



Walkwood

Church of England  Middle School

Safeguarding Policy

Governing Body Committee responsible:	Full		
Approval granted:	25 September 2023	Review date:	Autumn Term 2024



“Show your wonderful love. Your mighty arm protects those who run to you for safety.”

Psalm 17: 7

“Father, I don’t ask you to take my followers out of the world, but keep them safe from the evil.”

John 17: 15

“Church of England Schools have at their heart a belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each pupil to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Schools have a duty to try to remove any factor that might represent a hindrance to a child’s fulfilment. We want all pupils to want to engage in learning in a safe and welcoming ethos.”

Valuing All God’s Children, Church of England, 2014

“The core purpose of any Church school is to maximise the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God.”

SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) 2012



Aim

Walkwood Church of England Middle School recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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



Introduction

Walkwood Church of England Middle School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support pupils in School. The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, health and well-being by creating an honest, open, caring and supportive environment. The pupils' welfare is of paramount importance.

This policy is consistent with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview and/or appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques.
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- Where a school or college has charitable status, Charity Commission guidance on charity and trustee duties to safeguard children is available at [Charity Commission Guidance](#).

Our designated safeguarding staff are aware of:

[West Midlands procedures](#)

[WCF levels of need guidance](#)

There are 5 main elements to this policy:

- Prevention (e.g. positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils, safer recruitment procedures).
- Protection (by following agreed procedures, ensuring that staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns).
- Support (to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused).
- Communication including working with all partners (to ensure appropriate information is shared and actions are taken).
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.



This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to the school. **Safeguarding and child protection are the responsibility of all staff.**

We will ensure that we will comply with our duties under all relevant legislation We will ensure this policy and our procedures are effective and comply with the law at all times, this includes training for all staff.

We will ensure that all our parents and working partners are aware of this policy by mentioning it in particular documents, displaying appropriate information within the school, and on the school's website (<https://www.walkwoodms.worcs.sch.uk/Policies>).

Ultimately, all our systems, processes and policies will operate with the best interests of the children and under the ethos of our school. Where there is a safeguarding concern, school leaders should consider the child's wishes and feelings when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

Raising concerns/complaints.

We respond robustly when concerns are raised or complaints made as we recognise that this promotes a safer environment and we seek to learn from complaints and comments. The school will act and seek to resolve the concerns in a timely way, keeping people informed as to progress wherever possible. The school's complaints procedures are available from the website (<https://www.walkwoodms.worcs.sch.uk/Policies>).

All our staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's confidential reporting (whistleblowing) policy. Whistleblowing concerns about the Principal should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

[NSPCC's whistleblowing advice line](#) dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by our school.

Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk

[NSPCC - When to call the police](#)

Human Rights Act

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information (including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found at [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)

Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)



Safeguarding Commitment

The school adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff encourage children and parents/carers to feel free to talk about any concerns and to see school as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.

Our school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty;
- include in the curriculum activities and opportunities (specifically, but not exclusively, through Spiritual and Social Education and ICT) which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse (including online) and to know where to get help;
- ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers and colleagues from other agencies;
- operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children including identity, right to work, enhanced DBS criminal record and barred list (and overseas where needed), references, and prohibition from teaching or managing in schools (s. 128);
- criminal history and suitability to work with children information should only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted;
- as part of the shortlisting process our school may consider conducting an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which our school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Support

Walkwood Church of England Middle School recognises that children may need support throughout their time at school to help them develop a sense of self worth and confidence and to be able to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing. We recognise that this may be attributed to numerous reasons and support is tailored specifically for their individual needs.

We also appreciate that some children experience adverse childhood experiences such as enduring abuse or witnessing violence. For such children school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components of their lives. Other children may be vulnerable because, for instance, they have a disability, are in care, or are experiencing some form of neglect.

Our school seeks to remove any barriers that may exist in being able to recognize abuse or neglect in pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disability. We will seek to provide such children with the necessary support and to build their self-esteem and confidence.



Roles and Responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes a responsibility to be alert to possible safeguarding concerns and to record and report concerns to staff identified with child protection responsibilities within the school (currently called Designated Safeguarding Leads). Staff should be aware that they may need to work with other services as needed and assist in making decisions about individual children.

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including Principals, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their decisions about individual children.

Every member of staff, including volunteers working with children at our school, is advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned and '*think beyond the obvious*'. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to act as outlined in this policy. They take account of the '*one chance rule*' in relation to honour violence-based issues, that an adult may have only one opportunity to save a potential victim.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

The names of the Designated Safeguarding Leads for the current year are listed on Appendix 1 of this document.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using our school's confidential reporting (whistleblowing) policy. If staff feel unable to raise a child protection failure within the internal reporting systems, they can contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#).

Governing Body

In accordance with the Statutory Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" September 2021 Walkwood Church of England Middle School's Governing Body will support school leaders to ensure the actions within the following paragraphs are in place.

- The safeguarding policy, along with associated procedures and training are in place and are always effective and comply with the law. The policy will be reviewed at least annually or more often, for example in the event of new guidance or a significant incident.
- We will ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our school are effective.



- Governors have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS. We carry out a section 128 check for school governor, because a person subject to one is disqualified from being a governor, doing so using the free Employer Secure Access sign-in portal via the Teaching Regulation Agency.
- We operate safer recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers. Furthermore, the Principal, nominated Governors and key staff involved in the recruitment process have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers/ people in a position of trust.
- There is a senior member of name school/college leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection (the “Designated Safeguarding Lead”) and there is always cover for this role through the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads, with appropriate arrangements for before/after school and out of term activities.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads shall undertake effective training (in addition to basic child protection training) and this is refreshed every two years. In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals using appropriate information sources which include The Key and emails from Worcestershire Children First.
- All other staff and volunteers who work with children undertake appropriate training which is regularly updated, and that new staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school’s arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities (including this policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021).
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in these arrangements brought to the attention of the Governing Body will be rectified without delay.
- The Chair of Governors or, in the absence of a Chair, the Vice Chair, deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Principal, with advice and guidance from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Effective policies and procedures are in place and updated annually including Code of Conduct” for staff and volunteers - [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who work with children in education settings October 2015”](#).
- Information is provided to the Worcestershire Children First (on behalf of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership) when requested, for example through the Annual Safeguarding Return (e.g. section 175 audit).
- Our school Governing body and school leaders ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. This as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.



- There is an individual member of the Governing Body who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school and liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Our school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2018 including providing a co-ordinated offer of Early Help for children who require this. Early Help may be offered directly through our school or via referral to an external support agency. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Our governing body are aware that among other obligations, the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and the United Kingdom’s General Data Protection Regulation place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information we hold safe and secure.
- Our school complies with all legislative safeguarding duties, including the duty to report suspected or known cases of FGM and the duty to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism. School leaders shall consider and assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk.

Principal

The Principal of the school will ensure that:

- the safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are effectively implemented, and followed by all staff;
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
- allegations of abuse or concerns that a member of staff or adult working at school may pose a risk of harm to a child or young person are notified to the Local Authority Designated Officer in a timely manner;
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner. The NSPCC whistle blowing helpline number is also available (0800 028 0285);
- all staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility to pass on safeguarding concerns and that if all else fails to report these directly to Children’s Social Care (Children’s Services) or the Police.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Walkwood has an appropriate senior member of staff as the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This person holds the prime responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) and this role is explicit in their job description.

We also have Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads who have been trained the same. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained alternates, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with our Designated Safeguarding Lead. This responsibility will not be delegated. Our Designated



Safeguarding Lead and Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads have undertaken training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. Their knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals using appropriate information sources which include The Key and emails from Worcestershire Children First.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads will liaise with the safeguarding partners, and work with other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) to understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

During term time, Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads during school hours for staff in our school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Cover will be arranged for non-term-time and during school trips.

Multi-agency working

In our school we have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Our Governing Body will ensure that we will contribute to multi-agency working in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

In our school, key pastoral and senior staff understand our local safeguarding arrangements and work with partners from Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. The Worcestershire Children First Head Teacher Safeguarding Steering Group is represented by all phases of education are part of our WSCP and make all schools/colleges aware and follow the local arrangements for local protocol and assessment policies and procedures. We are also prepared to supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners.
[Worcestershire Children First \(worcschildrenfirst.org.uk\)](http://worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

Our school works with Worcestershire Children First social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

In our school we allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a Section 17 or a Section 47 assessment.

As with any safeguarding allegation, colleagues from other agencies, service providers or volunteers must follow our school's policy and procedures.

What School and College Staff Need to Know

All staff are aware of systems within our school which support safeguarding, and these should be shared with them as part of staff induction.



All our staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role and this training is regularly updated.

Our staff working with children will be aware of how to report a concern, doing so using Edukey.

Appropriate staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

Our staff working with children know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or an alternate) and children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. Such staff are able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

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

What school/college staff will do if they have concerns about a child

Our staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

All concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay using the Edukey reporting software package. This software package is installed on every desk top computer. Where this is not possible, all concerns should be reported via the paper copies of Appendix 2 (available at reception for all visitors to our school) and given directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider what action to take and have appropriate discussions with parents/carers prior to referral to children's social care or another agency unless, to do so would place the child at risk of harm or compromise an investigation.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or an Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.



Early Help

Any child may benefit from early help. Pastoral staff are experienced and appropriately trained to early identify the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child; and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

The Early Help Offer accessible on our school website. As part of our early offer, we support children and young people by completing an early help assessment.

Abuse and neglect

Our staff working with children are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect. As part of our safeguarding training, such staff know what signs to look for to identify early signs of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation to safeguard children who may be in need of help or protection. If staff are unsure, they always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or an Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Our staff working with children are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

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.

Our staff working with children have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and sharing nudes and semi-nudes' images and or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Online Safety

Walkwood Church of England Middle School ensures that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an effective whole school approach to online safety which empowers us to protect and educate pupils and our staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes';
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images(e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. (Report may be made to [APWG | Unifying The Global Response To Cybercrime](#)).

We ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing practices to mitigate risk. These factors also apply in the use of remote learning.

The Governing Body should ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing their whole school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead (and alternates) and any parental engagement.

At our school, pupils must hand in mobile devices at the start of the school day, and these are returned at a day's end. This is because we understand that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school, could sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via



large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. By forbidding the use of such technology in school, these risks are significantly reduced.

Filters and monitoring

The use of these programs is reasonable and needed to ensure the limit of children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. Our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. We should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. We also consider the age range of their children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

In our school, children are taught about safeguarding matters (acknowledging that they may not be able to label the term directly), including online safety. We recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

As part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum, there is particular emphasis within Spiritual & Social Education, including through Relationships Education (for Year 5 and 6 pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for Years 7 and 8 pupils) and Health Education.

Safeguarding in the Curriculum

The curriculum allows flexibility dependant on the pupil's year group. At Walkwood, we reflect current school issues within our delivery of lessons around current matters.

The following areas are among those addressed in Spiritual and Social Education and in the wider curriculum:

- Bullying/Cyber Bullying
- Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Online Safety / Mobile technologies
- Stranger Danger
- Fire and Water Safety
- Peer on Peer Abuse
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Road Safety
- Domestic Abuse
- Healthy Relationships / Consent
- Honour Based Violence issues (HBV) e.g. Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation
- Sexual Exploitation of Children
- County Lines
- Extremism and Radicalisation (in line with the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Main_tained_Schools.pdf).



Information Sharing

We recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies, and this is also recognised within our school's Privacy Statements.

We have ensured arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within our school/college and with Worcestershire Children First children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

Our staff are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

Our school is aware of the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK's General Data Protection Regulation place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

This includes:

- the processing conditions which allow us to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and is treated as 'special category personal data', are appropriate and comply with the Act;
- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk;
- for schools, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. Where in doubt, we may seek independent legal advice.

Our school recognises that the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK's General Data Protection Regulation 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.

When children transfer from our school, the safeguarding records are also. Safeguarding records will be transferred separately from other records and best practice is to pass these directly to a Designated Safeguarding Lead in the receiving education setting, with any necessary discussion or explanation and to obtain a signed and dated record of the transfer. In the event of a child moving out of area and a physical handover not being possible then the most secure method should be found to send the confidential records to a named Designated Safeguarding Lead. Files requested by other agencies e.g. Police, will be copied.

Records, Monitoring and Transfer

Staff who work with pupils are clear about the need to record and report concerns about a child or children within the school. Such staff know to include the child's words as far as possible and should be timed, dated and signed, otherwise they are reported on Edukey.



The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect are stored apart from normal pupil or staff records.

Where children leave Walkwood, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college 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 to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead will ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained, this will be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

The receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.

Child protection records are stored securely, with access confined to specific staff, and are reviewed regularly to check whether any action or updating is needed. This includes monitoring patterns of complaints or concerns about any individuals and ensuring these are acted upon. Edukey allows a chronology of significant events.

A record of any proven allegations made against staff is kept in a confidential.

Procedures for Managing Concerns

Our school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Safeguarding Worcestershire <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/>. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the West Mercia Consortium inter-agency procedures and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership Levels of Need guidance.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads are the first points of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads. In the absence of any of these, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider what action to take and have appropriate discussions with parents/carers prior to referral to children's social care or another agency unless, to do so would place the child at risk of harm or compromise an investigation.

All referrals will be made in line with local procedures as detailed on the Worcestershire Children First Website.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral shall be made to Children's Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not



appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal.

Staff follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Principal are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Principal. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point they should contact Children's Services directly with their concerns.

Concerns and or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should:

- encourage an open and transparent culture;
- enable schools and colleges to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early;
- minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

What is a low-level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils.

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

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

Low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.



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

Both child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Some specific forms of child criminal exploitation can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

Child sexual exploitation can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

Child sexual exploitation can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.



Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances), and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important we support where and when appropriate, doing so promptly after information of concern has been received.

Children Absent from Education

Our school has a clear Attendance Policy that outlines the procedures that are enacted to support pupils in their return to school as well as to challenge non-attendance.

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. Our school's response to persistently absent pupils shall help to prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

Pupils who are absent for extended periods are likely to be reported to social care as part of the process to avoid the following situation arising.

Children Missing Education

Children missing education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation. It is important our school's response to children missing from education supports identifying such abuse and also helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Children at risk of missing education are children of compulsory school age who are:

- not on a school roll;
- not being educated other than at school;
- identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (4 weeks).

Children miss education for a number of reasons including:



- they don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system;
- they are removed by their parents;
- behaviour and/or attendance difficulties;
- they cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying;
- they fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area;
- the family move home regularly;
- problems at home.

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full time education.

We shall consult appropriate information:

[Worcestershire children first children missing from education guidance.](#)

[Statutory guidance children missing in education](#)

Elective Home Educated

We expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, we know this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended, we must inform Worcestershire Children First of all deletions from our admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

County Lines

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

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations and are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.



One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Should we identify a child who may be at risk of exploitation, the Designate Safeguarding Lead or an assigned individual staff member will work with and support and consider completion of a GET SAFE risk assessment. This will be referred to Worcestershire Children First Get Safe team for further assessment and support. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or an assigned individual staff member will also consider referral to Worcestershire Children First family front door as part of our school's and local safeguarding procedures. More information can be found : [Get Safe - keeping children and young people safe from criminal exploitation.](#)

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 sex or sexuality.*

The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

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

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence 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.

Where we identify a victim of domestic abuse being high risk, we will consider a referral to the multi-agency risk assessment conference. The purpose this is to share information and establish a multi-agency action plan to support the victim and to make links with other public protection procedures, particularly safeguarding children, vulnerable adults and the management of offenders. We will continue to provide help and support in order to safeguard children. This will usually be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. a referral to the multi-agency risk assessment conference does not replace a referral to children social care.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is to highlight that a Domestic Abuse Incident has taken place and the police have been called. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help



to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform Worcestershire Children First, who then inform the school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is so we have up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads may refer to, or make contact with, the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

'Honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse includes 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. We are aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of honour-based abuse or who has suffered from the same, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or an Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead. As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

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 regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may 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 female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.



Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#)

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

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Pastoral staff at our school understand we could potentially play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

Preventing Radicalisation

We know children are susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, and as part of our whole safeguarding approach we acknowledge the following definitions.

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

As defined in the [Government's Counter Extremism Strategy](#).

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

As defined in the [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales](#).

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

As defined in the [Terrorism Act 2000](#).



There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability.

Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff who work with pupils are alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Such staff use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, reporting such concerns using Edukey.

The Prevent Duty

As all schools/colleges we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (para 110). This is known as the Prevent Duty.

The Prevent duty is part of our school/college' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders are familiar with the [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#).

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from our school may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages - will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

The designated safeguarding lead (or an alternate) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.

- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

Educate Against Hate, is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

Relationships and Sex Education

This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education (for Years 5 and 6 pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for Years 7 and 8 pupils) and Health Education which was made compulsory from September 2020.

There is a specific policy that covers this aspect of the school's work.

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

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

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

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

Child protection

There is a specific policy that covers aspects of child protection that are part of the school's pastoral work. These include:

- bullying;
- peer-on-peer child-on-child abuse;
- sexual harassment;
- protecting Children within IT systems
- provision for children with additional vulnerabilities.

Managing Professional Disagreements

On occasions there will be disagreements between professionals as to how concerns are handled, and these can impact on effective working relationships. The school will support staff to promote



positive partnerships within school and with other agencies and will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns and disagreements if appropriate and use the WSCP escalation procedures if necessary.

The Use of 'reasonable force' in Schools

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

Private fostering - LA notification when identified

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of school/college staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

We will then notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases, so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Services as soon as possible. If we become aware of a privately fostering arrangement, we will check that Children's Services have been informed.

Children Looked After and Previously Children Looked After

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse and/or neglect.



We ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. We also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and other key pastoral staff of the child will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Statutory Children's Social Care Assessments and Services

Concerns about a child's welfare should be referred to Worcestershire Children First social care. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, our school will make a referral to social care and, if appropriate, the police are contacted immediately.

Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, and our school shall provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here : [Contextualised Safeguarding](#)

Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children: examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- poor record keeping;
- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies;
- sharing information too slowly;
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

Mental Health

Staff who work with pupils are 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. Trained staff 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.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how childhood experiences can impact on mental health, behaviour and education.

Our school may have access to a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.



Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Sometimes children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead may hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This will be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Findings from the Children in Need review, 'Improving the educational outcomes of Children in Need of help and protection' contains further information; the conclusion of the review, 'Help, protection, education' sets out action Government is taking to support this.

What school and college staff look out for

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

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of honour-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education.

Use of School Premises for Non-School Activities

Walkwood Church of England Middle School will ensure that when we hire out our school premises or facilities to organisations or individuals we will endeavour to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.



When services or activities are provided by our school under the direct supervision or management of our school the arrangements for child protection will apply.

Where an external body is providing community or extra-curricular activities, our school shall seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, and ensure that there are arrangements to liaise with our school on these matters where appropriate.

Alternative Provision

Walkwood Church of England Middle School is aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to.

The Department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- [Alternative provision](#) - DfE Statutory Guidance
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff

There is a specific policy that covers this area.



Appendix 1: Key Personnel

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Jo Power
Safeguarding Governor:	Mrs Jo Power
Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mr S West
Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads:	Mrs G Mckenna Mrs L Laszcz Mr A Hewitt Rev C Leach
Prevent Lead:	Mr S West
Child Sexual Exploitation Lead:	Mrs G Mckenna

Family Front Door: **01905 822666** (core working hours)
Out of hours or at weekends: **01905 768020**

To submit an online Cause for Concern notification log onto:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20559/refer_to_childrens_social_care/1658/are_you_a_professional_and_worried_about_child



Appendix 2: Visitor's report form

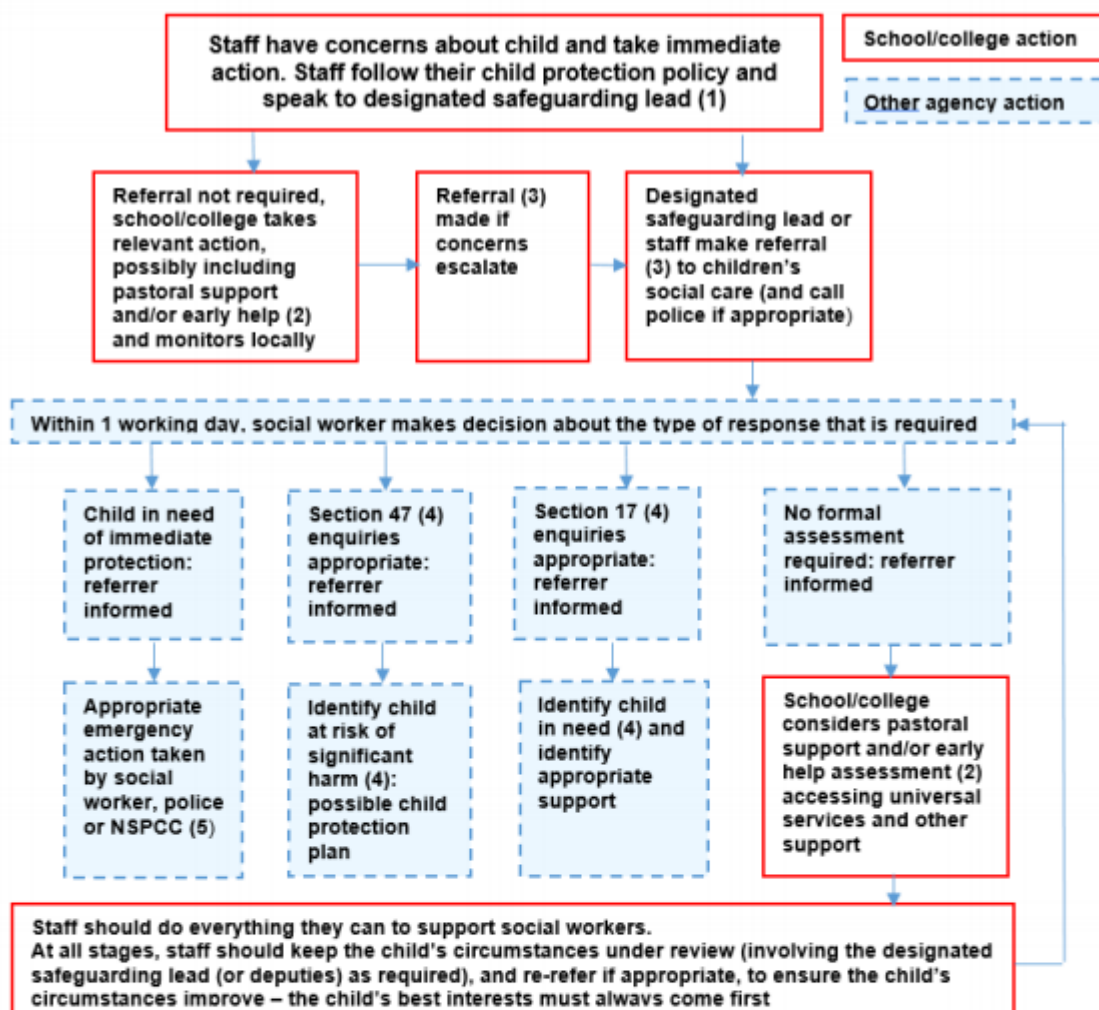
Concern about a Child's Safety and Welfare

Pupil's name:	d.o.b.	Year group:
Date:	Time:	
Name of visitor (<i>please print</i>):	Signature:	
Organisation:	Position:	
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.		
Details of concern/incident - record the who / what / where / when / how factually (use reverse or if necessary):		
Any other relevant information (<i>witnesses, immediate action taken</i>)		
Check to make sure your report is clear now - and will also be clear to our staff member reading it next		
Action taken	Staff signature:	
	Date:	
Designated Safeguarding Lead – Response/Outcome	Staff signature:	
	Date:	



Appendix 3: Actions where there are concerns about a child

Actions where there are concerns about a child



- (1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance.
- (2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
- (3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- (4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- (5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).



Appendix 4: Safeguarding poster for pupils

Pastoral and safeguarding personnel

All Walkwood staff have responsibility for Safeguarding: Vertical Tutors, Pastoral Managers, middle and senior leaders, Teaching Assistants, and all support staff.

“Show your wonderful love. Your mighty arm protects those who run to you for safety.”

Psalm 17: 7

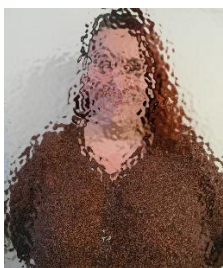


We have trained members of staff who safeguard our children:



Mr S West

Designated Safeguarding Lead



Mrs G Mckenna

Alternate Safeguarding Lead



Mrs L Laszcz

Alternate Safeguarding Lead



Mr A Hewitt

Alternate Safeguarding Lead



Appendix 5: Safeguarding reminder poster for staff

Pastoral and safeguarding personnel

All Walkwood staff have responsibility for Safeguarding: Vertical Tutors, Pastoral Managers, middle and senior leaders, Teaching Assistants, and all support staff.

“Show your wonderful love. Your mighty arm protects those who run to you for safety.”

Psalm 17: 7



- **Vertical Tutors** are first-line for pastoral matters, and accurately mark the register in the morning and afternoon. They demonstrate the Fruits of Faith by word and action.
- **Subject teachers** mark the register each lesson and ensure all pupils who are marked present are there. The Superhero skills keep learning safe and provide challenge. Teachers demonstrate the Fruits of Faith by word and action.
- **Teaching Assistants** support pupils in learning, and assist in promoting the learning skills and Fruits of Faith.
- **Simon West** – **Designated Safeguarding Lead, Co-ordinator of Looked After Children provision.**
- **Gemma McKenna, Laura Laszcz, Ash Hewitt** and **Clive Leach** as **Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads.**
- **Rich Macdonald, Paul Cockram, Chris Hunt** and **Katie Reeves** as **College Leaders** – lead on everyday care and support of pupils in the Colleges, including the Looked After Children.
- **Dani Timmins** is **SENDCo.**
- **Deb Brotherhood, Sami Ellis, Luke Fletcher, Mel Russell** and **Helen Hands** as **Pastoral Managers.**
- **Sophie McKeon** as the main **First Aider.**
- **Ash Hewitt, Harry Sharpe** and **Jason Laming** ensure that the school site is safe.
- **Safeguarding Governor** is **Jo Power.**

