



# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**for the whole School including EYFS**

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Effective from 1 September 2024

# **Child Protection Policy**

## **‘Making Beechwood Park a Safe School for Children’**

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# 1. Introduction

**Safeguarding and child protection therefore lie right at the heart of our educational culture; they are a state of mind at *Beechwood Park* which go beyond policy and procedure.**

## **Non-Recent Allegations of Abuse**

Where an adult were to make an allegation to the School that they were abused as a child, the Head will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police. Non-recent allegations made by a child, should be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with local authority children social care and the police. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened. The School will co-operate to the same high standards as it responds to allegations of current abuse.

## **Organisations or Individuals using school premises**

The School may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the School premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, the Schools will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

# 2. Definition of Safeguarding and Child Protection

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of *KSCiE 2024* as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

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

As a summary:

- **Safeguarding** is a **proactive** approach that aims to prevent harm and promote the welfare of all children.
- **Child protection**, on the other hand, specifically deals with cases where a child is at risk or experiencing significant harm, taking **reactive** measures to protect them.

# 3. Purpose of the *BPS Child Protection Policy*

*Working Together to Safeguard Children*, DfE, [September 2024](#) requires schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse and neglect which, in the case of *Beechwood Park School* are established by the *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership*. *Beechwood Park School* therefore ensures that we have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which:

- We believe a child may have been abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- A member of staff has behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child or that indicates they would pose a risk of harm.

The *BPS Child Protection Policy* forms part of a suite of documents and policies which identify the safeguarding responsibilities of the School, including boarding and the *Early Years Foundation Stage*. This policy serves to

1. Minimise harm, or risk of harm, and to specify action in clear procedures of which all staff and volunteers are fully aware.
2. Inform staff, parents, volunteers and governors about the School's responsibilities for safeguarding children.
3. Enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with

- *BPS Staff Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy*
- *BPS Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*
- *BPS Pupil Conduct Policy*
- *BPS PSHE Policy*
- *BPS ICT Policy*
- *BPS Online Safety Policy*
- *BPS Missing Child Policy*
- *BPS Boarding Policy*
- *BPS Staff Whistleblowing Policy*
- *BPS Online Safety and Acceptable Usage Policies.*

#### **4. Responsibilities of School Staff and Volunteers**

All staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contract workers, have a legal responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can live and learn. They understand the need to be vigilant and how to seek early help when they have a concern. In effect, Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Staff recognise that parents must 'take responsibility' for their children rather than 'have rights' over them. School staff and volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with children.

**All staff working with children maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.** Child abuse is no respecter of class or wealth. People who abuse children can be from any section of society, often appearing quite ordinary, respectable and caring. This makes it very difficult for the children they abuse to be believed. Within a professional, close community like *Beechwood Park School* where people dedicate their lives to caring for and educating children, it can be difficult to appreciate that some people neglect or seek to harm children. Children can be abused or neglected within the family, within an institution, or within a community. They are more likely to be abused or neglected by those known to them. Children may be abused by an adult, more than one adult, another child or children (child on child abuse).

##### **What is in the best interests of the child?**

When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members always act **in the paramount interests of the child**. Staff always take the child's wishes / feelings into account when deciding what action to take and which services to provide. Such wishes must not preclude staff taking action to protect where significant harm exists or is likely to exist.

##### **Early Recognition**

Staff recognise the importance of the **early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect** and of children receiving the right help, at the right time, to address risks and prevent issues escalating. The School will work with other agencies to ensure that a child can receive early help if required; such help will always be provided in consultation with parents or carers.

##### **Multi-agency Working**

*Keeping Children Safe in Education* (hereafter *KCSiE*) states that governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. Furthermore, it states that governing bodies and proprietors of all schools

should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).

The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) are the 3 organisations responsible for the partnership arrangements for keeping children safe (Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary and The Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board) that will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies, of which schools and colleges are, to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

*Beechwood Park* follows the procedures established by the *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership* which sets out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. A guide to procedure and practice for all agencies in Hertfordshire working with children and their families is available here: <http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>

### **School Staff and Volunteers**

*Beechwood Park School* staff and volunteers are particularly well-placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with children. They are also aware that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs.

**In accordance with KCSiE all staff and volunteers have a duty to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. There is a professional and a statutory obligation to report suspicions of abuse (actual or likely) and, in extreme cases, a lack of action could constitute criminal neglect. All staff have a statutory responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.**

The DSL ensures that the Head, all members of staff and volunteers in regulated activities:

- Have regular child protection training;
- Are knowledgeable and aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect;
- Can identify children who may be in need of protection;
- Are aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse or neglect and
- Are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow.

### **Training**

The *Designated Senior Lead* (DSL) organises whole-staff child protection training in line with the *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership* **every three years** and delivers a safeguarding update **at least at the start of every term** to include Prevent and Online Safety guidance.

Additionally, the DSL, the *Senior Leadership Team* and the *Head of Digital Learning* (including Online Safety) provide staff with frequent and regular child protection updates and reminders.

Every *Academic Head of Department*, *Pastoral Head of Department* and *Whole-School Staff* meeting agenda includes a Child Protection and Health and Safety standing item, which ensures that Child Protection and Health and Safety stay at the forefront of our thinking. *Senior* and *Middle Managers* pass on concerns to the DSL in accordance with the practices below.

### **Staff Induction Training**

The DSL ensures that all employees, residents, visitors, volunteers, contractors and sole traders receive appropriate child protection induction training, to include Child Protection, the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods, online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see KCSiE 2024 para 141 for further information).

As part of their induction, the DSL provides staff with a copy of:

- the *BPS Child Protection Policy* including *Safeguarding Cause for Concern Record*, NSPCC Advice Line and the School's safeguarding response to children who go missing in education

- Part One *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)*
- Annex B, if working directly with children, condensed version of Part one of *KCSiE (2024)*. It can be provided (instead of Part one) to those staff who do not directly work with pupils
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused.
- all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training
- *BPS Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy* (including signing the AUP)
- *BPS Mental Health Policy*
- *BPS Staff Whistleblowing Policy*
- *BPS Pupil Conduct Policy*
- *BPS Pupil Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*

### **Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Child Protection Policy**

The DSL also

- Attends annually the *Full Board of Governors* in July to present the *Hertfordshire Annual Safeguarding Report* to the Governors, along with the updated *Child Protection Policy* and an update to changes in legislation.
- Implements the *BPS Child Protection Policy* through the School's induction and training programme, and as part of day-to-day practice.
- Monitors compliance with the policy and through staff professional development review.
- Ensures all School leaders and staff who work directly with children read *KCSiE Part 1*, including Annex B.

## **5. Statutory Framework**

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, *Beechwood Park School* acts in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- *The Children Act (1989)*
- *The Children Act (2004)*
- *Children and Social Work Act 2017*
- *Education Act 2002 (Section 175/157) – Regulatory Compliance – ISSRs and National Minimum Standards for Boarding or 'EYFS Framework*
- *The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (September 2022)*
- *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual (Electronic)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education, Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE, Sept 2024)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1: Information for all school and college staff (DfE, September 2024)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE, [September 2024](#)*
- *The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005*
- *Sexual Offences Act (2003)*
- *Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)*  
Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:
  - *Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales ([2024](#))*
  - *The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)*
  - *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*
- *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)*
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006*
- *Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE 2021)*
- *Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014* (makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. Includes taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place).
- *Serious Violence Strategy 2018*
- *Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)*
- *The Human Rights Act 1998*
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2021)*

## 6. Key School Child Protection Contacts

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection, PREVENT officer, the Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS and for Boarding at *Beechwood Park School* is

**JAIME PACKER** - DEPUTY HEAD (PASTORAL)

[safeguarding@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:safeguarding@beechwoodpark.com)

01582 840333 - Ext 151

**If an allegation relates to the DSL, do not contact the DSL but contact the Head.**

At Beechwood, there are also two Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for Child Protection, appointed to act with or in the absence/unavailability of the DSL.

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) for Child Protection:**

**SAM MCINTOSH** – ASSISTANT HEAD and HEAD OF JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

[smcintosh@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:smcintosh@beechwoodpark.com)

01582 840333 - Ext 156

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) for Child Protection:**

**NICOLA GREENWOOD** - ASSISTANT HEAD and HEAD OF MIDDLE DEPARTMENT

[ngreenwood@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:ngreenwood@beechwoodpark.com)

01582 840333 - Ext 147

### Other Designated Safeguarding Senior Persons

**OLIVER BULLOCK** - DEPUTY HEAD (ACADEMIC) and CHAPLAIN

[obullock@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:obullock@beechwoodpark.com)

01582 840333 - Ext 128

**ANNE-MARIE RIDLER** - BURSAR

[aridler@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:aridler@beechwoodpark.com)

01582 840333 - Ext 132

**OTTILIE MACPHERSON** – DIRECTOR OF CO-CURRICULAR

[omacpherson@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:omacpherson@beechwoodpark.com)

01582 840333 - Ext 164



## Designated Safeguarding Governor

If the allegation relates to the Head or to the Vice-Chair, do not contact the DSL but contact the Chair of Governors.

If the allegation relates to the Chair of Governors, do not contact the DSL but contact the Vice-Chair.

Designated Governor for Child Protection is **CLARE CUTLER**

**CHAIR OF THE PASTORAL CARE AND WELFARE COMMITTEE**  
**VICE-CHAIR OF GOVERNORS at *Beechwood Park School***  
[ccutler@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:ccutler@beechwoodpark.com)

**MARK HAMMOND – CHAIR OF GOVERNORS at *Beechwood Park School***  
[mhammond@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:mhammond@beechwoodpark.com)

## 7. Key School External Child Protection Contacts for Staff

A referral is always made to the Local Authority where the child lives.

1. **Consultation Hub**      01438 737511

2. **Referral Children's Services**

Children's Services aim to process the contact within a day; working hours are:

Mon-Fri, 08:30 – 17:30.

If the contact is urgent, call 0300 123 4043 (available 24/7)

Contacts about children need to be made at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childprotection](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childprotection)

In most cases, parents need to give consent; Children's Services can't process the contact without it.

Consent is not required if:

- a) the child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent
- b) there would be an impact on a criminal investigation
- c) a delay in making the referral would impact on the immediate safety of the child.

In order to make the online referral you will need to set up an account; the process is instant.

[How to make a child protection contact to Hertfordshire Children's Services](#)

Watch the [simple guidance video](#) and to learn more about the form.

### MASH

Hertfordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is made up of Police, Probation, Safeguarding Nurses and Children's Services staff, all working together to share information, safeguard children, prevent delay for families and ensure they receive the right response and service at the right time. The Hertfordshire MASH deals with contacts and referrals sent by members of the public and professionals to Children's Services for a safeguarding response. Where the MASH team consider that the child's welfare will be better met by early help services, they will ensure referrals reach the most appropriate teams and will inform professional referrers the outcome of their request for a safeguarding assessment.

There are MASH leaflets at the Main Entrance and [here](#); if ever you needed to make a referral, please use the details provided on that leaflet.



### 3. Families First Helpdesk

The helpdesk provides support for the Early Help Module (EHM) system for the whole of Hertfordshire. Monday to Thursday, 9am – 5pm. - Friday, 9am – 4.30 pm.

Phone: 01438 737575

Email: [familiesfirstassessment@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:familiesfirstassessment@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Online information: [Advice for Early Help](#)

### 4. LADO Team: 01992 555 420 - [Information](#)

### 5. CPSLO

Child Protection School Liaison Team [Handbook](#)

Child Protection School Liaison Team – all [Contact Details](#)

<b>School Liaison Admin Support Officer – Grant Sinclair</b> (Monday – Friday either AM or PM hours each day)	
Office	0199205550420 (internal 25420)
Email	<a href="mailto:cpsloadmin@hertfordshire.gov.uk">cpsloadmin@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Kassiane Papageorgiou – Team Manager</b>	
Office	01992 556 979 (internal: 56979)
Email	<a href="mailto:Kassiane.papageorgiou@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Kassiane.papageorgiou@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>Carly Danes – CPSLO – full time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Herts (Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston, Whitwell, Kimpton / villages)</li><li>• Hatfield (Welwyn)</li><li>• St Albans (Harpenden and Redbourn)</li></ul>	
Mobile	01992 556393
Email	<a href="mailto:carly.danes@hertfordshire.gov.uk">carly.danes@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Louise McCourts – CPSLO</b> (Part time; working days Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Watford</li><li>• Dacorum (Hemel Hempstead, Tring and Berkhamsted)</li><li>• Three Rivers (Rickmansworth)</li></ul>	
Mobile	07814 077 877
Email	<a href="mailto:Louise.mccourts@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Louise.mccourts@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>



For Buckinghamshire: [Making a Referral](#)



For central Bedfordshire: [Making a Referral](#)



6. **NAPAC** (the National Association for People Abused in Childhood) offers support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. 0808 801 0331 - <https://napac.org.uk/>

## 8. Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DSL) Areas of Responsibility

The broad areas of responsibility of the DSL are:

### Managing Child Protection Contact Referrals and cases

The DSL is expected to

- take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.
- contact the Child Protection Consultation Hub when advice is needed regarding child protection concerns which possibly meet the threshold for statutory intervention;
- refer cases
  - to the *Local Authority Children's Services* (Safeguarding and Specialist Services) for all cases of suspected abuse or neglect where there is a risk of significant harm to the child, complete Child Protection Contact Referrals, and support staff who make referrals to Children's Services;
  - to the Channelprogramme where there is a radicalisation concern and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
  - to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and
  - to the Police in cases where a crime may have been committed. [NPCC - When to call the police](#) should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

### Working with others

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, Form Teachers, medical, Head of Digital Learning, Boarding Staff and Learning Support Teachers) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies and acting as a point of contact so that children's needs are considered holistically;
- support staff who make Child Protection Contact Referrals and other service referrals;
- liaise with the Head to inform them 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](#).
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically;
- liaise with the Lead Nurse and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health;

- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- work with the Head and relevant strategic leads (Deputy Head (Academic), Head of Junior, Middle and Senior Departments, Director of Co-curricular), 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. This includes:
  - ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, 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.
- co-operate under statutory duty in the same way as other relevant agencies with the published arrangements, once the School is named as a relevant agency and act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements;
- appoint a designated member of staff who **must** have appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience to have responsibility for the welfare and progress of looked-after children (as appropriate).  
[Statutory guidance](#) for Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked after children contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher.
- Share information with appropriate staff in relation to a child's looked after (CLA) legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an Interim Care Order or Care Order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility;
- ensure they have details of the CLA's social worker and the name of the virtual school Head Teacher in the authority that looks after the child or those currently working with a social worker.

### Information sharing and managing the Child Protection File

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that Child Protection Files are kept up-to-date, 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.

The DSL:

- ensures the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Part one and Part two of KCSiE;
- ensures that when pupils leave *Beechwood Park* School, they transfer securely the Child Protection File to the new 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, separately from any other documentation;
- obtain proof that the new school has received the safeguarding file for any child transferring and then destroy any information held on the child unless the case is currently open and in line with data protection guidelines;

- should not send the file until the child is physically attending the new school but will consider if it would be appropriate to share the Child Protection File and any information with the new school in advance of a pupil leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help them thrive in their new school. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives;
- ensures as part of meeting a child's needs, that the governing body recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies.
- See [12. Record Keeping](#)

### Training

The DSL and DDSL receive appropriate formal training **every two years**. The DSL/DDSL should also endeavour to attend Prevent in Education course organised by Hertfordshire County Council's prevent programme manager and CPSLO service. In addition to this training, they should refresh their knowledge and skills (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at least annually to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including Hertfordshire criteria for action and children's social care referral arrangements;
- Have a working knowledge of how Hertfordshire conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Understand the importance of the role the Designated Safeguarding Lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns, Child Protection Contact Referrals alongside referrals to other agencies;
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the School, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners (Full details in Chapter one of **Working Together to Safeguard Children**);
- Understand and support the School with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Be able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at School;
- Recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the School may put in place to protect them.

## Raising Awareness

The DSL:

- Ensures all staff including contractors, volunteers and supply staff have access to, and understand the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- Ensures each member of staff has access on Sharepoint and on request to the *BPS Child Protection Policy* and procedures, and understands them, especially new and part-time staff;
- Works with the governing body to ensure that the BWPS Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly;
- Helps promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and School leadership staff;
- Ensures parents are aware of the School's statutory role regarding safeguarding children and have access to the *BPS Child Protection Policy* on the website and on request, therefore making parents aware that the DSL can seek advice regarding child protection concerns from the Child Protection Consultation Hub and can make Child Protection Contact Referrals about suspected abuse or neglect; the DSL does not require parental consent to make a referral;
- Fosters links with the *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP)* to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on child protection.

## 9. The Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will ensure leadership responsibility that the policy, the procedures and training at *Beechwood Park* are always effective and comply with the law.

**All** governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place at School are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

The Head should ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood and followed by staff.

The governing body should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

According to the Equality Act, the School **must** not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). There is also a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people.

The responsibilities placed on governing body include:

- Ensuring that an effective *Child Protection Policy* is in place, together with a staff behaviour policy.
- Ensuring that staff induction is in place with regards to child protection and safeguarding (including online safety which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see *KCSIE 23* para 141 for further information) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training should

be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.

- Ensuring that they review the *BPS Child Protection Policy* annually.
- Ensuring that all staff are provided with access to *Part One* of *KCSiE* OR Annex A (a condensed version of Part one of Keeping children safe in education. It can be provided (instead of Part one) to those staff who do not directly work with children.
- Ensuring that all staff are provided with access to *Part One* of *KCSiE* Annex B on specific safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring that information regarding the role and identity of the DSL and DDSL are provided to all staff on induction.
- Appointing an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team to act as the *Designated Safeguarding Lead*.
- Ensuring the School has a written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place (*BPS Staff Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy*) and at least one of the persons who conducts each interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- Ensuring that the DSL and DDSLs undergo formal child protection training **every two years** (in line with *KCSiE* and HCSP procedures) and receive annual safeguarding refreshers (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSPs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).
- Prioritising the welfare of children and creating a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding including online safety in an age- appropriate way, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Identify their contribution to inter-agency working, which includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional support is needed for children.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.
- Reviewing regularly and reporting back to the Pastoral Care and Welfare Review Committee (once a term) the effectiveness of filters and the monitoring system as indicated in the *BPS Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy*.
- When the governing body hire or rent out School facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

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

with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The guidance on [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#) details the safeguarding arrangements that schools should expect these providers to have in place.

The contact details of DSL and the two DDSLs are forwarded to external providers. The DSL and DDSLs share a WhatsApp group to co-ordinate cover during the holidays and to provide each other with advice and support

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2024\)](#), provides additional information to support the governing body.

## 10. When to be concerned

### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of every pupil, including those in boarding and those in the EYFS. It believes that all children have the right to be protected from maltreatment. Staff at *Beechwood Park School* form a part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is based on the principle of providing help for families to stay together where it is safe for the children to do so, and looking at alternatives where it is not, whilst acting in the **best interests** of the child at all times.

**All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see Appendix 4), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

The DSL ensures that **all staff understand their DUTY OF CARE to safeguard and protect the welfare of pupils** at the School according to arrangements which follow guidance issued by the Secretary of State and that child protection and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's responsibility** and that in order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, every member of staff must make sure their approach is **child-centred**.

The DSL ensures that staff understand that someone may abuse a child either by **inflicting harm themselves** or by **failing to act to prevent harm**.

*Beechwood Park School* provides an environment in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they feel free to talk and are listened to. The School provides wide-ranging opportunities for children to discuss their concerns with members of the School staff and particularly with their Form Teachers or Key Worker. Pupils know they can also speak with the Nurses in Surgery, their Head of School Department and, in particular for the Senior Department pupils, with the Head. Boarders can phone the *Independent Person* and the *Care commissioner for England* (the *Head of Boarding* displays their contact details in the Boarding House).

All staff and volunteers who work closely with children have **a duty to refer safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead** for child protection, unless the concerns relate to the *Designated Safeguarding Lead* himself in which case they must refer their concerns to the Head.

**If Staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.**

If staff have a concern, they should follow this policy and speak to the Designated Senior Person/DSL (or deputy). The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (or DSPs) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate persons to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

Any staff member should be able to make a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services if **necessary by calling 0300 123 4043 / 0300 123 40 40**.



Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision.

Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the School's own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment; or
- a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer significant harm from abuse or neglect.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, the DSL will make a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services and/or the police immediately.

**Anyone can make a Child Protection Contact Referral.**

**When the DSL doesn't make the Child Protection Contact Referral, the person making the referral must inform the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible that they have made a Child Protection Contact Referral.**

If a member of Staff believes the child's situation does not appear to be improving and/or believes that the DSL/DDSL has not acted on their concerns, the member of staff should press for re-consideration.

**Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.**

## 10.1. Extra Familial Harm (formerly Contextual Safeguarding)

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside the School. All staff, but especially the DSL/DDSLs should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

## 10.2. Children who may require early help (known as Families First in Hertfordshire)

**Families First** is Hertfordshire's strategy for early help services for families. A directory of early help services is available at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst) which will help practitioners and families find information and support to prevent escalation of needs and crisis.

All *Beechwood Park* staff should be aware of the **early help process (here)**, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with the DSL to support early identification and assessment of a child's needs.

It is important children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This also includes staff monitoring the situation and feeding back to the DSL any ongoing or escalating concerns so that the DSL can consider a Child Protection Contact Referral to *Children's Services (Safeguarding and Specialist Services)* if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving.

Staff and volunteers working within the School must be alert to the potential need for early help for children who are more vulnerable. If early help is appropriate, the DSL/DDSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up a Families First Assessment as appropriate.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff must be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and/or has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)

- Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan the local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers;
- has a mental health need;
- is acting as a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;

**Members of Staff at Beechwood Park School must be aware of the main categories of maltreatment:**

- **Physical abuse,**
- **Emotional abuse,**
- **Sexual abuse and**
- **Neglect.**

**Staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.**

For further information see *KCSiE Part 1* and [Appendix 4](#) of the *BPS Child Protection Policy*.

**Members of Staff must also be aware of the indicators of maltreatment and specific safeguarding issues so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.**

### **10.3. Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

Children with SEND, disabilities or certain medical conditions are more prone to:

- peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- being disproportionately impacted by behaviour such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- being unable to understand (due to difficulties with cognitive understanding) the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content or behaviours in school, or the consequence of doing so.

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's impairment without further exploration;
- Assumptions that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties;
- Reluctance to challenge carers, (professionals may over empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child);
- Disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased;
- A disabled child's understanding of abuse;

- Lack of choice/participation;
- Isolation.

Further information can be found in:

- [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#), and
- [Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions](#).

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: Find your local IAS service ([councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk))
- Mencap - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

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

The fact that a child 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. Teachers let our pupils know via PSHE, assemblies and Form Periods that they can approach their Form Teacher, the Nurses, the Learning Support Team or anyone they feel most comfortable with for support and advice. We treat homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying and abuse seriously.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory [Relationships Education and Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education](#) curriculum and staff at Beechwood present the topic with care, empathy and compassion. There is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying and abuse.

#### **10.5. Senior Pupils with a degree of responsibility over other pupils**

As part of their induction, at the start of the Michaelmas Term, the Head briefs all Top Formers and other pupils with a degree of responsibility over other pupils that they should inform the DSL if they have any concerns about the way that a child is being treated or if they receive any disclosures or allegations of abuse.

#### **10.6. Abuse**

Abuse is 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.

##### **10.6.1. Child on Child Abuse**

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).

This policy encapsulates an Extra Familial Harm approach, where:

- Staff recognise that pupils can have experiences of significant harm in extra-familial contexts, and seek to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;
- Staff recognise that as children enter adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time outside of the home in public environments (including on the internet) within which they may experience abuse; and
- Staff consider interventions to change the systems or social conditions of the environments in which abuse has occurred. For example, rather than move a child from a school, professionals could work with the School leadership and pupil body to challenge harmful, gendered school cultures, thus improving the pre-existing School environment.

**All staff** must be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- up-skirting, which involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. This is a criminal offence and perpetrators could face up to two years in prison if convicted;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, staff must report the matter to the DSL. In this situation the DSL will undertake a full evaluation of the facts, including any specific issues relating to the alleged perpetrator(s) as well as the alleged victim(s). The following points will be considered:

- Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- Whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- Whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

In all situations of significant harm (actual or likely) the DSL will make a decision regarding the need to refer the matter to children’s services in accordance with local procedures. The DSL will act on the advice provided. Where there is no evidence of significant harm but the DSL identifies other welfare concerns the DSL will consider the best way to support the children concerned and to actively promote their wellbeing.

As necessary the DSL will develop a strategy in conjunction with the children, their parents and carers in order to prevent a recurrence of the incident(s).

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to a pupil, staff must regard this as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

Staff are aware that abuse is abuse and child on child abuse will never be tolerated. Staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and staff do not tolerate or pass this off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, or “part of growing up” as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment.

Furthermore, staff recognise the gendered nature of child on child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. All staff are aware that abuse is abuse.

Staff recognise that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and are alert to pupil relationships and the potential for child on child abuse.

#### All staff

- are aware of the importance of **challenging** abusive behaviours; children may not feel ready or know how to tell of abuse, or may not recognise their experience as harmful;
- recognise that, even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported;
- know that the DSL or any member of staff need to refer such abuse to an external safeguarding agency.

Hertfordshire County Council recommends that education settings use The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the Brook Advisory Service to help professionals assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at <https://www.brook.org.uk/education/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool/>

In order to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, the DSL ensures that the School:

- provides a developmentally appropriate PSHE and RSE curriculum which develops pupils’ understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe;
- nurtures a culture where pupils can raise concerns with any member of staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued;
- enforces the *BPS Pupil Conduct Policy* and a *BPS Anti-Bullying Policy*;
- has a robust approach to Internet Safety which develops pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skills, to ensure personal safety and self-protection when using the internet and social networking.
- supports victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse;
- develops robust risk assessments where appropriate (e.g. Using an Individual Action and Safety Plan and Support Plan tools);
- has robust monitoring and filtering systems in place to ensure pupils are safe and act appropriately when using information technology in school;
- where there is an allegation or concern that a child has abused others Section 5.1.7 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual (Electronic), ‘ChildrenWho Abuse Others’: [http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_chil\\_abuse.html](http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_chil_abuse.html)  
Staff should also refer to Part five of *KCSIE – ‘Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment’*: page 105

#### 10.6.2. Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

- When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, the School will follow the guidance outlined in Part five of [KCSIE 2024](#).
- **The School recognises that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff will maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here.’** We recognise sexual violence and sexual

harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable.

- Staff:
  - are clear to all pupils that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it
  - recognise, acknowledge, and understand the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported
  - challenge physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.
- Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers
- All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be 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. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will not be dismissed or downplayed and will be treated equally seriously and in line with relevant policies and procedures.
- Staff recognise that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way to pupils that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- Staff recognise that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse. All staff will be aware certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone, for example because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.
- The DSL (or DDSL) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response.
- The DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and any other children involved/impacted, in line with part five of KCSIE 2024 and HSCP procedures.
- The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
- Reports will initially be managed internally by the School and where necessary will be referred to Children’s Services and/or the police.

#### 10.6.2.1. Sexual Violence

It is important that staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school. When referring to sexual violence in this policy and in KCSiE, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual violence. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#) as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or

mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – Schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone’s bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

**Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

### **What is consent?**

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

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

Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent](#).

### **10.6.2.2. Sexual harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is likely to:

- violate a child’s dignity and/or
- and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or
- create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes. The DSL will consider when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim;
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;



- upskirting (this is a criminal offence), and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. Taking and sharing nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) provides detailed advice for schools and colleges
  - sharing of unwanted explicit content
  - sexualised online bullying
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
  - coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

It is important that staff consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

**Important considerations in evaluating the situation include:**

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behaviour has been displayed;
- the ages of the pupils involved;
- the developmental stages of the pupils involved;
- any power imbalance between the pupils;
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse - sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between pupils;
- understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.
- whether there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or School staff;
- any other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

The School will in most instances engage with both the victim's and alleged perpetrator's parents/carers when there has been a report of sexual violence; this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and will depend on a case-by-case basis. The exception to this is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent/carer will put a child at additional risk. Any information shared with parents/carers will be in line with information sharing expectations, our confidentiality policy, and any data protection requirements, and where they are involved, will be subject to discussion with other agencies (for example Children's Services and/or the police) to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

### 10.6.3. Harmful sexual behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this policy. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously

When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the



other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector, and sources are listed in *KCSI/E* Annex B.

It is effective safeguarding practice for the DSL (and DDSLs) to have a good understanding of HSB. This forms part of their safeguarding training. This aids in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school approach to safeguarding.

Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

### 10.6.3. Allegations against other pupils which are safeguarding issues

Potentially, pupils may make allegations against other pupils in the school, which are of a child protection nature. Child Protection issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, teenage relationship abuse and sexual exploitation, gender based violence/sexual assault, bullying, cyber bullying, sexting, child-on-child exploitation, sexual bullying or harmful sexual behaviour.

Staff must consider this as a child protection allegation against a pupil if some of the following features are present.

The allegation:

- is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil;
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence;
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the School;
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil;
- indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil.

### 10.6.4. Physical Abuse

This is 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.

There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering the action or sanctions to be undertaken.

### 10.6.5. Serious Violence

**All staff** are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime:

- increased absence from School;
- change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;
- significant decline in performance;
- signs of self-harm or significant change in wellbeing;
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries;
- unexplained gifts/new possessions.

Staff are aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's [Preventing Youth Violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance. Also refer to [Part](#)

### 10.6.6. Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both pupils who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

The *BPS Anti Bullying Policy* makes pupils and staff aware that bullying may involve:

- An Imbalance of Power: pupils who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity— to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e. g. size, hair colour, race, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### 10.6.7. Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Communications Act 2003, Section 127, which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could be deemed to be criminal behaviour. If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support pupils may require in these instances, the School (*Deputy Head Pastoral, Head*) will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

### 10.6.8. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'semi-nude', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, regardless of their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people may not even be aware that they could be breaking the law as stated, as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Is staff become aware of this:

- **Never** view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – **this is illegal**.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the Head (or in their absence to the DSL/DSLs) and seek support.
- **Do not** delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- **Do not** ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.

- **Do not** share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- **Do not** say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- **Do** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Guidance on responding to and managing sharing nudes incidents can be found from:

- Department for Digital, Culture, media & Sport and UK Council for Internet Safety: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)
- NSPCC: [Sexting: Advice for Professionals](#)
- NCA [Sextortion Alert](#)

Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive between the two. Harmful Sexual Behaviour should be considered in a child protection context.

### 10.6.9. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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.

### 10.6.10. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it as set out above.

### 10.6.11. Teenage Relationship Abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

### 10.6.12. Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Child-on-Child Abuse

When a pupil makes an allegation against another pupil, members of staff must consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern.

1. If there is a safeguarding concern, the member of staff must inform the DSL (or the DDSL) immediately, both verbally and by completing a Child Protection and Safeguarding incident on CPOMS.
2. Staff will write a factual record of the allegation, but must not attempt at this stage to investigate the circumstances.
3. The DSL or the DDSL must meet with the Head to discuss the case.
4. The DSL will contact the *Child Protection Schools' Liaison Officer (CPSLO)* regarding setting up a *Risk Assessment Management Plan (RAMP)*, which is used when children or adults might pose a risk to others in the School community.
5. If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police will be involved.
6. The DSL will keep the parents of all pupils informed and updated on the progress of the referral (Child Protection Contact).
7. The DSL or the DDSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the secure safeguarding records.
8. If the allegation highlights a potential risk to the School and the pupil, the School will follow the *BWP Pupil Conduct Policy* and take appropriate action.
9. The DSL will monitor the plan and set up a date for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.
10. In addition to all of the other procedures in this policy which still apply in these cases, whilst the matter is investigated, the DSL will offer any child at risk suitable protection from the infliction of actual or likely significant harm.

### 10.6.13. Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.'

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- **Psychological/emotional abuse:** Includes name-calling, threats and manipulation, blaming the other person for the abuse or 'gas-lighting'.
- **Economic abuse:** Controlling access to money or resources. They might take the other person's wages, stop them from working, or put them in debt without their knowledge or consent
- **Sexual abuse:** Doesn't have to be physical. They might manipulate, deceive or coerce the other person into doing things they don't want to do.
- **Coercive control:** When an abuser uses a pattern of behaviour over time to exert power and control. It is a criminal offence.
- **Physical abuse:** Not only hitting. They might restrain the other person or throw objects. They might pinch or shove and claim it's a 'joke'.

- **Tech abuse:** They might send abusive texts, demand access to the other person's devices, track with spyware, or share images of the other person online.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence (where children see, hear or experience its effects) 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. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Staff can find advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped on the following links:

[NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects](#)

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or bullying
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- drug or alcohol use
- eating disorders
- problems in school or trouble learning
- tantrums
- withdrawal

[Safe young lives: young people and domestic abuse](#)

**Operation Encompass teachers' helpline**

Operation Encompass teachers' helpline, funded by the Home Office, is available for all staff in education settings and allows staff to speak in confidence with an educational psychologist about how best to support children experiencing domestic abuse.

Phone: 0204 513 9990 - Opening hours: Monday to Friday, term-time, 8am to 1pm

Further information and resources can be found on the [Operation Encompass website](#) and in a [handbook for schools](#), which provides information about the impact of domestic abuse on children and advice on how to support them.

**10.6.14. Bruising**

**What do we know about bruising?**

- Bruising is strongly related to mobility. Once children are mobile they sustain bruises from everyday activities and accidents. Bruising in a baby who is not yet crawling, and therefore has no independent mobility, is very unusual.
- Most children who are able to walk independently have bruises. Bruises usually happen when children fall over or bump into objects in their way.
- Children have more bruises during the summer months.

**Where would you expect to see bruising from an accidental injury?**

- The shins and the knees are the most likely places where children who are walking, or starting to walk, get bruised.
- Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body – such as the knees and elbows – and are often seen on the front of the body.

- Infants who are just starting to walk unsupported may bump and bruise their heads – usually the forehead, nose, centre of their chin or back of the head.
- It is common to have fractures, particularly rib or metaphyseal fractures, without any bruising.
- Accidental bruising in children with disability is related to the child’s level of mobility, equipment used, muscle tone and learning ability.

#### **When should you be concerned?**

- There are some patterns of bruising that may mean physical abuse has taken place.
- Abusive bruises often occur on soft parts of the body – such as the abdomen, back and buttocks.
- The head is by far the commonest site of bruising in child abuse. Other common sites include the ear and the neck.
- As a result of defending themselves, abused children may have bruising on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet.
- Clusters of bruises are a common feature in abused children. These are often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh, or on the body.
- Bruises which have petechiae (dots of blood under the skin) around them are found more commonly in children who have been abused than in those injured accidentally.
- Abusive bruises can often carry the imprint of the implement used or the hand.
- Non-accidental head injury or fractures can occur without bruising. Severe bruising to the scalp, with swelling around the eyes and no skull fracture, may occur if the child has been “scalped” – ie, had their hair pulled violently.

#### **Implications for practice**

A bruise should never be interpreted in isolation and must always be assessed in the context of the child’s medical and social history, developmental stage and explanation given. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness should be seen promptly by a doctor.

Bruising that suggests the possibility of physical child abuse includes:

- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- bruising in babies
- bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- bruises to the face, back, abdomen, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape
- bruises that carry an imprint – of an implement or cord
- bruises with petechiae (dots of blood under the skin) around them.

If a member of staff notices a bruise, they will ask the pupil how they got the bruise, make an entry in CPOMS (Medical – unless they have a concern, when they then see the DSL/DDSL) and the Form Teacher will follow up (particularly if the bruise is in a place they wouldn’t expect it – see above). The Form Teacher will contact the child’s parents to ask about the bruise, highlighting that they are obliged to follow up as a way of protecting our pupils, that this is not intended to cause offense nor is accusatory and that we are well aware that children can get bruises from a wide range of reasons.

### **10.7. 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.

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.

More information including definitions and indicators are included in *KCSiE 2024 - Annex B*.

Also refer to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership [6.5 Safeguarding Children Abused Through Sexual Exploitation](#)

## 10.8. Mental Health

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

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, staff must take immediate action by following the procedures in this policy and speaking to the DSL/DDSL. Staff must also refer to the *BPS Pupil Mental Health Policy*.

## 10.9. PREVENT: Safeguarding Children and Young People from Radicalisation

Under the [Prevent Duty \(2024\)](#), Section 26 of the [Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) (Changes to legislation: Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before April 2024), all schools and colleges must have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” Children can be especially vulnerable to extreme ideologies and radicalisation and protecting our pupils from these is core to our safeguarding practices at *Beechwood*.

*Beechwood Park's* child-centred educational philosophy, its *Mission* and *Values* promote the development of confidence and independence, which build resilience against extreme ideologies and radicalisation. Pupils learn critical thinking skills and discuss current affairs as and when they arise. The School also dedicates one week of every year to the promotion of *British Values*; we build mutual respect and understanding and promote the use of dialogue not violence as a form of conflict resolution.

We achieve this through:

- The promotion of the *School's Mission* and *School Values* through all aspects of School life, in particular through Form Periods, Assemblies, PSHE and other opportunities for open debate;
- The effective implementation of all school policies and in particular, the *BPS Online Safety Policy*, *BPS Pupil Conduct Policy*, *BPS Equal Opportunities Policies* and *BPS Anti-Bullying Policy*.
- The promotion of *Diversity* as a core *School Value*;
- Educational *Citizenship* programmes.
- The promotion of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.
- The teaching of pupils to respect each other and to celebrate differences in others whatever they may be.



- Learning about other faiths, cultures and traditions and life both in a modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

There are signs and vulnerability factors that may indicate a child is susceptible to radicalisation or is in the process of being radicalised. It is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist thinking and intervene to safeguard those at risk of radicalisation. Staff must be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of *Prevent* support. Staff act proportionately to the concern using the *Prevent Notice, Check, Share* approach, which could lead to the DSL making a *Prevent Referral*.

The School encourages the use of external speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils and appropriately vets and supervises all visitors, whether invited by staff or pupils in accordance with the *BPS Visiting Speaker Policy* to ensure that they are suitable.

The School is aware of its obligations to work in partnership with other agencies in delivering the *Prevent Duty Guidance 2015* and trains its staff, adjusts its policies according to need and ensures that safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership*.

The Head, DSL and DDSL should complete a [WRAP training](#) and the DSL filters down key messages to all staff members through training and updates.

The School's web filter protects pupils from online terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet through School IT systems. Pupils and staff report to the *DSL* any concerns relating to inappropriate content found on the internet and pupils and staff sign a *BPS Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)* annually to confirm that they understand what is acceptable.

The DSL trains staff at least annually to follow normal referral processes if they have concerns about a child relating to the prevention of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. Staff assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism and identify who may be at risk of radicalisation; they report back to the *DSL/DSLs*. The *DSL* will assess the level of potential risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include *Channel* or *Children's Services*.

Although decisions to seek support for a child in need, or about whom there are concerns relating to radicalisation would normally be taken in consultation with parents and pupils, the School does not require parental consent for a Child Protection Contact Referral, when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm.

Hertfordshire County Council guidance on *Prevent* is here at [5.3.9 Prevent Guidance](#) of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership CP procedures which outlines the specific duties in Hertfordshire. This guidance also features contact details and advice on making a **Prevent referral**.

For support and advice on extremism, staff and parents may contact the HCC *Prevent Programme Manager* on 07773 094 89, the local police force (101), *ACT Early Support Line* on 0800 011 3764 and the *DfE* dedicated telephone helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice for Staff and Governors: 020 7340 7264 and [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk).

## 10.10. Children who are absent from Education

*Beechwood Park School* has rigorous admission and attendance procedures in place to identify and respond to children who are absent, particularly on repeat occasions.

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the School's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.



The *BPS Pupil Attendance Policy* informs staff about their responsibilities to record attendance and lateness carefully. The School is aware of its duties relating to *KCSiE* and to report children who go missing from school.

### 10.11. Online Safety

Staff at *Beechwood Park School* take action to protect children from harmful and inappropriate electronic/digital material. The School has appropriate filters and monitoring on School devices and school networks systems in place. The Head of Digital Learning runs a daily report on Smoothwall and reports directly to the DSL (full details are in the *BPS Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy*). We teach pupils about safeguarding, including online safeguarding, through the Computer Science curriculum and through the PSHE and SRE programme. The School uses opportunities to help children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet.

Staff at *Beechwood Park* teach pupils to understand the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Further resources can be found at:

- **The UK Safer Internet Centre** [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- The **National Crime Agency's CEOP Education Programme**: Protecting children and young people from online child sexual abuse through education.

### 10.12. Private Fostering Arrangements

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority any instances of private fostering arrangements. All employees and volunteers at *Beechwood Park School* will report to the *DSL* any pupil who lives away from their parents for more than 28 days per year.

### 10.13. Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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.

Staff at *Beechwood Park School* are knowledgeable to the health care and welfare of its pupils and are watchful for any signs or symptoms of so-called honour-based abuse. All staff are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If in any doubt staff should speak to the DSL or DDSL who will contact the *Referral Children's Services*.

### 10.14. Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as "female circumcision" or "cutting". This is illegal in the UK. Section 5B of the *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003* (as inserted by section 74 of the *Serious Crime Act 2015*) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and

healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the girl or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

If a **teacher**, (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at *Beechwood Park*), in the course of their work, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher must report this to the police** via 101. **This is a mandatory reporting duty.** (KCSIE 2024) After they have reported FGM to the police they should inform the DSL/DDSL if the child is at *Beechwood Park*. Any non-teaching member of Staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out must report this to the DSL/DDSL without delay and the DSL/DDSL will report the matter to the police.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen but she might talk about or staff may become aware of:

- a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt.

### 10.15. Fabricated or Induced Illness

FII is a rare, potentially lethal form of abuse.

Staff will raise concerns when it is considered that the health or development of a child is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired by the actions of a carer or carers having fabricated or induced illness. It is important that the focus is on the outcomes or impact on the child and not initially on attempts to diagnose the parent or carer. This can inflict both physical and emotional harm.

### 10.16. Boarding

The DSL and the Head of Boarding

- ensure that all staff comply with the arrangements made to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders, in accordance with [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, 2022](#).
- are aware that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

All boarding staff are aware that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility throughout the School and the boarding facilities. The Head of Boarding and the DSL remind staff regularly, and is part of the yearly new staff induction.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. To this effect, boarders:

- hand in their personal devices at Boarding Registration in the afternoon (currently, only a few pupils on the SEN register); the devices are locked away in a dedicated trolley or office;
- may only use the School computers in the Boarders' Common Room for gaming, where they are supervised;
- may only use the PCs in the Upper, Lower Computer and iMac Suites for their prep, under supervision;
- may not use any personal devices such as phones. If Boarders want to ring home they use one of the School phones available in the Boarding House.

The DSL and the Head of Boarding are aware that boarding schools have additional factors to consider with regard to safeguarding. As such, they make clear to all boarders at the welcome briefing at the start of the academic new year, at the start of a new term and when a new boarder arrives that pupils at Beechwood Park (including boarders) do not have exclusive relationships.

Staff monitor relationships closely, managing pupils if required and reporting back to the Head of Boarding every evening and at the weekly boarding meeting.

The Boarding House is also equipped with key-pad doors, alarms and CCTV which prevent anyone entering the Boarding House and pupils entering accommodation of the other sex.

Child-on-child abuse is taken seriously. The arrangements reflect the unique nature of boarding accommodation and the risks associated with children sharing overnight accommodation. All Boarding Staff are aware of the significant gender imbalance (predominantly boys in Year 7 and Top Form). The security system supports the management of pupils. Pupils' accommodation is age-related and no pupils have supervisory roles over others (there are no Dorm Monitors). Boys and girls have distinct accommodation areas, protected by the security system. In the communal areas, staff are always on duty.

The *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools* states that if any boarders or their parents have any concerns about the School's arrangements for child protection, they can contact *Ofsted*. There is no requirement to report, but parents and boarders may do so if they wish.

Piccadilly Gate - Store Street - Manchester - M1 2WD

Tel: 08456 404040

email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

### 10.17. Safeguarding of Pupils on off-site School visits

The School recognises its child protection responsibilities for the care and safety of pupils both on and off school premises and will gain written assurance that any staff of other off-site organisations who supervise our pupils on a site other than the School have been checked for suitability to work with children.

### 10.18. EYFS Child Protection

In addition to other child protection measures for EYFS children, and in accordance with the EYFS statutory requirements, the School has a clear policy on the use by parents and staff of mobile phones and cameras in the EYFS setting. These are contained in the *Guide for Beechwood Parents All you need to know ... about Beechwood Park Junior Department*, the *BPS Staff Handbook* and the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*. Staff observe this guidance throughout the School.

Members of staff will only take photographs of children with their parents' permission (provided in writing via consent form). Where staff take photographs to give evidence of children's progress, photos can only be taken on School devices. Staff must then download them onto school computers. Staff cannot use photos or pass on outside the School.

**Staff and pupils must not use their own mobile phones in the vicinity of EYFS except in the case of an emergency. If a member of Staff uses their phone in an emergency they need to self-report to the Head or DSL/DDSL.**

### 10.19. Disqualification

As an EYFS provider, and school for children under the age of eight years, the SLT at *Beechwood Park* is aware of its responsibilities not to employ those who have been disqualified from working in childcare. As an EYFS registered setting, the DSL will inform Ofsted of allegations against people living or working at the premises, or of any other abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises - as soon as practicable and within 14 days at the latest.

## 11. Dealing with a Disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff / volunteer:

- Listens to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accepts what the pupil says
- Allows the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but does not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Does not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Children’s Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services
- Reassures him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stresses that it was the right thing to tell
- Listens, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)

**IF YOU CONSIDER A CHILD TO BE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OR AT RISK OF HARM, CONTACT THE POLICE WITHOUT DELAY.**

**Send allegations or suspicions against staff and volunteers without delay to the Head.**

**If the allegation is made against the Head, send allegations or suspicions of abuse to the Chair of Governors or Vice-Chair of Governors without informing the Head.**

Once the *DSL* (or the Head or the Chair of Governors/Vice-Chair of Governors) has received the disclosure, he will pass it on to the *Hertfordshire LADO*, who will advise as to how to differentiate the concern between

- a) a pupil in **immediate risk of significant harm or someone has committed a crime**: the DSL or a member of staff must immediately contact the emergency services on 999
- b) a pupil **in need of additional support from one or more agencies**: the DSL will refer to Children’s Services of the area where the child resides.

### **Support**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for themselves and discuss this with the DSL.

## 12. Record Keeping

All members of Staff should be confident of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as ‘special category personal data’. Where in doubt the School should seek independent legal advice.

The DfE emphasises in KCSiE, para 120 page 32, that “The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children’.

The July 2018 [Government guidance, Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#), includes “seven golden rules for sharing

information” as well as some useful “myth busters”.

Data protection law is not a barrier, but it is a system of checks and balances to be borne in mind when recording, sharing, and retaining vital but sensitive data. **Staff must record all information in a neutral way, detailing facts, and not making judgments or assumptions.**

When a child makes a disclosure, whether they are a day child, boarder or a member of EYFS, the member of staff/volunteer will:

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation by completing a Child Protection and Safeguarding incident on CPOMS, wherever possible.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Describe any injuries, indicating position and approximate size, only viewing those parts of the body which are normally visible. In CPOMS, indicate on the body map the areas where the injuries are visible.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions

**Give all records to the DSL immediately. Do not keep copies.**

The DSL manages all safeguarding records in accordance with the *Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005*.

When pupils move from one Form Teacher to another, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any Child Protection information with the new Form Teacher. He will do this at the start of the new academic year, and at any time when the pupils change Form Teacher.

### 13. Confidentiality

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that all staff/volunteers clearly understand.

- All staff in School, both teaching and non-teaching staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (*Children’s Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services* and the Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tells the child in a manner appropriate to the child’s age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

### 14. Communicating with Parents

The DSL requires parental consent before submitting a Child Protection Contact Referral; the only exceptions are:

- the child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent (a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats / forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed)
- there would be an impact on a criminal investigation (leading to an unreasonable delay, leading to the risk of loss of evidential material)
- a delay in making the referral would impact on the immediate safety of the child.

The DSL may also consider not informing parent(s) where this would place a member of staff at risk. The DSL will ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the School and staff for safeguarding children.

Where reasonably possible the School holds more than one emergency contact number for every pupil.

## 15. Low-Level Concerns

The focus of this approach helps articulate the methodology by which the SLT implements and measures the impact of a culture in which all members of our community live within the Mission, Values and, for staff, the expected behaviours as set out in the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*. In particular,

- The SLT promote a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which all staff are confident and clear about the expected behaviours of themselves and their colleagues;
- The DSL/DDSLs promote each employee's statutory responsibilities to protect children from abuse and harm in accordance with the School's *Child Protection* and *Health and Safety* policies;
- The SLT ensures that staff feel empowered to raise any low-level concern, whether about their own or a colleague's behaviour, in support of the School's Mission and Values;
- The Head and the DSL/DDSLs provide responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of concerns when they are raised – maintaining both the confidence that concerns will be handled promptly and effectively and protecting staff from false allegations and misunderstandings.

### Definition of Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small and even if it is no more than a 'nagging doubt,' that an adult may have acted in a manner inconsistent with the School's Mission, Values or Staff Behaviour Policy, or a sense of unease as to the adult's behaviour particularly towards or around children.

### Low-level concerns about self (self-reporting)

From time to time an individual may find themselves in a situation which might appear compromising to others, or which could be misconstrued. Equally, an individual may have behaved in a manner, which on reflection, they consider fall below the standard set out in the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*.

The School community encourages self-reporting in these circumstances as it demonstrates both awareness of the expected behavioural standards and self-awareness as to their own actions or how they could be perceived. Staff view self-reporting of low-level concerns as an important means of maintaining a culture where everyone aspires to the highest standards of behaviour.

### Low-level concerns about another adult

Occasionally, an individual may notice conduct in others which causes concern. These actions and behaviours fall short of a formal allegation of abuse. These tend to be behaviours which indicate that the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy* has not been met. Any such concerns can be dealt with as a Low-Level Concern.

### What should I do if I have a low-level concern?

Where a low-level concern exists, the member of staff makes an appointment to see the Head to self-report or to report as soon as reasonably possible and always within 24 hours of the event, having completed a *BPS Low-Level Concern Form*. If the concern is about the behaviour of the Head, the member of staff will contact the Chair of Governors ([mhammond@beechwoodpark.com](mailto:mhammond@beechwoodpark.com)).

### How will my low-level concern be handled?

The Head will consider all low-level concerns they receive and satisfy themselves in the first instance that this is a low-level concern and should not be reclassified as an allegation and deal with under the appropriate procedure outlined in the *BPS Child Protection Policy*.

The Head may discuss low-level concerns with the DSL/DDSLs without delay and at the most within 24 hours.

The circumstances in which a low-level concern might be reclassified as an allegation are when:

1. The threshold is met for an allegation as stipulated in the *BPS Child Protection Policy*;
2. There is a pattern of low-level concerns which collectively amount to an allegation; or

3. There is other information which when taken into an account leads to an allegation.

Where the Head is in any doubt whatsoever, they will seek advice anonymously from the LADO.

If the Head establishes that the concern is low-level, they may wish to meet with the individual who self-reported or with the person the concern was raised about. The Head will deal with the low-level concern by means of a discussion, guidance or even training, as appropriate.

### **Record keeping**

Once a low-level concern has been recorded and submitted, the Head will keep a confidential record in a central file which logs low-level concerns. This is necessary to enable patterns to be identified. No record will be made of the concern on the individual's personnel file and no mention made in a job reference unless either:

1. The form directly asks for details;
2. The concern (or group of concerns) has been reclassified as an allegation; or
3. The concern (or group of concerns) is sufficiently serious enough to result in formal action under the *BPS Grievance, Capability and Disciplinary Policy*.

## **16. Allegations involving School Staff and Volunteers**

The guidance in [KCSiE Part 4](#) is about managing cases of concerns/allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college.

In accordance with Part 4 of *KCSiE*, an allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff (including the DSL), supply Staff, contractors or volunteer may have:

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

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of School, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. The 'Case Manager' (see below) can seek advice from the LADO.

Staff must report their allegations **without delay** to the **Head**, or, where the Head is the subject of an allegation, or if the Head is absent, to the **Chair of Governors**.

To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff are aware of the guidance in the *BPS Staff Handbook*, *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy* and Government document *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings*.

### **The initial response to an allegation**

Where a member of Staff identifies that a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child, or if the situation is an emergency, the Head/Chair of Governors (the 'Case Manager') should contact local authority children's social care and as appropriate the police immediately as per the processes explained in Part one of *KCSiE*. Failure to report in accordance with procedures is potentially a disciplinary matter.

The person making the allegation must:

- Make an immediate written record of the allegation - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present.
- Sign, date and immediately meet with the Head/Chair of Governors to pass on the record without delay.



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

- Looking after the welfare of the child – the DSL/DDSL is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as described in Part one of KCSiE.
- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation – the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

When dealing with allegations, the School should:

- apply common sense and judgement
- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently, and
- provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

The ‘Case Manager’ will:

1. Take the matter seriously.
2. Keep an open mind.
3. Not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification.
4. Not make assumptions.
5. Not promise confidentiality, advising the child that they might need to share the concern on a 'need to know' basis only.
6. Must refer to [KCSiE Part 4](#).

Neither the recipient of the allegation nor the Head, DSL, Chair or Deputy Chair will investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements. The Head or Chair of Governors must refer all allegations to the Local Authority Designated Officer: **LADO Team: 01992 555 420**

If the allegation meets any of the four criteria set out **in bold** at the start of this section, the Head/ Chair of Governors will always contact the LADO **without delay and within one working day at the latest**.

If the allegation meets the threshold for safeguarding and the allegation requires a child protection strategy meeting or joint evaluation meeting, this will take place in accordance with section 4.1 of the *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures*.

If the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding and does not require a child protection strategy meeting or joint evaluation meeting, the LADO will provide the Head/ Chair of Governors with advice and support on how he should manage the allegations.

The Head/ Chair of Governors will, as soon as possible, following briefing from the LADO inform the subject of the allegation.

If the allegation is about supply staff, the Head/ Chair of Governors will contact the agency who has provided the supply staff to keep them fully informed and involved.

Employers have a duty of care to their employees. They should ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

For further information, see *HSCP Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures Section 4.1 Managing Allegations against Adults who Work with Children and Young People* and Hertfordshire, Safeguarding Children’s Partnership website on, <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/healthsoc/childfam/childprotection/hertssafboard/>

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the School either as above or using the *BPS Whistleblowing Policy* or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing



channels may be open to them:

- **Children's Services 0300 123 40 43 / 0300 123 40 40**
- **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline** is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.  
Staff can call: **0800 028 0285** – this line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- Ofsted: [whistleblowing@ofsted.co.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.co.uk)

## 17. Arrangements for dealing with allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other School Staff including Volunteers

### **BPS Staff Behaviour Policy**

In accordance with *KCSiE*, the School has a *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*, which is published on the staff shared policy area. To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff follow the safer working practice and are familiar with the guidance contained in the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*.

### **Allegations about a Member of the Boarding Team**

If the allegation of abuse concerns a member of the Boarding Staff Team, and the Head decides that they should be suspended from their duties, the School will provide suitable accommodation for them away from the School site until the matter has been resolved. This is in accordance with the requirements of the *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools*.

### **Confidentiality**

Since 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, restrictions exist on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers and the School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and to guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE / TRA publish information about an investigation of decision in a disciplinary case.

### **Reporting to the DBS**

The Head understands their legal duty to report promptly to the *DBS* any person's services (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) when both of the following conditions have been met:

#### ***Condition 1***

The School withdraws permission for a person to engage in regulated activity with children or the School moves the person to another area of work that isn't regulated activity.

This includes situations when the School would have taken the above action, but the person was re-deployed, resigned, retired, or left. For example, a teacher resigns when an allegation of harm to a pupil is first made.

#### ***Condition 2***

The School thinks the person has carried out one of the following:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults. An action or inaction has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm or;
- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and / or vulnerable adults. eg there has been no relevant conduct but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable still exists; or
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal, of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering.

The Head undertakes to provide as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible and recognises that failure to make a report constitutes an offence. It also recognises its legal duty to cooperate with an investigation.

Please see the guidance on [Making Barring Referrals to the DBS](#).

### **Reporting to the TRA**

Independent Schools are also under a duty to consider making a referral to the *Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)* where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: “unacceptable professional conduct”, “conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute” or a “conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence”. Advice about whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to refer to the TRA can be found in *Teacher Misconduct: The Prohibition of Teachers (July 2014)*. The TRA [website](#) provides further guidance.

### **The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

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

Staff will not investigate allegations before the Head has first spoken with the LADO. The Head must contact the LADO within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

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

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

The LADO is responsible for:

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

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

### **Where do we find the necessary information in order to make a referral?**

Information is available [here](#)

LADO Team: 01992 555 420

## 18. School Procedure

Please see Appendix 3:

If any member of staff is concerned about a child, he or she must inform the DSL/DDSL without delay. The DSL/DDSL will decide whether they should raise the concerns to Children's Services and if deemed to have met the threshold a Child Protection Contact Referral the DSL/DDSL will be completed.

If the DSL/DDSL makes a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services the DSL/DDSL will discuss the referral with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

While it is the DSL/DDSL's role to make Child Protection Contact Referrals, any staff member can make a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (e.g. concern that a family might have plans to carry out FGM, Forced Marriage etc). In these circumstances a Child Protection Contact Referral should be made to Children's Services and/or the Police immediately. Where Child Protection Contact Referrals are made by another member of staff, they should inform the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible.

If a **teacher** (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at *Beechwood Park*), in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police via 101. **This is a mandatory reporting duty.**

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise and a factual account of any verbal disclosures and observations.

Staff must pay particular attention to the attendance and development of any child about whom the School has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a Child Protection Plan and the DSL/DDSL will keep a written record.

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the DSL/DDSL will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the DSL at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file.

The DSL is responsible for making the senior leadership team aware of trends in behaviour that may affect pupil welfare. If necessary, the DSL will organise training.

## Glossary

BPS	<i>Beechwood Park School</i>
CCE	<i>Child Criminal Exploitation</i>
CLA	<i>Child Looked After (previously known as LAC)</i>
CPSLO	<i>Child Protection School Liaison Officer</i>
CSE	<i>Child Sexual Exploitation</i>
DV	<i>Domestic Violence</i>
DBS	<i>Disclosure and Barring Service</i>
DSL	<i>Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>
DDSL	<i>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>
DSP	<i>Designated Safeguarding Person</i>
EHM	<i>Early Help Module</i>
EYFS	<i>Early Years Foundation Stage</i>
FII	<i>Fabricated or Induced Illness</i>
FGM	<i>Female Genital Mutilation</i>
HBA	<i>So-called Honour Based Abuse (formally known as HBV - Honour Based Violence)</i>
HSB	<i>Harmful Sexual Behaviour</i>
HSCP	<i>Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership</i>
KCSiE	<i>Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) (Statutory Guidance)</i>
LAC	See CLA
LADO	<i>Local Authority Designated Officer</i>
LLC	<i>Low-Level Concern</i>
MASH	<i>Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub</i>
NAPAC	<i>National Association for People Abused in Childhood</i>
The School	<i>Beechwood Park School</i>

## APPENDIX 1 What to do if you are worried a child is being abused or neglected

Member of staff has concerns about a child's welfare  
**(including children in need and children at risk)**  
 Be alert to signs of abuse and question unusual behaviours

### Where a child discloses abuse or neglect

- Listen; take their allegation seriously; reassure that you will take action to keep them safe.
- Inform them what you are going to do next.
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not question further or approach/inform the alleged abuser

### Discuss concerns with Designated Safeguarding lead

The **Safeguarding Lead** will consider further actions required, including consultation with Children's Services, immediately (number below) **or the Police if a crime has been committed, immediately**. Concerns and discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded in writing by agency /organisation. In **exceptional** circumstances or in the absence of a safeguarding lead the individual may contact Children's Services directly.

Still have concerns: refer to Children's Services

No longer has safeguarding concerns

Children's Service during office hours.  
**0300 123 4043**  
 If the child is at immediate risk dial **999**:  
 and ask for Police assistance

Out of Hours  
 Contact  
 Emergency Duty  
 Team

Additional /  
 unmet needs

### Children's Service

1. Acknowledge receipt of referral
2. Decide on next course of action (within one working day)
3. Feedback decision to referrer  
 e.g.:
  - Further Assessment including
  - Child protection enquiries/Strategy Discussion
  - No further action required for Children's Services
  - **and Early Help assessment recommended**
  - Referred to other agency for service provision

Consult with family and relevant agencies and undertake a Families First Assessment or Early Help Module (EHM).

## **APPENDIX 2** Where a pupil discloses abuse or neglect, follow this sequence of events

### **Create a Safe Environment**

Create a safe environment by offering the child a private and safe place if possible. Stay calm and reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame. Tell the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you.



### **Listen**

Listen to what the child has to say and take them seriously; reassure the child but advise that you cannot promise to keep a secret. Do not make promises you cannot keep. If there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, assistance should be called for. Tell the child what you are going to do next after the disclosure.



### **Talking to the child**

When talking to the child, do not interview the child and keep questions to a minimum. Do not display shock or disbelief. Encourage the child to use his/her own words and do not ask leading questions, interrupt their dialogue, or make assumptions, which might give particular answers. Do not repeat the disclosure over and over. Seek consent from the child to share any information disclosed but should consent not be given, an explanation can be given as to why the DSL must be told.



### **Record**

Record in detail the circumstances and timings of the disclosure including the nature and extent of any injuries, explanations given by the child (as much as possible in the child's own words) and the action taken (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings), within 24 hours of the disclosure. Record in writing the child's name, address and date of birth along with the child's behaviour and emotional state, who else was present at the time of the disclosure. Sign (with time and date) all notes made and give them to the DSL. When the child has finished speaking, do not leave the child alone. Call for immediate assistance from the DSL or deputy DSL or follow the procedures for allegations against staff, volunteers. The DSL (or other responsible person within the scope of this policy) will then deal with the matter. An entry on CPOMS must also be completed by the person who receives the allegation.



### **Do not take responsibility**

Only tell those people that it is necessary to inform.  
Do not try to investigate the allegation yourself - this is not our role or responsibility but that of statutory agencies (Children's Services and/or police)  
Immediately consult our Designated Safeguarding Lead so that any appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary.  
Do not approach or inform the alleged abuser.

## APPENDIX 3 Allegations against adults/school Staff /Volunteers

**Report immediately to the Head**  
Report any concern or allegation against the Head to the Chair of Governors,  
unless there is clear evidence to prove that the allegation is incorrect.



**If you become aware that a member of staff/volunteer may have:**  
Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to child or  
Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child



**Report the allegation within one working day to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) team:**  
The LADO team: **01992 555 420**



### **The LADO will:**

1. Consider the relevant facts and concerns regarding the adult and child or children, including any previous history
2. Decide on next course of action - usually straight away, sometimes after further consultation with other multi-agency parties such as the Police and HR.



If the allegation threshold is NOT met, the LADO will agree with you an appropriate response (E.g. for the agency to undertake further enquiries or undertake an internal investigation)



If the allegation threshold is met a strategy meeting will normally be held either by phone or in person. Normally a senior manager/ safeguarding lead, the LDO, HR, Police and social care are invited to attend. Relevant information is shared, risks to children are considered and appropriate action agreed - e.g. child protection and other enquiries, disciplinary measures or criminal proceedings. A record of the meeting will be made, and regular reviews will take place until a conclusion is reached.



## APPENDIX 4 Indicators of Neglect and Abuse



### Physical abuse

This is 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.

There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering the action or sanctions to be undertaken.

#### Child

Bruises – shape, grouping, site, repeat or multiple	Withdrawal from physical contact
Bite-marks – site and size Burns and Scalds – shape, definition, size, depth, scars	Aggression towards others, emotional and behaviour problems
Improbable, conflicting explanations for injuries or unexplained injuries	Frequently absent from School
Untreated injuries	Admission of punishment which appears excessive
Injuries on parts of body where accidental injury is unlikely	Fractures
Repeated or multiple injuries	<b>Fabricated or Induced Illness</b> – (FII)
<b>Parent</b>	<b>Family/environment</b>
Parent with injuries	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Evasive or aggressive towards child or others	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Explanation inconsistent with injury	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Over chastisement of child	

### Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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, though it may occur alone.

Child	
Self-harm	Over-reaction to mistakes / Inappropriate emotional responses
Chronic running away	Abnormal or indiscriminate attachment
Drug/solvent abuse	Low self-esteem
Compulsive stealing	Extremes of passivity or aggression
Makes a disclosure	Social isolation – withdrawn, a 'loner' Frozen watchfulness particularly pre school
Developmental delay	Depression
Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)	Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
Parent	Family/environment
Observed to be aggressive towards child or others	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Intensely involved with their children, never allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Previous domestic violence	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
History of abuse or mental health problems	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Mental health, drug or alcohol difficulties	Wider parenting difficulties
Cold and unresponsive to the child's emotional needs	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Overly critical of the child	Lack of support from family or social network.

### Neglect

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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 caregivers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child	
Failure to thrive - underweight, small stature	Low self-esteem
Dirty and unkempt condition	Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
Inadequately clothed	Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
Dry sparse hair	Abnormal voracious appetite at school or nursery
Untreated medical problems	Self-harming behaviour
Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold	Constant tiredness
Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury	Disturbed peer relationships
Parent	Family/environment
Failure to meet the child's basic essential needs including health needs	Marginalised or isolated by the community
Leaving a child alone	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Failure to provide adequate caretakers	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Keeping an unhygienic dangerous or hazardous home environment	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Unkempt presentation	Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn
Unable to meet child's emotional needs	Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
Mental health, alcohol or drug difficulties	

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Child	
Self-harm - eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts	Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
Running away from home	Inappropriate sexualised conduct
Reluctant to undress for PE	Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
Pregnancy	Sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn	Poor attention / concentration (world of their own)
Pain, bleeding, bruising or itching in genital and /or anal area	Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant
Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners	
Parent	Family/environment
History of sexual abuse	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Excessively interested in the child.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Parent displays inappropriate behaviour towards the child or other children	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Conviction for sexual offences	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Comments made by the parent/carer about the child.	Grooming behaviour
Lack of sexual boundaries	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.

## APPENDIX 5 You have a concern about a child. What should you do?

Where there are clear concerns about risk of harm to a child, you must make a referral to Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services on 0300 123 4043.

- Follow the *BPS Child Protection Policy* and consult the DSL/DDSL.
- The [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) contains details of the **local contacts** for the various services.
- Use the **Continuum of Need** document to help you assess the level of need for the child.
- If there is a clear safeguarding concern, make a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services: Contact details: 0300 123 4043  
Referral **Form**
- For cases where there is not an immediate child protection concern you may consider a Families First Assessment to enable a range of professionals to work together and decide how best to support the family's needs. Families First Portal - [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst)
- Call the Consultation Hub and ask for early help and advice to support a family through early help/Families First **01438 737511**

# APPENDIX 6 Low-Level Concern Regarding A Staff Member



## Low-Level Concern Regarding A Staff Member

Please use this form to share any concern relating to another member of staff. This should be used no matter how small, and even no more than a 'nagging doubt' that an action is not consistent with the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*.

Name of adult writing this concern:			
Role in School:			
Name of adult whom this concern is about:			
Date and time of concern:			
Date and time of recording/reporting:			
<b>Nature of concern:</b> <i>You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident. Please use a separate sheet if necessary. Consider any contextual information that may be appropriate to know.</i>			
Signature		Date:	
<b>Audit date:</b>		<b>Audit completed by:</b>	
Overall RAG rating	Red	Information is lacking and vague, needs to be addressed urgently	
	Amber	Key information is included but recording could be further improved	
	Green	The recording meets the required standards	
Action needed	Timescale	Name and position of person responsible	Date action completed

## APPENDIX 7 Low-Level Concern about Self (Self-Reporting)



### Low-Level Concern about Self (Self-Reporting)

Please use this form to self-report if you find yourself in a situation which might appear compromising to others, which could be misconstrued or if you have behaved in a manner, which on reflection, you consider falls below the standard set out in the *BPS Staff Behaviour Policy*.

Name of adult <b>self-reporting</b> :			
Role in School:			
Date and time of incident:			
Date and time of recording/reporting:			
<b>Nature of incident:</b> <i>You should provide a concise record – including brief context of the incident, and details which are chronological and as precise and accurate as possible – of any relevant incident(s). Please use a separate sheet if necessary. Consider any contextual information that may be appropriate to know.</i>			
Signature		Date:	
<b>Audit date:</b>		<b>Audit completed by:</b>	
Overall RAG rating	Red	Information is lacking and vague, needs to be addressed urgently	
	Amber	Key information is included but recording could be further improved	
	Green	The recording meets the required standards	
Action needed	Timescale	Name and position of person responsible	Date action completed