinks for whatever reason that a child may be at risk or experience abuse by their peer(s), or that a child may be at risk of abusing their peer(s), they must report their concern to the DSL without delay in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures in this policy. If a staff member becomes aware that a pupil is sexually active, they must report this to the DSL who will work alongside and support that pupil whilst ensuring that the activity is lawful and consensual.

11. The school offers a high quality education taught within a Christian worldview and this, together with our Christian ethos and values, shapes the framework in which each pupil is encouraged to reach his/her full potential.
12. The school encourages pupils to develop moral discernment through its pastoral care system and its *Behaviour Policy* which details significant rewards for upholding the school's values and high standards of behaviour. Pupils are expected to always treat others with courtesy and respect.
13. The school aims to provide an environment that promotes self-confidence, a feeling of worth and security and where pupils are encouraged to share concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to and acted upon. In these ways pupils develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse both from adults and their peer group. This is achieved through:
  - a. The school aims, the first of which is *Valuing the Individual*.
  - b. Good pastoral care which is central to the life of the school. Each pupil has a Form Tutor who forms part of the pastoral care team for that year group. The pastoral care team takes the time to get to know their pupils well and build the trust to enable a listening culture.
  - c. Ensuring pupils know that there are adults in the school whom they can

- approach if they are worried.
- d. The Head of Pastoral Care offers one to one support to challenge pupils who are struggling with varying pastoral care team issues. The aim of this role is to give the pupils the key skills of resilience and strength to work through issues.
  - e. A “Listening Post” is also available where pupils drop written concerns into a secured letterbox which is solely accessed by the Pupil Coach. Any safeguarding concerns raised through this post, will be referred to the DSL.
  - f. The student council who feedback areas of concern to a member of the leadership team.
  - g. Encouraging self-confidence and self-esteem through celebrating success in gifted areas such as sports, drama, music or academic subjects or through presentations or participation in shows.
  - h. A Wellbeing program which teaches on staying safe, physically, emotionally and online.
  - i. Externally run workshops to reinforce the message that every pupil is unique, special and gifted.
  - j. Girls on Board program to help girls to understand their social needs and how they can meet each other’s.
  - k. The school ethos which fosters a culture of open communication and trust among staff, pupils and parents. Pupils are encouraged to report concerns without fear of judgement or reprisal.
  - l. Respectful behaviour is expected and rewarded. Pupils are helped to build healthy, respectful and mature friendships with one another. Pupils are frequently reminded of these expectations and that bullying is not tolerated.
14. The school curriculum includes a comprehensive Relationships and Sex Education program which promotes a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The program tackles issues such as:
- a. healthy and respectful relationships
  - b. boundaries and consent
  - c. stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - d. body confidence and self-esteem
  - e. how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
  - f. the concepts of, and laws relating to - sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called ‘honour’-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support
  - g. what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
15. The school recognises that it is located in a very multicultural urban area and staff are aware of the possibility of a wide range of Safeguarding issues in particular the

risk of serious violence and child criminal exploitation. A range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include being male, poor attendance or permanent exclusion from school, having experienced maltreatment as a child and having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery.

16. The school recognises the possible issues including FGM and forced marriage with some ethnic groups.
17. The school recognises the risks posed by Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism and regularly reviews its risk assessment. The school counters this risk including the risk of non-violent extremism from either religious or political groups via its caring Christian Ethos and Wellbeing curriculum which actively promotes Fundamental British Values and follows DfE SMSC guidance. The school employs email and Internet filters to help identify any pupils at risk and monitors the content of talks by visiting speakers.
18. The school recognises the pressures on teenagers, and staff are aware of possible mental health issues and fabricated or induced illness and that these could be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Form tutors or any other member of staff will refer to the DSL immediately with any concerns around marked changes in behaviour or demeanour or a poor attendance record as this could indicate a mental health issue. Possible warning signs include:
  - a. Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
  - b. Changes in eating / sleeping habits
  - c. Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
  - d. Changes in activity and mood
  - e. Lowering of academic achievement
  - f. Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
  - g. Abusing drugs or alcohol
  - h. Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
  - i. Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
  - j. Secretive behaviour
  - k. Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
  - l. Lateness to or absence from school
  - m. Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
  - n. An increase in lateness or absenteeism

The school has a pastoral care team for dealing with such issues. These resources are available for both the pupil showing poor mental health and their peers, who can find this a difficult time. The school will never attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem and the DSL will signpost pupils and their families to external medical professionals if deemed necessary e.g. GP, CAMHS or other mental health professionals.

The school promotes positive mental health via sessions within the Wellbeing program and form time activities.

19. The school recognises that some pupils choose to self harm and incorporates dealing with such situations into staff training.

20. Pupils who are considered vulnerable, including looked after children, are risk assessed and entered onto the Pastoral Care Register drawn up by the Pastoral Care Team and shared with staff.
21. The school recognises 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 takes these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.
22. The school recognises that children absent from education could be at risk. The *Attendance Policy* details the procedures and actions that the school takes to safeguard pupils who are persistently absent or leave the school roll at non-standard points.
23. The school includes keeping safe both from adults and peers within its curriculum. The approach through Wellbeing, visiting speakers and subject curriculum aims to empower, helping pupils think about the risks they may encounter and how they might overcome them. Particular importance is given to understanding how to take the opportunities the internet provides whilst understanding the risks of using it. Other areas include keeping safe on the streets and understanding the risks of alcohol and drugs.
24. The school recognises that the use of the Internet within school can pose a risk to pupils' welfare and employs tools such as Securly, a Cisco Meraki Advanced Security Appliance performing content filtering at the school's network edge and Google SafeSearch to monitor use of the internet for trends and potentially harmful activity as well as minimise the risk of inappropriate content being viewed. Blocking includes the IWF Child Abuse Content URL list, online pornography, the Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit list and offensive language. The system automatically flags major concerns to the DSL and identifies the pupils and sites that have been blocked. Securly is active whenever a pupil is logged into their school google account no matter where that login occurs. Remote learning via Google Classroom and Google Meet requires login to the school google account thus providing a level of protection when pupils are working remotely.
25. The school will not tolerate illegal material being brought into school or being passed between pupils outside of school. If a pupil is thought to be at risk as a consequence of online activity the school may seek assistance from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Unit (CEOP) and a range of sanctions may be imposed on any adult or pupil who misuses technology in this way. The school's *Anti-Bullying Policy*, *Behaviour Policy* and *Internet and Electronic Devices AUP for Pupils* addresses issues such as cyberbullying and sharing the nudes and semi-nudes.
26. The school recognises that most pupils have their own mobile devices and requires parents to enable provider filtering on any mobile device brought to school. Parents are informed that the effectiveness of the provider filtering can be checked at [testfiltering.com](http://testfiltering.com). Once at school pupils are required to switch off and put away their mobile phones whilst on school premises. The use of mobile phones by sixth form students is limited to specific sixth form areas and phones must be connected



to the school's WiFi to ensure filtering.

27. The school recognises that Safeguarding is not just about Child Protection issues and has a commitment to identifying needs and working with parents and external professionals to support children who are in need of additional help. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on these issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the TES website and also on its own website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website. Specific Safeguarding Issues Include:

- a. bullying including cyberbullying
- b. child missing from home or care
- c. child abduction and community safety incidents
- d. children and the court system
- e. children missing education (CME)
- f. children with family member in prison
- g. child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- h. county lines and/or gangs and youth violence, drugs
- i. cybercrime
- j. domestic abuse (DA)
- k. fabricated or induced illness
- l. faith abuse
- m. female genital mutilation (FGM)
- n. forced marriage
- o. gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- p. hate
- q. homelessness
- r. mental health
- s. modern slavery
- t. child-on-child abuse
- u. preventing radicalisation
- v. private fostering
- w. relationship abuse
- x. sexual violence and sexual harassment
- y. sharing of nudes or semi-nudes
- z. so-called 'honour-based' abuse
- aa. upskirting

28. Some pupils may just need additional support from external professionals for issues which don't immediately fall into the categories listed in Appendix B. In these cases the school may for example support a referral to a professional via the pupil's GP working with agencies such as CAMHS. For children at Level 2 on the Threshold an Early Help Assessment might be completed to aid the referral process and future Team Around the Child meetings. Details of the Thresholds can be found in Appendix B and *Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board: Thresholds for Intervention*.

29. The school recognises its responsibility to notify the relevant local authority safeguarding partnership if it suspects that a parent has entered into a private fostering arrangement - that is an arrangement for a pupil to stay more than 28 days with someone who is not a close relative. This means someone who is not a grandparent, step parent, sibling, uncle, aunt by full or half relation or by marriage.
30. The school recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This can include:
- a. assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's need or disability without further exploration;
  - b. being more prone to peer to peer group isolation (including prejudice-based bullying);
  - c. being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing signs (especially with certain medical conditions are present);
  - d. communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
31. The school recognises the dangers of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. The creation, possession and distribution of sexual imagery (including photos and videos) of and by children under the age of 18, even if it is of themselves, is illegal and will be treated as a Safeguarding matter. Sexual imagery of children under the age of 13 will always be referred to the police. If image sharing is consensual with no evidence of abuse and between older children they will be supported by the pastoral care team within school and parents will be informed unless in doing so this would result in a risk of harm to the child.
32. The school recognises that pupils can become abused through sexual violence (including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault) and sexual harassment defined as "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature" which can occur online and offline and in an extra-familial situations. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. The school recognises that sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours. The school's Wellbeing program includes Relationships and Sex Education and addresses relationships, consent and personal identity in an age appropriate manner for each year group. In addition Key Stage 3 pupils learn about healthy friendships, building self esteem, good communication and mental wellbeing. Key Stage 4 pupils also learn in detail about sex trafficking, as well as considering how to make positive choices and look after their mental wellbeing. These sessions also include sessions on how pupils foster healthy and respectful relationships with their peers. Details can be found in the *Wellbeing Policy* and the *Relationships and Sex Education Policy*.
33. The school recognises that taking pictures under a person's clothing without them knowing (upskirting) with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim

humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is now a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.

34. Child abuse is taken to refer to any child of under 18 years who, through the actions of parents, carers or other adults, or through their failure to act, has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, physical or serious emotional harm. Children can also suffer physical or emotional abuse by other children. This may happen inside or outside school and where there is “reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm” the procedures of this policy will apply.
35. There are many components in child abuse and neglect which may extend beyond a child’s family. Whilst one may try to define them individually, 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 and the response requires Contextual Safeguarding which requires assessment of risk outside the home. More complete definitions can be found in Appendix A.
- a. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
  - b. **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.
  - c. **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 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.

- d. **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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.
- e. **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.
- f. **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, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE can affect any child including 16 and 17 year old who can legally consent to having sex. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to boys

and the school recognises the risk of girls from CCE. The school recognises that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may increase their risk of sexual exploitation.

36. The school recognises that children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking; online abuse; teenage relationship abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Extremist groups make use of the internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as susceptible to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism should also be considered.
37. The school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will work with these children through:
  - a. The ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
  - b. The pastoral care system through form tutors and a pupil coach or other relevant pastoral care.
  - c. The behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
  - d. Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), education welfare service and educational psychology services.
38. The school recognises its duty as set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and seeks to identify and provide early intervention to prevent children becoming homeless.
39. The school gathers emergency contact details for all pupils via the Pupil Record Form. Parents are asked to provide emergency contact details for themselves and additionally the contact details of two alternative contacts who can be called upon in an emergency.
40. The school recognises that when lessons are delivered online into pupil's homes welfare and safeguarding concerns may become apparent that would not otherwise have been noticed. Staff must report welfare concerns to the pupil's form tutor or if it is a safeguarding concern staff must follow the procedures in this policy for reporting concerns. All concerns must be acted upon.

41. The school recognises that attendance of lessons is important even when being delivered online and even when not required to by law teachers will record attendance at online lessons and report absence patterns to form tutors to follow up.
42. The school recognises the significance of cybercrime and includes education on this topic within both its computer science and life skills curriculums. Any obsession can be spotted within computer science and appropriate guidance given.
43. The school recognises the existence of Modern Slavery and includes material from the anti-trafficking organisation A21 within its curriculum to raise awareness.
44. The school recognises the need to keep pupils safe within the community and incorporates confidence building material within its wellbeing curriculum on how to keep themselves safe. This includes sessions delivered by the Safer Schools Officer. A specific risk assessment is carried out for any pupils for whom additional risks are present.
45. The school recognises that some children may be required to give evidence in criminal or family courts. The wellbeing curriculum covers the criminal justice system and the workings of courts and the pastoral care staff support any specific child who is going through this process.
46. The school recognises that some children may have a family member in prison and puts in place a pastoral care plan for any such pupils.
47. The school recognises the vulnerability of pupils in toilets or changing areas. These have been designed to both safeguard pupils and provide privacy. All toilets are individual cubicles which have been designed for single occupancy with a WC pan, washbasin and hand dryer within the cubicle. Each cubicle has full height doors and is directly accessed from a corridor. The cubicles are in small groups with each group designated for either boys or girls according to their biological sex. There are also individual occupancy toilets that are unisex and designed to be equally accessible to disabled pupils. Showers are also contained in cubicles within changing rooms which are designated for boys or girls according to their biological sex. Should an alternative arrangement be required the school will conduct a risk assessment to inform any reasonable adjustments that it may be able to make
48. The school recognises its responsibility to ensure that any user of its premises has appropriate arrangements to keep children safe and will seek assurance from any external user of its premises that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place. Contact between the respective safeguarding leads will be in place and hire agreements will stipulate arrangements must have regard to *After-school clubs, community activities and tuition, DfE September 2023* and that failure to comply with safeguarding standards will lead to immediate termination of the agreement. The school will follow this procedure including contacting the LADO directly should any allegation be received by the school.
49. Visitors are required to agree at sign in that the use of devices to record sound, video or other images is prohibited.

## Child Protection Procedures

1. If staff have a concern they must act on it **immediately** by following these procedures and speaking to the DSL. They should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action. Staff should also be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Staff should not assume that other professionals will share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. **Anyone may make a referral to MASH at any time including during school holidays.**
2. Concerns about a child may not always arise as a result of direct disclosure or allegation but from observations made by a number of staff on the appearance, attitude, change or demeanour of a child. Concerns could arise out of a child's inappropriate behaviour towards other children. Concerns would also arise where a child has a pattern of absence or a run of unexplained absence (an unexplained absence of 10 or more consecutive days will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer). Staff must be aware that a deterioration in a pupil's mental health could indicate a safeguarding concern, in which case the correct procedures must be followed in referring to the DSL.
3. A concern may arise from another child, other children or a parent.
4. 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 abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.
5. Whether direct or indirect the following steps should provide staff with the means of dealing with the information they have been given.
  - a. The first person to whom the issue is raised should listen, record, and explain to the child or adult what the next steps will be and who else needs to know. CPOMS should be used to record where possible. If paper records are used they must be signed and dated and entered onto CPOMS at the earliest opportunity.
  - b. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing. Information will be kept confidential and stored securely. Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
  - c. The child should not be interrupted or questioned further except to clarify the information given. Leading questions must never be used.
  - d. The child must never be promised confidentiality. Staff must explain their duty to report but confirm that they will keep the child or adult informed.
  - e. 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. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

- f. It is not the responsibility of the initial staff contact to investigate, but to confirm and record the facts (day, time, place, who was involved, what occurred). The issue must be entered into CPOMS immediately and flagged as *Safeguarding* which will alert the DSL who will inform MASH if necessary.
  - g. If there is a risk of **immediate serious harm** to a child, a referral must be made to MASH immediately either by the DSL (or deputy) or by the staff member if the DSL (and deputy) is not available in which case the DSL must be kept unformed - unless there is reason not to do so.
  - h. For children with English as an additional language, the school will never use family members as translators for the child when there are any potential child protection or welfare concerns.
6. The concern must be referred to the DSL (or deputy) immediately. If, for any reason, the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible. **Anyone can make a referral to MASH. If there is a risk of immediate harm the staff member must make an immediate referral to the MASH and inform the DSL as soon as possible.**
  7. Staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
  8. In situations where staff have information from or about a child that is ambiguous, unclear or where there is some doubt about its status, the information should be discussed with the DSL or a deputy.
  9. Where the concern relates to suspected abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil:
    - a. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, any such abuse will be reported as a safeguarding concern with both the child being abused and the child, or children, responsible for the abuse being treated as “at risk” as both as the latter maybe a victim themselves in another context. A plan defining a support



package will be drawn up by the pastoral care team for either of or both the child being abused and the child responsible as deemed appropriate by the pastoral care team.

- b. If the situation does not involve a risk of immediate harm then the situation may be dealt with as described in the *Anti-Bullying Policy*.
  - c. In a situation where a crime may have been committed, the police should be informed.
  - d. This child on child abuse is most likely to include but is not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, race issues, gender based violence, sexual violence and harrassment, sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, upskirting, initiation/hazing rituals, prejudiced-based or discriminatory based. It must never be passed off as *banter* or *part of growing up*.
10. If the incident involves sharing of nudes or semi-nudes it must be referred to the DSL as soon as possible. Under no circumstances should staff view the image, delete or ask the pupil to delete the image, share any information with other members of staff, pupils or parents or say anything to blame or shame the pupil. Staff must reassure the pupil that they will receive support and explain that they need to report the incident to the DSL.

The DSL will hold an initial review meeting and interview any pupils involved. If there is any evidence of harm, concern about the risk of harm, if an adult is involved, the imagery depicts acts which are violent or unusual for the pupil's developmental stage or involves a pupil under the age of 13, imagery has been shared without consent and with malicious intent then a referral must be made to MASH immediately. If there are abusive and/or aggravating factors, incidents should always be referred to the police through MASH. Parental consent is not necessary to make a referral to statutory agencies. The decision should be made by the DSL with input from the Head. The imagery should not be viewed by adults unless such viewing is absolutely necessary to safeguard the child and then only by the DSL in the presence of a senior leader. The device should either be switched off and retained in a locked area pending further investigation or if other agencies do not need to be involved the pupil will be asked to delete it in the presence of the DSL and will be given a deadline by which they must have deleted the imagery from all devices, online storage and social media. The pupil will be reassured that they are not alone and the wider pressures are understood. The DSL will remain solution-focused and avoid victim-blaming. Issues of consent and trust will be discussed as will the legal issues. Parents should be informed at an early stage unless informing them will put the child at risk of harm. Parents will be given support and signposting.

*Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS December 2020)* should be consulted for further information.

11. Incidents involving sexual violence or harassment are especially difficult and distressing and must be referred to the DSL as soon as possible. If there is any evidence of harm, concern about the risk of harm or if an adult is involved then a referral must be made to MASH and/or the police immediately by the staff member if the DSL or Deputy is not available. In this instance the DSL or deputy will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there is a report of a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the starting point is it should be passed to the police. In responding the DSL should consider the wishes of the abused pupil on how to proceed, the nature of the incident (whether a crime has been committed), the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance between the pupils, whether the incident is a one off or a sustained pattern and the ongoing risk. It should be remembered that abused pupils may not disclose the full picture immediately and that health needs, such as physical, mental and sexual health problems including unwanted pregnancy may be present. A risk assessment should be carried out noting the time and location of the incident and any action required to make the location safer. Consideration will be given as to how the abused pupil and the pupil responsible can be separated during the school day. It is important that the abused pupil is never made to feel they are the problem and that where possible they can continue their normal school routine. A plan will be put in place for them. If the incident is a one-off it may be appropriate to respond in line with the *Behaviour Policy*, alternatively an Early Help Assessment may be considered along with temporary or permanent exclusion in line with the *Exclusion Policy*. If the pupil responsible remains in the school then a plan will be implemented for them as well. Unless it would put a pupil at further risk both sets of parents will be engaged in the process. The proportionate response will always be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and harassment is never acceptable and will never be tolerated. Support will be put in place for any other children affected by the incident including any necessary support for siblings due to the effects of intra-familial harm.
12. So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.
13. Teaching staff (including teaching assistants and peripatetic teachers) must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Reporting can be done via the non-emergency number 101. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. Concerns that FGM

may be about to take place should be referred to the DSL, and there will be a referral to MASH. Teachers must act on suspicion and not ask to see evidence.

14. Concerns about extremism or radicalisation must be discussed initially with MASH who might suggest a referral to 'Channel' via the Police non-emergency number 101 in accordance with *Making a Referral to Prevent, October 2022*. The *National Referral Form* will be used. In less serious cases it may be sufficient to follow the normal Safeguarding procedures for referrals to MASH. Support will be offered to all pupils who are suspected of being exposed to extremist views. Effective engagement with parents / the family will be considered as they are in a key position to spot signs of extremism or radicalisation. The school will assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms. The schools will discuss any concerns in relation to possible extremism or radicalisation with the child's parents unless there are specific reasons to believe that to do so would put the child at risk.
15. It is important to ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services so that the outcome has the best interests of the child at its heart.

## Referral to the MASH

1. **Anyone can make a referral to MASH at any time.**
2. **Allegations of sexual abuse/child sexual exploitation** must be referred **immediately** to the Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) and/or MASH without advising parents. In the case of emergency 999 can be used. Evidence will need to be collected by a trained social worker and an officer from the CAIT and questioning should be minimised to prevent further abuse and trauma. It is possible that a criminal offence has been committed and evidence should not be compromised.
3. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm**, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. **Parental consent does not apply when a child is or may be at risk of harm.** The initial referral should be to Wandsworth MASH who may advise referral to the Children's Services department in the pupil's own borough. The referral must be followed up in writing as soon as possible, using the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) Although the referral would usually be made by the DSL **any staff member may make the referral and inform the DSL as soon as possible.** Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is vital that as much information as possible is provided by the staff member making the referral. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.
4. **If the situation does not involve a risk of immediate harm** the DSL must inform and advise parents that a safeguarding concern has arisen (or a disclosure made) and ask the parent/carer to come into school unless they have evidence to suggest that this would be seriously prejudicial to the child's welfare. It must be noted that

parental consent is not necessary to make a referral to statutory agencies, if a child is believed to have been harmed or to be at risk of harm.

- a. It should be understood that various injuries might occur in the home to children as a result of accidents. Things may be said to children or they may overhear things that upset them. These should not be ignored, but discussed with the parent/carer in a supportive way.
  - b. Situations such as this may be born out of stress and difficult relationships within the family. If a referral is made the MASH may make further investigations before they conduct a Section 47 Child Protection Inquiry.
  - c. Where there is information concerning the possible physical/emotional abuse or neglect, attempts should be made to discuss this with the parent/carer, however, parental consent is not necessary to make a referral to statutory agencies.
  - d. If the explanation given by the parent differs from the information offered by the child, a formal referral should be made to the MASH and the parent informed why this is being done. The formal referral must be made **within 24 hours of the allegation being made** by telephoning the MASH and completing the relevant referral form . The referral should be to the Children's Services department in the pupil's own borough. The contact details can be found by entering the pupil's home postcode into [www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council). The referral must be followed up in writing within 48 hours Referrals will generally only be made for children at Level 3 or Level 4 on the Threshold. Details of the Thresholds can be found in Appendix B and *Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board: Thresholds for Intervention*. **If in any doubt the MASH should be consulted** as to whether or not the information amounts to a Level 3/4 Child Protection referral.
  - e. For those children at Level 2 on the Threshold an Early Help Assessment should be completed and referrals made to suitable professionals. On general matters of childcare, welfare or need, school staff should discuss such concerns with their Education Welfare Officer or the LEA lead CP officer. It may be that a pupil is not in danger of harm but is in need of support from one or more agencies.
5. The DSL will be responsible for coordinating information gathering and recording on CPOMS.
  6. If at any stage a member of staff is not happy with an investigation they should press for a re-consideration.
  7. Incidents of historical abuse **MUST** still be referred to MASH
  8. **If a referral has NOT been made and a member of staff still has concerns they must make the referral themselves by contacting MASH and following the steps defined in this section.**

### Following Referral to MASH

1. Following any referral it will be an expectation that the school will provide any information and reports that will assist MASH, Children's Social Care / Children

and Families Dept and Police Child Abuse Investigation Team in their assessment or subsequent investigation.

2. The DSL will follow up Children's Services should a decision on the course of action not be made by Children's Services within 24 hours.
3. The DSL or deputy must be prepared to attend a Child Protection Case Conference or Strategy Meeting should one be called.
4. It is important that staff continue to monitor attendance, behaviour and appearance of pupils subject to a Child Protection enquiry and send information to MASH and social services, and to attend the Core Group meetings required.
5. School staff who work with children and families, hold valuable information and insights on vulnerable children and they play an extremely important part in the Protection of Children and in assisting other agencies to carry out their Child Protection Duties.
6. If a pupil is responsible for the abuse the school will consider whether the perpetrator also has a safeguarding need and follow safeguarding procedures. A pupil responsible for abuse will also be subject to the school's disciplinary procedures as defined in the *Behaviour Policy* and *Exclusion Policy*. The approach will be risk based and proportionate. It could include but is not limited to, removal from classes, restriction of freedoms, temporary and permanent exclusion. In cases of permanent exclusion the school will do what it can to ensure the continuity of the pupil's education.
7. The pupil will be supported via a pastoral care plan and as appropriate given access to the pupil coach along with professionals as advised by social services. A risk assessment will inform the plan. In cases of child on child abuse this will apply to both the perpetrator and the victim.

### **Allegations Against Staff (incl. the Head and DSL), Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors**

1. This section has regard to the DfE guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)* and *the procedures of the WSCP LADO*.
2. The school recognizes that because of their daily contact with pupils in a variety of situations, including the caring role, teachers and other school staff are vulnerable to accusations of abuse. Guidance for staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of allegations or harm are included in this policy and the *School Handbook*. The school further recognizes that, regrettably, in some cases such accusations may be true.
3. This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that a member of staff including supply teachers and volunteers has:
  - a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
  - c. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children;

- d. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (which may have happened outside of school)
4. It maybe that the child making the allegation is at risk in which case a referral to MASH and/or the police as outlined in the Child Protection Procedures
5. Any allegation against a member of staff, the DSL, supply agency staff, volunteer or contractor including allegations of inappropriate behaviour including in their personal lives, which may be relevant to their role in the school, must be reported immediately to the Head. All allegations will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately and immediately. The Head **must refer the accusation to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) ideally immediately but always within one working day.**
6. If the Head is unavailable or there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head, then the allegation must be referred immediately to the LADO by the individual making the allegation.
7. If the allegation is about the Head then the person making the allegation must be referred immediately to the Chair of Trustees ([chairoftrustees@thameschristianschool.org.uk](mailto:chairoftrustees@thameschristianschool.org.uk)) who will contact the LADO. If the Chair of Trustees is not available the person must refer it directly to the LADO themselves keeping the Chair of Trustees informed. In either case the Head must not be informed prior to contact with the LADO.
8. Allegations against trustees will be investigated by a panel of trustees not involved in the allegation. If the allegation is substantiated the trustee will be removed from office.
9. Parental consent is not required to refer an allegation to the LADO.
10. Information about the LADO can be found in: '*LADO Procedure: A guide to managing allegations against adults working with children*' and '*LADO Procedure: A guide for staff and volunteers who work with children and are faced with an allegation of abuse*'. The LADO referral form is available from the WSCP website at [LADO Referral Form](#). The LADO referral form must be completed and emailed to [IPOC@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:IPOC@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) and cc'd to [LADO@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk). This must be followed by a telephone call to the LADO on 020 8871 7440. In all cases referral must be made within one working day.
11. The LADO must always be informed of any allegation prior to any investigation by the school. On the advice of the LADO the school may be asked to conduct basic enquiries to establish facts which will help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation for example:
  - a. was the individual in the school at the time of the allegation?
  - b. did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the child?
  - c. are there any witnesses?
  - d. was there any CCTV footage?
12. The LADO will consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree on a course of action. This can be on an informal basis to begin with but all

discussions must be recorded in writing. **Under no circumstances will allegations be investigated without prior consultation with the LADO**, or in the most serious cases, with the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. If the allegation is about physical contact, for example restraint, it should be taken into account that school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

13. If an allegation is made against a member of supply staff, the school will take the lead in the investigation whilst keeping the supply agency fully involved.
14. If an allegation is made against a contractor, the school will take the lead in the investigation whilst keeping the employer fully involved.
15. The school will consider both the welfare of the child whilst investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation. If a child has been harmed, maybe at immediate risk of harm or the situation is an emergency the schools Child Protection Procedures will be followed.
16. It is important to maintain confidentiality and reporting restrictions exist to protect the identity of members of staff up to the point where the member of staff is charged with an offence. These restrictions include the publication of anything which may identify the member of staff on a social networking site.
17. When dealing with allegations the school, working with the LADO, will
  - a. apply common sense and judgement
  - b. deal with allegation quickly, fairly and consistently
  - c. provide effective protection for the child
  - d. support the person subject to the allegation
18. Allegations may be found to be substantiated, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious.
19. If no further action is required, the school, working with the LADO will record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.
20. If further action is required this will normally be carried out by a senior member of staff in discussion with the LADO. The school retains a legal practitioner to provide HR/personnel advice. The LADOs role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school, or a combination of these.
21. Suspension will be considered only in a case where there is cause to suspect a pupil or other pupils are at risk of significant harm or where the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. Other options should be considered in consultation with the LADO.
22. Details of allegations that are found to be malicious or unfounded will be removed from personal records. For all other allegations a comprehensive summary will be kept until the accused member of staff reaches normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if this is longer.
23. Malicious allegations by pupils and/or their parents against staff will result in disciplinary action according to the behaviour policy and the terms and conditions.

24. In cases which are not found to be substantiated the DSL will consider whether the child or person making the allegation is in need of support or may have been abused by someone else.
25. Only substantiated allegations will be included in employer references in a way that is factual and does not include opinions.
26. Malicious or false allegations will be removed from personnel records. For all other allegations the following records will be retained in personnel files:
  - a. a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
  - b. details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
  - c. a note of any action taken, decisions reached and outcome
  - d. a copy provided to the person concerned
  - e. a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in references.

Records will be kept for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation or until the accused reaches normal pension age. Records of incidents involving sexual abuse must be kept for the term of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

27. If any person (whether employed, contracted, contracted via an agency, a volunteer or student) is found, after investigation, to have acted improperly, that is they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child, or has refused to cooperate with an investigation, they will be reported to the DBS as soon as possible in accordance with regulations. Compromise agreements will not be allowed in these circumstances neither will "garden leave".
28. The school will consider making a referral to the TRA should a teacher be dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned) for "unacceptable professional conduct", "conduct that might bring the profession into disrepute" or a "conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence". Compromise agreements will not be allowed in these circumstances.
29. When the school is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order, in respect of an individual who works at the school, immediate action will be taken to ensure that the individual does not carry out work in contravention of the order.
30. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching at the school and other historical allegations of abuse should be referred to the Police.
31. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been or may be misconstrued, he/she should discuss the matter with the Head without delay. The staff member must provide a written report of the incident. It is essential to inform the Head in all cases where a member of staff has been obliged to restrain a pupil physically or where a complaint has been made by a pupil, parent or other adult.
32. Low level concerns which in themselves may not amount to an allegation including poor or unsafe practice must be reported to the Head. Low level concerns about the Head must be reported to the Chair of Trustees. Concerns about supply staff and contractors must be notified to the Head who will notify their employers so that any potential patterns can be identified.



33. At the conclusion of an investigation the facts will be considered to determine whether any lessons can be learned or improvements made. This will happen even if the allegation was concluded to be unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated.

### **Low Level Concerns About Staff (incl. the Head and DSL), Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors**

1. A low level concern is any concern, no matter how small, even if causing no more than a sense of unease. Low level concerns may involve being over friendly with a child, having favourites, taking photographs, engaging on a one to one basis in a secluded area, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language or inappropriate contact outside of school.
2. The sharing of low level concerns is important to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff).
3. Low level concerns must be reported to the Head who will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern, to the individual involved and any witnesses.
4. Details of the concern will be recorded in writing by the Head along with the context of the concern and any action taken. The name of the individual reporting the concern will be noted unless they wish to remain anonymous in which case anonymity will be respected as far as possible along with decisions, action taken and the rationale for the decisions and actions taken.
5. Records of Low Level Concerns will be kept confidential and monitored so that any potential patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified and responded to. Where a pattern of behaviour is identified the school must decide a course of action. This might be internal disciplinary procedures, or referral to the LADO if the harm threshold is met. If the school is in doubt as to whether the harm threshold has been met the LADO will be contacted for advice. The school will consider if any wider cultural issues in the school have enabled the behaviour to occur and if appropriate, whether policies need to be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of recurrence.
6. Staff should self-refer to the DSL or Head if they ever feel that they have been in a situation which could be misinterpreted, may appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe that they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.
7. Records of Low Level Concerns will be retained until the individual leaves the school's employment.

### **Minimising the Risk to Staff, Volunteers and the Head**

1. Staff must take precautions to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm as specified in the *Code of Conduct* including:

- a. making sure that the glass visibility panels to doors are not obscured especially during 1:1 lessons
- b. ensuring another adult is present during tense or difficult conversations
- c. avoiding any form of physical contact especially during 1:1 sessions or specialist performing arts and sports coaching - If absolutely necessary then the pupil's permission must always be sought
- d. never entering rooms designated for changing into sports kit for the opposite sex whilst changing is in progress
- e. maintaining a high standard of professionalism in electronic communication with pupils' and ensuring that any such communication is limited solely to the purpose of their education.
- f. never becoming friends with pupils (past or present) on social networking sites within 5 years of their leaving the school.
- g. never uploading, downloading or distributing any pornographic, discriminatory or offensive material.
- h. ensuring that their own electronic devices are protected with a passcode.
- i. using school devices wherever possible to take photographs or videos of pupils and ensuring that pupils are comfortable with the photograph or video being taken before taking it.
- j. in cases where a school device is not available and a personal device is used, ensuring that any photographic, video or audio recordings of pupils are uploaded and deleted from their personal devices at the earliest opportunity.
- k. ensuring that their privacy settings on their personal social networking sites are set appropriately so that their own personal information is not available to the general public.
- l. never conveying pupils in their cars.
- m. never giving out their personal information such as phone number or address to pupils or parents.
- n. never arranging to meet pupils outside of school.
- o. ensuring clothing is discreet in all positions for example leaning across a desk.
- p. ensuring that their language and behaviour reflects the high standards and values of the school at all times and that it is never offensive.
- q. ensuring that any challenge to a pupil's appearance, including uniform infringements, is carried out in a discreet manner so as not to embarrass or sexualise the pupil.
- r. When teaching pupils online from home, staff must be appropriately dressed, ensure that their background is appropriate and uncluttered and ensure that other family members are aware and do not enter the room. If there is no alternative to teaching from a bedroom then the background must not contain anything that would identify it as such.
- s. When teaching pupils one to one online all meetings must be recorded and

parents and pupils must be previously informed that all sessions will be recorded for safeguarding purposes.

- t. When teaching pupils remotely Google Meet must be used from the teachers school account and requests to admit users from outside the school domain must be denied. All communication between staff and pupils during remote learning must be via their school google account.
2. Staff must never enter into a personal relationship with a pupil including students in the sixth form. Such relationships with pupils under the age of 18 or over the age of 18 and still a pupil at the school are illegal and will be reported to the Police.
3. Staff must ensure they closely follow the *School Handbook* and the *Electronic Devices and Internet AUP for Staff*.
4. Staff must ensure they are familiar with the *Code of Conduct, Disciplinary and Dismissals Procedure* and *School Handbook* which clearly states the consequences of failing to take adequate steps to protect themselves from allegations of harm.
5. Should a member of Staff be convicted of a criminal offence even if on maternity, paternity or sabbatical leave they must inform the Head immediately.
6. In order to further minimise the risk of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with pupils, all staff should follow the school's *Physical Intervention Policy*.

## Responsibilities

### Responsibilities of the Proprietorial Body

The Proprietorial Body is responsible for:

1. Ensuring there is a senior board level lead to take **leadership responsibility** for Safeguarding who is suitable trained so as to provide strategic challenge to the DSL and Head.
2. Ensuring there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a member of the senior leadership team who has received appropriate, up to date training and has sufficient time, authority and resources to take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and promoting pupil's welfare, and these responsibilities are clearly defined in their job description.
3. Ensuring there is at least one deputy DSL (DDSL) who has received appropriate, up to date training to the same level as the DSL and has sufficient time and resources, and these responsibilities are clearly defined in their job description.
4. Ensuring that there are adequate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote the pupil's welfare and that the Safeguarding Policy is developed and implemented in full including all training needs.
5. Cooperating with and following the procedures set out by the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP), the London Safeguarding Children

Partnership (LSCP), the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the DfE guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2018 - updated 2020)* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)*.

6. Ensuring the school is part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. These discussions will be undertaken after the reading of local threshold documents published by the relevant local authority.
7. Ensuring effective links are developed with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences.
8. Undertaking an annual review of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This review will be undertaken in collaboration with the DSL and other Directors with input sought from selected staff. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in Safeguarding arrangements will be remedied without delay as soon as they are identified.
9. Ensuring all staff and volunteers receive regular safeguarding and child protection training to:
  - a. know the name of the DSL and deputies and understand their role.
  - b. understand that Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
  - c. be aware of their responsibility in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL and have read and understood the DfE guidance *Keeping children safe in education Part 1 (September 2023)*.
  - d. understand the issues of child on child abuse and their responsibility to deal with this as such abuse must **never** be tolerated.
  - e. understand what to do in the case of allegations made against staff, volunteers and the Head.
  - f. are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices and that such concerns are handled sensitively.
  - g. ensuring that the statutory requirements are met with respect to the safeguarding induction of new staff.
10. Ensuring that all trustees:
  - a. receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

- b. are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including of a sexual nature
  - c. are aware of their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to support pupils with regard to protected characteristics.
  - d. are aware of their obligations under their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
  - e. are aware of their duties to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information safe and secure.
11. Ensuring that written records of concerns about children are kept on CPOMS, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
  12. Ensuring all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
  13. Ensuring that Policies adequately cover the additional challenges faced by pupils with SEND.
  14. Ensuring that there is a designated member of staff to take responsibility for the welfare and progress of looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school roll and that staff have up to date information including the most recent care plan and contact arrangements for children who are “looked after” by a local authority. The designated teacher should work with the virtual school head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child’s personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.
  15. Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding by setting out its obligations in the terms and conditions. Raising parents’ awareness should avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child.
  16. Ensuring that pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online safety and sex and relationship education through teaching and learning opportunities as part of the curriculum. More details can be found in the *Online Safety Policy, Relationships and Sex Education Policy* and *Wellbeing Curriculum*.
  17. Ensuring that appropriate internet filters and monitoring systems are in place and that their effectiveness is regularly reviewed and at least annually.
  18. Ensuring that safer recruitment practices are always followed in accordance with the *Recruitment and Selection Policy* and that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received safer recruitment training within the past 5 years..
  19. Ensuring this Policy is implemented where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer and that appropriate referrals are made to the DBS and TRA if necessary.

### **Responsibilities of the DSL**

This role is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to safeguarding issues and that there is a dedicated resource

available for other staff and volunteers to draw upon. The DSL will undertake the following responsibilities:

1. Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review and act as a point of contact for the three safeguarding partners making up WSCP.
2. Have an understanding of locally agreed processes for assessment and intervention such as “Early Help Assessment”.
3. Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.
4. Attend in depth training in PREVENT including how to make referrals and be able to provide advice and support staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
5. Understanding the effects of harmful sexual behaviour and the lasting impact that trauma can have on children’s behaviour, mental health and wellbeing. Be able to respond to this in promoting educational outcomes.
6. Develop links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the Local Safeguarding Partnership, obtaining access to resources and attending any relevant refresher training courses and ensure that staff are aware of suitable training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
7. Refer cases of suspected abuse to the MASH as required and within 24 hours.
8. Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
9. Liaise with the Head to inform him of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and Police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).
10. Assist Children’s Services and MASH in enquiring into allegations of child abuse. This will include ensuring the school is represented at safeguarding case conferences and that information about the child is provided as required.
11. Coordinate action and liaise with the case manager and designated offices at other agencies including the LADO (in cases concerning a staff member) the Police (where a crime may have been committed), Channel (where radicalisation is a concern), the DBS and the TRA where required.
12. Follow as appropriate recommendations made by the Children’s Services and MASH.
13. Refer cases to Channel where there is a radicalisation concern.
14. Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the DBS as required.
15. Investigate and manage instances of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
16. Monitor authorised and unauthorised absence patterns to detect signs of possible abuse and notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the safeguarding register.

17. Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy and any associated procedures are kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they evolve. That they are reviewed at least annually and work with the proprietorial body regarding this.
18. Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy and procedures are accessible, known, understood and used appropriately by all staff and volunteers.
19. Ensure that the safeguarding policy is made available to parents and prospective parents via the public website and that parents are made aware both via the Safeguarding Policy and also the Terms and Conditions of the fact that the school may need to make referrals.
20. Ensure that all members of staff are familiar with school and WSCP/LSCP/DfE guidelines and procedures for identifying and reporting abuse, including allegations of abuse against staff.
21. Support staff who make referrals to MASH, the LADO or Channel.
22. Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including the provision of academic and pastoral support.
23. Ensure confidential records are kept only accessible to those that need it. These will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcomes.
24. Ensure that Child Protection records are transferred securely to the child's next school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term and that a receipt is obtained.
25. Liaise with staff (especially pastoral staff, first raiders, technicians and SENDCO's) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with the relevant agencies such as MASH and Channel.
26. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to all staff
27. Be alert to the specific needs of children in need and those with special educational needs and young carers.
28. Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures that may be put in place to protect them.
29. Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.
30. Ensure that pupils are safe online whilst they are at school and their knowledge and understanding of online risks is up to date.
31. Responsibility for Online Safety including understanding the processes involved in internet filtering and monitoring and ensuring that it is reviewed regularly and that decisions as to what is blocked and why are documented and presenting this to the trustees.
32. Ensure that the additional risks that pupils with SEND face online are recognised and are suitably mitigated.

33. Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
34. Work with the head and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes ensuring that the school knows which children have or have had a social worker and understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these children and, supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.
35. Ensure there is always cover for the role when absent from school and that either the DSL or a deputy is contactable when school activities are taking place whether out of hours or during school holidays.

### **Responsibilities of Staff**

1. All school staff including volunteers have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care. In doing so they should always be alert and question behaviours seeking advice and support as necessary from the DSL.
2. Staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which pupils can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Pupils should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood boundaries. Staff must be vigilant of any suspected child on child abuse, for example serious bullying, which must be investigated in line with the school's policies.
3. Staff are expected to play a role in preventing safeguarding issues from through their teaching their subject teaching where appropriate including Wellbeing, RSE and online safety.
4. If presented with a disclosure of suspected abuse, staff should follow the procedures defined in the section **Child Protection Procedures**.
5. Staff are expected to monitor and report to the DSL as required on the welfare, attendance and progress of any pupils on the safeguarding register.
6. Staff are expected to report low level concerns about the behaviour of adults to the Head.

### **Training**

1. The DSL, deputies and Head will attend training every two years in Level 3 Safeguarding and Inter-agency Working and Prevent awareness. This training is carried out by WSCB or SACPA.
2. Trustees with responsibility for safeguarding will also attend training every two



- years in Level 3 Safeguarding and Inter-agency Working and Prevent awareness.
3. The DSL is updated weekly on the latest safeguarding issues and guidance via email subscription to NSPCC CASPAR and Andrew Hall Safeguarding Briefing.
  4. The DSL will oversee training for all staff which may be carried out by the DSL or a deputy.
  5. All staff who work with children including volunteers in regulated activity will receive full formal training in safeguarding annually in line with LSCP advice. Training will include *Safeguarding, Use of CPOMS, Early Help, Code of Conduct, Online Safety, Data Protection, Children Missing in Education, Managing a report of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harrassment, Visiting Speakers, Low Level Concerns, Whistleblowing and Prevent*.
  6. Staff will also receive training in *Health and Safety Awareness (including Risk Assessments) and Fire Safety and Awareness* at their induction and thereafter every three years. Training will be proportionate to their role.
  7. All staff who work with children, including volunteers and trustees, will receive training on equality, discrimination and reasonable adjustments helping all to ensure arrangements for hearing the pupil voice within the school remain adequate and effective.
  8. All new staff, temporary staff and volunteers will be provided with induction training that includes:
    - a. The identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies
    - b. *Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 (September 2023)*
    - c. *Safeguarding Policy (including dealing with child-on-child abuse and managing a report of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harrassment)*
    - d. *Mental Health*
    - e. *PREVENT*
    - f. *Attendance Policy and Children Missing in Education*
    - g. *Online Safety Policy including filtering and monitoring and Cyber Security*
    - h. *Electronic Devices and Internet AUP for Staff*
    - i. *Electronic Devices and Internet AUP for Pupils*
    - j. *Use of mobile phones for staff and pupils*
    - k. *Behaviour Policy*
    - l. *Anti-Bullying Policy*
    - m. *Whistleblowing Policy*
    - n. *Low Level Concerns*
    - o. *School Handbook*
    - p. *Code of Conduct*
    - q. *Physical Intervention Policy*
    - r. *Visiting Speaker Policy*
    - s. *First Aid Policy*

- t. *Health and Safety Policy*
  - u. *Fire Evacuation Procedure*
  - v. *Equality Policy (including the importance of Protected Characteristics)*
  - w. *COSHH Awareness (if applicable)*
  - x. *Risk Assessments*
  - y. *Data Protection*
9. Visiting staff and volunteers with limited access to pupils will be made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding. This will be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
  10. Trustees will receive training proportionate to their role delivered annually at a Trustees meeting.
  11. The training of staff is reviewed annually.
  12. The DSL will communicate any changes or updates to Safeguarding immediately via email and or staff meetings.
  13. The DSL will consult with WSCP and guidance from NSPCC and SACPA as reference material when planning training for other staff.

### **Appointment of Staff**

1. The Head will ensure that, when appointing staff, it is made clear that safeguarding is a high priority of the school and that enhanced checks including the Barred List check will be made of any candidate through the Disclosure and Barring Service before appointments are confirmed.
2. Details of the checks carried out to ensure safer recruitment are detailed in the *Recruitment and Selection Policy*.
3. When a member of staff is employed by an outside organisation, such as a supply teacher, assurances that the appropriate checks have been carried out will be obtained and their identity checked before they start.

### **Use of Third Party Organisations**

1. Assurance is obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation working with the school's pupils either on-site or on another site (for example, in a separate institution).

### **Record Keeping, Information Sharing and Storing**

1. The Head will ensure that teachers monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of pupils on the safeguarding register and will provide information as required.
2. All staff are expected to maintain high quality safeguarding records on CPOMS which separate fact, allegation, hearsay and opinion and which clearly indicate concerns, discussions, decisions of action taken and reasons for those decisions. These records are confidential to the DSL and may in some cases be required in court proceedings.
3. All staff must assist the WSCP/Children and Families Dept by providing

information for safeguarding case conferences as required and in the form prescribed by the WSCP.

4. All staff must record all discussions with parents, EWOs and EPs that pertain to attendance, behavioural or general concerns on CPOMS. Any decisions made must be recorded along with why the decision was made.
5. All reviews of plans must be recorded on CPOMS and wherever possible these should be given to parents. Actions agreed must be recorded.
6. For any child where there are safeguarding concerns, a note must be stored in their regular file (available to all staff) stating that there is also a secure file in a locked cabinet with details of any child protection concerns.
7. Child Protection records are kept on CPOMS.
8. Child Protection records will be transferred securely to the child's next school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term and a confirmation of receipt obtained. The DSL will, if necessary, contact the child's next school before transferring to ensure they are aware of any needs which may require prior provision.
9. Child Protection records will be kept securely until the child's 25th birthday (or longer if required) if the child leaves Thames Christian School and does not go on to another school.
10. Information must be kept in accordance with Data Protection procedures and limited to one or two key members of staff on a 'need to know' basis. However, information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Staff do not need consent to share personal information in relation to safeguarding "*provided there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required*". It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
11. Records will be kept about who information is shared with, when it was shared and why it was shared. *Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2018 - updated 2022)* makes this a statutory duty. If in doubt the government guidance *Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (July 2018)* should be consulted.
12. All pupil/school records must be kept updated and passed on when the pupil transfers school.

## **Communicating Policy to Parents and Pupils**

1. Parents and pupils must be informed that the school has a Safeguarding Policy and is required to follow the DfE Guidelines for reporting suspected abuse to the appropriate authorities. This responsibility is contained in the *Terms and Conditions*.
2. Pupils and parents should know how the school's safeguarding system works and with whom they can discuss any concerns. They should also be made aware of local or national telephone helplines.

3. This policy is sent to parents as part of the new pupil pack and updates of DSLs included in the annual list of staff responsibilities. The policy is available on both the public website and parents website and parents are informed when a new policy is issued.
4. Summary cards containing contact details are available to pupils on classroom notice boards and available to parents.

## **Policy Review**

1. The policy will be kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they evolve.
2. The policy will be reviewed immediately on the issuance of new guidance or if a suspected failing in the policy is identified.
3. The policy will also be reviewed annually by the WSCP.
4. An annual review of safeguarding will be carried out by the Proprietorial Body working with the DSL. The review will consider analysis of cases and Safeguarding Risk Assessment. The content of the policy and procedures will be assessed to ensure the effectiveness of them and any deficiencies or weaknesses will be remedied immediately. The meeting will be minuted and approved by the Trustees. The next annual review will be completed by July 2024 at the latest.
5. The school recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing concerns on a daily basis. Therefore input will be sought by the DSL via termly Safeguarding review meetings with form tutors and at least termly updates at Staff Meetings.
6. Any changes to the policy will be disseminated via an updated training session for all staff and a new policy will be made available to parents.

## Useful Contact Information

- Wandsworth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) ) to which referrals should initially be made: 020 8871 6622 (weekday office hours 09:00-17:00) and 020 8871 6000 (after 17:00 and weekends) or [MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk). In case of emergency use 999. Online referral form [Make a referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) - Wandsworth Borough Council](#)
- Wandsworth Education Welfare Officer: 020 8871 8306 or 07929 862210
- Wandsworth Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADO): 020 8871 7440 or 07974 586461 [LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk)
- For advice or information about private fostering contact [mash@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:mash@wandsworth.gov.uk) 020 8871 6622
- Information and support about how to complete the Early Help Assessment - Beverly Applewhaite 020 8871 7746
- Mental health 24/7 crisis line [www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline)
- Mental health 24/7 crisis line for Wandsworth 0800 028 8000
- For support and advice about extremism contact the police on 101 or the DfE telephone helpline on 020 7340 7264 or [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285
- NSPCC Website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Childline 0800 1111 (freephone)
- Rape Crisis (sexual abuse) <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/>
- Survivors Trust (sexual abuse) <http://thesurvivorstrust.org/>
- DBS, Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA 01325 953795

Further contact details of a range of resources can be found in KCSIE Part 1 which is issued to all staff and can be found on the staff information website under Safeguarding.

**Signed:**

**Review**

This policy will next be reviewed in July 2023.

## Contact details for referrals to neighbouring Safeguarding Children Partnerships

Enter the pupil's home postcode into [www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council) to display contact details of the relevant LA. For convenience the contact details are listed below.

Borough	Contact	Out of Hours Contact	email
Bromley	020 8461 7373	030 0303 8671	mash@bromley.gov.uk
Camden	020 7974 3317	020 7974 4444	LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk
Croydon	020 8255 2888	020 8726 6400	childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk
Ealing	020 8825 8000	020 8825 8000	
Greenwich	020 8921 4477	020 8854 8888	safeguardingchildren@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Hammersmith + Fulham	020 8753 6610	020 8748 8588	familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk
Islington	020 7527 7400	020 7226 0992	CSCreferrals@islington.gov.uk
Kensington + Chelsea	020 7361 3013	020 7361 3013	socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk
Kingston	020 8547 5008	020 8770 5000	lscb-support@rkingrichlscb.org.uk
Lambeth	020 7926 5555	020 7926 3100	helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk
Lewisham	020 8314 6660	020 8314 6000	safeguardingboard@lewisham.gov.uk
Merton	020 8545 4226	020 8770 5000	mash@merton.gov.uk
Richmond	020 8547 5008	020 8770 5000	mash@richmond.gov.uk
Southwark	020 7525 1921	020 7525 5000	mash@southwark.gov.uk
Tower Hamlets	020 7364 5006	020 7364 4079	mash@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Westminster	020 7641 4000	020 7641 6000	AccessChildrensServices@westminster.gov.uk

## Appendix A - Definitions of Abuse

The following information should help alert you to the signs of possible abuse.

### Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental. Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns, as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place some time later.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- cigarette burns
- human bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds, with upward splash marks
- multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- sudden speech disorders
- self-harm
- fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

### **Sexual Abuse**

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

It is also important to remember that it not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level, sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults



## **Neglect**

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate clothing for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

## **Children who are absent from Education**

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.

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

Different forms of harm often overlap, and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

### **County lines**

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

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

The above CCE/CSE indicators can also be indicators of County Lines, as can a number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are

involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#)

### **Modern Slavery**

My encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK](#)

### **Cybercrime**

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent 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. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

### **Controlling or Coercive Behaviour**

Also known as coercive control, the use of control and coercion in relationships is a form of domestic abuse and, since December 2015, a criminal offence.

Controlling and coercive behaviour is outlined in Government guidance issued under

section 77 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 as part of the Government's non-statutory definition of domestic violence and abuse. It is described as:

- Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour; and
- Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim

Coercive control is a form of abuse that involves multiple behaviours and tactics which reinforce each other and are used to isolate, manipulate and regulate the victim. This pattern of abuse creates high levels of anxiety and fear. This has a significant impact on children and young people, both directly, as victims in their own right, and indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on the non-abusive parent. Children may also be forced to participate in controlling or coercive behaviour towards the parent who is being abused.

### **Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT)**

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

### **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators

present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. It should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Detailed guidance can be found in the document *Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation* from which the following is taken.

Signs that FGM maybe imminent:

- It may be possible that families will practise FGM in the UK when a female family elder is around, particularly when she is visiting from a country of origin.
- A professional may hear reference to FGM in conversation, for example a girl may tell other children about it.
- A girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'.
- A girl may request help from a teacher or another adult if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.
- A girl may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.

Signs that FGM may have already occurred:

- A girl or woman may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- A girl or woman may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- A girl may spend long periods of time away from a classroom during the day
- with bladder or menstrual problems.
- A girl or woman may have frequent urinary or menstrual problems.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school or college.
- A prolonged absence from school or college with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return could be an indication that a girl has recently undergone FGM.
- A girl or woman may be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.
- A girl or woman may confide in a professional.
- A girl or woman may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and involve local authority children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding

procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

### **Honour Based Abuse (HBA)**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

It is a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage](#). School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fm@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fcdo.gov.uk).

### **Extremism**

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

### **Radicalisation**

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

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.



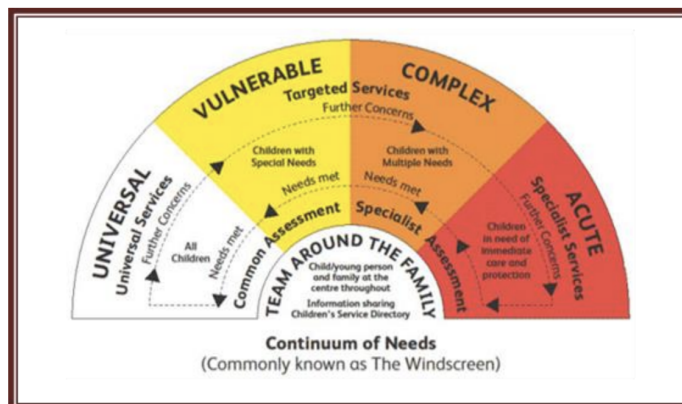
## Appendix B - Wandsworth LSCP Levels of Intervention

**Level 1 – Children with no identified additional needs - Universal.** The child has no additional needs; all their health and developmental needs will be met by universal services. This is a child who consistently receives child-focused care from their parents or carers and there are no extrafamilial/ contextual risks.

**Level 2 - Children with Additional Needs – Early Help/Targeted Support.** The child has emerging needs requiring early help. These needs can be met by universal services working alongside with community services. Early Help from the community at this level is intended to enable children and young people to achieve positive outcomes, as well as preventing an escalation of needs and requirement for statutory involvement in family life.

**Level 3 – Children with Multiple/Complex Needs - Child in need.** The child is at substantial risk of not achieving positive outcomes without support from specialist services. Needs identified in this tier are likely to mean that the child is referred to Children’s Social Care under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Support might be in the form of a Child in Need Plan; this may also be supported with services from Early Help and multi-agency partners.

**Level 4 – Children with Acute/ Specialist Needs - Child Protection and Specialist Support.** The child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This is the threshold for statutory child protection. The child may have already experienced adverse effects and outcomes are not being met. The family require significant support. Needs identified in this tier are likely to mean that the child will be referred to Children’s Social Care (CSC) and a statutory assessment completed.



More information can be found in [https://wscp.org.uk/media/xkqm0rib/levels\\_of\\_need\\_framework\\_2023.pdf](https://wscp.org.uk/media/xkqm0rib/levels_of_need_framework_2023.pdf)