Child Protection Policy

Fairways Primary School

Date policy ratified by governing body: 21st September 2026

Date of policy publication on the school's website: 28th September 2026

Safeguarding Contact Information

Key Safeguarding Contacts (school, college, trust)

Safeguarding Role	Name and Role	School/Education setting contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Jacqui Phillips	headteacher@fairways.southend.sch.uk
Senior Leader(s) nominated for contact in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Gareth Turner Samantha Imber	gturner@fairways.southend.sch.uk simber@fairways.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Gareth Turner Samantha Imber Debbie Bose	As above
Other staff with safeguarding responsibilities		
Attendance Lead/Education Welfare Officer	Jane Phillips	Janephillips@fairways.soutend.sch.uk
Special Educational Need Coordinator (SENCo)	Samantha Imber	As above
Designated Teacher for Looked After/Previously Looked After Children	Jacqui Phillips	As above
Senior Lead(s) for Mental Health and Well-being	Samantha Imber	
Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHE)/Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Lead	Thomas Davies	tdavies@fairways.southend.sch.uk
Senior Leadership Digital Lead	Gareth Turner	As above

Safeguarding Role	Name and Role	School/Education setting contact details
Designated Safeguarding Governor/Trustee	Marcia Carr	mcarr@fairways.southend.sch.uk
Governor/Trustee for Mental Health and Well-being	Marcia Carr	As above
Data Protection Officer	Keeley Hutchinson-Kupe	business@fairways.southend.sch.uk
Safeguarding training providers (including PREVENT)	The Key	

Key Safeguarding Local Authority Contacts

Referrals to Children's Social Care in the Local Authority	Where schools have concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person, a referral should be made through the Southend Children's Services Portal **Out of Hours:** 0345 606 1212
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Where school have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a child, they should contact the local authority duty officer (LADO): Email: LADO@southend.gov.uk Tel: 01702 534539
Essex Police	• 999 for emergencies or 101 for non-emergencies • Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) via 101 • Also see *When to call the police – guidance for schools and colleges*
Education (Performance, Partnerships & Safeguarding)	Email: Servicesforschools@southend.gov.uk Education Safeguarding is led by the Head of Service for Education Performance, Partnership & Safeguarding.
Children Missing from Education	Email: me@southend.gov.uk
Southend Virtual School	Email: Southend Virtual School
School Nursing Team	Email: schoolnursing@southend.gov.uk Tel: 01702 534843
Early Years and Childcare Improvement Team	Email: EarlyYears@southend.gov.uk

Key Safeguarding National Contacts

Organisation	Description and contact details
NSPCC helpline for adults	Helping adults protect children 24 hours a day. For help and support, including anyone needing advice about female genital mutilation, children and young people affected by gangs, concerns that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, contact the NSPCC trained helpline counsellors on: • Text 88858 • Tel: 0808 800 5000

Organisation	Description and contact details
	• Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Helpline Report Abuse in Education	Bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals who need support and guidance including for non-recent abuse: • Tel: 0800 136 663 • Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice	Free advice and support for professionals concerned about how Child Protection issues are being handled in their organisation: • Tel: 0800 028 0285 • Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
UK Safer Internet Centre professional advice line	Helpline for professionals working with children and young people in the UK with any online safety issues they may face themselves or with children in their care: • Tel: 0844 381 4772 • Email: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
Police Anti-Terrorist Hot Line number	Tel: 0800 789 321
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	Hosted by Refuge, Helpline Tel: 0808 2000247
Prevent Duty	Police Anti-Terrorist Hot Line Tel: 0800 789 321 Government advice and trusted resources to help safeguard students from radicalisation, build resilience to all types of extremism and to promote our shared values. Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism Guidance on how to make a Prevent referral: Making a referral to Prevent - GOV.UK
Operation Encompass	Information, resources and e-Learning for schools Home : Operation Encompass
Report harmful online content	• UK Safer Internet Centre – report online harm. A national reporting centre that has been designed to assist anyone in reporting harmful content online • CEOP – to report online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating online • Report online material promoting terrorism or extremism
Report Abuse in Education helpline	• Young people who have experienced abuse at school and parents and teachers who are concerned about sexual abuse in education settings can call the Report Abuse in Education helpline on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk
Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Services	• Stop it now! For worries about a child's sexual behaviour, 0808 1000 900. Includes Shore which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support. The aim is to prevent harmful sexual behaviours among young people.
Safer Recruitment	Guidance can be found in KCSIE, but further advice on Safer Recruitment for schools and colleges using recruitment and supply agencies can be found within the Better Hiring Institute's Education Supply Chains 'A Better Hiring Toolkit' advice: Better Hiring Toolkit for Education Supply Chains.pdf.

Organisation	Description and contact details
Children missing in Education	Statutory guidance for schools and local authorities, including policy checklist: Children missing education - GOV.UK

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Statutory Context

1.1.1 This Child Protection policy enables *Fairways Primary School* to carry out its functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in line with key statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- Department for Education's statutory guidance publications for schools and local authorities, including:
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (2018)
- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (2025)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Safeguarding Reforms 2025 - Foundation Years
- Human Rights Act (1998) and Equality Act (2010), including the Public Sector Equality Duty Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities - GOV.UK
- Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR
- Prevent Duty Guidance (2023) and The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation (2023)
- Southend, Essex & Thurrock Safeguarding and Children Protection Procedures

1.1.2 Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is defined in this guidance as the activity undertaken to protect children who are suspected of suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

1.1.3 As defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children 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 the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- 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 achieve the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

3.5 Schools are not required to have separate policies to cover EYFS requirements, provided these requirements are already met through existing policies and procedures.

Schools must, however, ensure that their safeguarding and welfare arrangements clearly demonstrate how all EYFS requirements are met, including those relating to, but not limited to:

- *Staff qualifications, training and support (including Annex C compliance)*

- *Supervision of staff*
- *Staff taking medication or other substances*
- *Smoking and vaping*
- *Managing behaviour*
- *Staff: child ratios*
- *Paediatric first aid (Annex A compliance)*
- *Safer eating*
- *Sleeping arrangements*
- *Toilets and intimate hygiene*
- *Child absence*
- *Use of mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities.*

Schools should review these areas regularly as part of their safeguarding and welfare audit cycle to ensure that EYFS statutory requirements remain fully met within whole-school safeguarding practice. Schools are encouraged to contact the Early Years and Childcare Improvement Team for clarification, guidance, or support as needed.

1.2 School Context: Child Protection Policy Statement

1.2.1 Fairways Primary School maintains an attitude of *"it could happen here" and a whole school/setting approach to this*. We recognise that everyone in the setting has a role to play to keep children safe.

1.2.2 The School is committed to maintaining a strong safeguarding culture in which children feel safe, listened to and respected, concerns are taken seriously, staff demonstrate professional curiosity and safeguarding is regarded as everyone's responsibility.

1.2.3The best interests of the child are at the heart of our work to identify and act swiftly on concerns, share information, and ensure that children feel listened to, are taken seriously, and are safe. We will:

- ensure that all children are safeguarded while on or off school premises
- be proactive about anticipating and managing risks that children face in the wider community and online.
- have a Prevent action plan/risk assessment (this is compliant with Prevent guidance). Resources, including Risk Assessment templates, which can be found here: Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism and Risk assessment templates for early years, schools and further education - Educate Against Hate.
- be part of Operation Encompass - a statutory obligation on police forces to share Operation Encompass notifications with schools.
- implement any local or national learning where appropriate, e.g. learning from case reviews or audits.
- ensure that all relevant policies are updated to reflect 'lessons learnt' and consideration given to the wider cultural issues within the school/education setting.
- recognise the vital role we play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements working, as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).
- understand our role within local safeguarding arrangements and operate in accordance with the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Safeguarding and Children Protection Procedures, including the local Threshold document.

1.3 Responsibilities of ALL adults in the school/setting

1.3.1 ALL adults in the school have a duty to keep children safe by**:**

- providing safe environments, with secure access, where children can learn and develop
- acting in the best interests of children to protect them on and offline
- identifying children who are at risk of harm or have been harmed, or need additional help to keep safe
- taking swift, timely and appropriate action to safeguard children who need extra help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer harm
- adhering to safe recruitment processes to make sure all adults in the school have the appropriate vetting checks in place
- clearly following managing allegations processes to address any concerns (including low-level concerns) about an adult's behaviour towards a child
- understanding the broader aspects of safeguarding in the context of care and education, such as behaviour, Special Educational Needs, attendance and educational visits.

1.3.2 The School recognises the strong link between attendance, safeguarding, wellbeing and educational outcomes and will take prompt action where attendance patterns, persistent absence or disengagement indicate possible safeguarding concerns.

1.3.3 All adults in this school follow the SET Procedures, including the suite of safeguarding policies, information, and guidance to support safeguarding for all Southend-on-Sea Schools, as listed below:

- Allegations against staff, volunteers and people in positions of trust who work with children (SET Procedures Part A, Section 7)
- Sharing Information (SET Procedures Part B, Section 3)
- Safer Recruitment (SET Procedures Part B, Section 12)
- Children Missing from Care, Home and Education (SET Procedures Part B, Section 20)
- Children Missing Education Guidance (to further support the SET Procedures chapter) The school will submit referrals made using Children Missing Referral Form
- Code of Conduct for staff
- Code of Conduct for governors in LA maintained schools
- Academy Trust Governance Code
- Attendance Policy
- Discipline and Dismissal at Work policy
- Disciplinary procedure (to support Dismissal at Work policy)
- Dismissals procedures (to support Dismissal at Work policy)
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour policy
- *"When the Adults Change", Paul Dix, is Southend-on-Sea's training provider in Relational Practice. Relational Practice training is provided to all Southend schools, parents and carers and professionals across Children's Services. Further information on Relational Practice approaches https://www.whentheadultschange.com*
- Letter of Assurance for visiting council staff (from the respective Head of Service)
    - Education Performance, Partnerships & Safeguarding Team
    - Specialist Support Services
    - SEND, Access & Inclusion Team
    - Early Years Services

Section 2: What is abuse?

2.1 Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child which may be caused by an adult, adults or by another child or children inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. The harm can involve:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- exploitation

2.2 Children can be at risk of abuse inside and outside of their home, in their community, inside and outside the school/education setting and online.

2.3 Safeguarding issues can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplained and/or persistent absences or going missing from education, serious violence (including county lines), radicalisation, consensual/non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images can be signs that children are at risk. Abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events; in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

2.4 Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children from a range of risks. Further information on indicators of abuse and neglect, as well as the safeguarding risks noted above, is available in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026). These include the following risks and include abuse perpetrated by other children, as well as by adults:

- any concerns that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect (or Acts of Omission)
- child on child abuse, absence from school
- bullying, including cyber/online bullying and prejudice-based bullying, anti-social behaviour, hate crime, discriminatory, racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls, including misogynistic practices
- harmful sexual behaviours
- sexual harassment, online sexual abuse, and sexual violence between children. Including abusive messaging, upskirting and sharing of sexual imagery
- child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, including county lines, modern slavery
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour or behaviours covered by PREVENT duties
- risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example youth produced sexual imagery
- misuse of artificial intelligence tools, including the creation, sharing or possession of AI-generated content, manipulated images, synthetic media or "deepfake" material which may place children at risk of harm, exploitation, bullying, harassment, abuse or reputational harm

- Online harm may include the creation, sharing or use of manipulated images, impersonation technologies, deepfake content, AI-generated sexual imagery, cyber-enabled abuse, online coercion and harmful online influence.
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship' abuse)
- substance misuse – drugs and/or alcohol
- gang activity and serious violence, particularly affecting young males who have been excluded, have experienced trauma and have been involved in offending
- domestic abuse
- faith or culture linked abusive practice such as forced marriage, marriage/civil partnership under the age of 18, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour-based' abuse or adultification.
- children with Perplexing Presentations (PP) in whom illness is fabricated or induced (FII)
- homelessness

2.5 This list correlates with the key priorities outlined in The Southend Safeguarding Children Partnership Strategy 2024/2027 that can be found here: Southend Safeguarding Children Partnership – One Page Strategy Summary 2024-27 | Safeguarding Southend Partnership. Further information about abuse and support as collated by the Southend Safeguarding Partnership can be found here: *Information for Children | Safeguarding Southend Partnership*.

2.6 For the purposes of this policy, we use the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator' as this is in line with KCSIE 2026 As a *school* we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. *Ultimately, school should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the child is most comfortable. Schools and colleges should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.* The use of appropriate terminology will be determined, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis and the sensitivity required for each situation.

Section 3: Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

3.1 All staff, governors and trustees will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to keep children safe, as set out in KCSIE (2025), by receiving:

- safeguarding training at induction
- safeguarding training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities and which is regularly updated (including training to level 3 and local requirements for the Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- safeguarding training which will include awareness of emerging safeguarding risks including online harms, generative artificial intelligence, synthetic or deepfake content, cyber-enabled abuse, exploitation and technology-assisted abuse
- online safety knowledge and for children to be taught about safeguarding, including in relation to keeping themselves safe online and digital literacy.
- attendance information, with dedicated attendance training for any staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral, or family support staff, and senior leaders

- data protection information (including recording protocols) and cyber security, relevant to the roles staff undertake
- training for those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children including Safer Recruitment
- support and training for those involved with Managing Allegations against staff.

3.2 All staff and governors/trustees know and understand their responsibilities and have knowledge of the policies which are part of the suite of safeguarding policies and related procedures (referenced previously in this policy), as well as the safeguarding response to child-on-child abuse, roles and names of the key staff for safeguarding (Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputy/ies, the designated teacher for looked after children and the senior mental health lead etc).

3.3 Staff and governors/trustees receive a paper/electronic copy and read/'sign to say that they have received, read, and understood the following:

- those who work directly with children at least Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education: for school and college staff and Annex B: Further information (2025)
- school/education setting leaders, including governors, trustees, proprietors and Designated Safeguarding Leads/their deputy all of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- staff who do not work with children directly at least Keeping Children Safe in Education: for school and college staff (part 1) (2025) or Annex A Safeguarding information for school and education setting staff (a condensed version of part 1)
- Code of Conduct policy for staff
- Code of Conduct policy for governors/trustees

3.4 All staff receive regular safeguarding and Child Protection updates, including online safety (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, which should be recorded and monitored by a Senior member of staff to ensure all training is up to date.

3.5 Staff build by their expertise by completing safeguarding training and through managing safeguarding concerns daily and seeking information from safeguarding professionals when appropriate to do so. Staff contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy.

3.6 Staff induction

Staff, governors and trustees will have induction appropriate to their roles in line with any advice from local safeguarding partners. New staff will also receive information about systems within the school which support safeguarding, including online safety and copies of policies. All staff undergo safeguarding and Child Protection training, including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction.

Section 4: School/setting accountability responsibilities

4.1 Filtering and Monitoring

4.1.1 The School will ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children when accessing the internet and digital technologies. The Governing Body will receive assurance that filtering and monitoring arrangements remain effective, proportionate and appropriate to the age range, needs and risks of pupils

4.2 Governance

4.2.2 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) part 2 'The Management of Safeguarding' the governing body or trustees exercise strategic leadership oversight of all aspects of safeguarding in the school, in line with statutory requirements. Safeguarding is a standing item at all governing body/trustee meetings and recorded in the minutes. To support this a safeguarding audit is undertaken every two years to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and processes.

4.2.3 The Governor/trust board member who takes leadership responsibility for the establishment to follow local arrangements is Marcia Carr

4.3 The Governing Body or Trustee Responsibilities

They will ensure:

- compliance to the Equality Act (2010) and the Human Rights Act (1998).
- that the school adheres to the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- appropriate policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare in line with Section 157/175 of the Education Act.
- an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school leadership team, is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- a clear job description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead is in place which clearly sets out their lead responsibility for safeguarding and Child Protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems processes.
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the significant level of responsibility and duties of the post.
- allocate sufficient time, funding, training, resources, and support to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to empower them to carry out the role effectively.
- additional deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) are appointed as required.
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead including any deputies are trained to undertake their role as set out in local requirements those involved in safeguarding work understand and apply the Threshold document, and the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Safeguarding and Children Protection Procedures. They follow the local information sharing protocols to supply information, as requested by the Southend Safeguarding Children Partnership, so that partners can perform their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, including information related to local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.
- staff and governors/trustees have the right to safeguarding training, allowing them to undertake their roles effectively. This includes recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse, mental health concerns, risks associated with non-school attendance, any additional safeguarding barriers for children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or specific medical or health conditions, protected characteristics and the use of 'reasonable force'.
- The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers to recognising abuse, reporting concerns and

accessing support and may therefore require increased vigilance, targeted support and reasonable adjustments
- children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.
- procedures for Safer Recruitment are robust, including the hire of any school premises or facilities and the use of any alternative provision provider.
- rigorous procedures are in place to report and manage any allegation raised about an adult's behaviour towards a child.
- the School will maintain procedures for reporting, recording, reviewing and responding to low-level concerns regarding adults working with children and will ensure that concerns are addressed consistently and in accordance with the School's Code of Conduct and Managing Allegations procedures
- That *the headteacher* as designated teacher, works with Local Authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after.
- the school works effectively with the Local Authority in line with the DfE guidance on Elective Home Education.

safeguarding policies, staff Codes of Conduct, Managing Allegations procedures, Whistleblowing arrangements and Discipline and Dismissal policies are reviewed regularly and remain consistent with one another

4.4 Headteacher Responsibilities

The Headteacher adheres to the Headteacher Standards (2020) to ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care. The Headteacher ensures that the policies and procedures adopted by their governing body/trust board are understood and followed by all staff. This includes working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputy, and other senior leaders to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding within the school and to promote the educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker. The Headteacher also ensures that sufficient information is provided to the governance board to enable them to undertake their safeguarding role effectively.

4.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Lead(s) Responsibilities

*Training***:** The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills required to carry out their duties of their role. This includes how to identify, understand, and respond to specific needs that can increase children's vulnerability, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk. In addition, the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care at the Local Authority. This training is updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy also undertake Prevent awareness training. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are at times delegated to a trained deputy, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This lead responsibility is not delegated.

*Availability***:** The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy is available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

*Responsibilities***:** The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). These are specifically outlined in KCSIE (2025), and primarily include:

- providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters
- responding to and act on any concerns or disclosures in a timely manner, triaging these against the Local Authority thresholds using all of the available information and refer or seek advice as necessary
- ensuring child protection records are appropriately maintained and updated, including detail about decision making and further actions or outcomes and the threshold level reached in line with local procedures
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and contributing to the assessment of children and being a key point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- informing the Headteacher of issues, including ongoing section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- being the lead contact when working with the school's leadership team 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 by:
    - ensuring senior leaders know and have oversight 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
    - 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.

4.6 Teachers Responsibilities

4.6.1 Teachers adhere to the Teachers' Standards (2021) to manage behaviour effectively and ensure a good and safe educational environment; this requires teachers to have a clear understanding about the needs of all pupils.

4.6.2 This includes:

- knowing, understanding and following school/setting's safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.
- all staff are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times, including when communicating electronically, using social media, engaging in online activity or where conduct outside the workplace could affect the safety and welfare of children, professional suitability or the reputation of the School
- supporting educational outcomes of pupils subject to safeguarding concerns to be met and following advice when this is provided, such as reasonable adjustments, implementing actions in a statutory safeguarding plan.

4.7 Visitors including Contractors Responsibilities

Visitors, including contractors, will read the school/setting's safeguarding procedure information (provided upon signing in at the office) so that they can follow protocol. Expectations will be referenced in any lease/letting agreement.

Section 5: Responding to concerns about a child's welfare

5.1 Everyone (including staff, supply staff, governors/trustees, volunteers, visitors etc.) must follow the protocol if they have concerns about a child's welfare:

- take the action necessary in an emergency to help the child, for example, call 999 for medical assistance or if a crime needs to be reported
- report their concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy as swiftly as possible and within the hour, e.g. the setting's platform for recording a child protection concern, concerns proforma (see example concern form in Appendix A concerns and Appendix B body map).
- speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy as quickly as possible if the matter is extremely urgent, or they are unsure
- follow the advice of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy and remember this information is confidential
- ensure record keeping is up to date and accurate. It should be logged as quickly as possible, on the same day and before the child is due to leave the school premises
- seek support for the child if they are distressed from the pastoral team member or trusted adult

Staff must always **immediately** inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy if there are any:

- concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse, exploitation, or neglect, including suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
- searching incidents where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a learner was in possession of a prohibited item or where a search has revealed a safeguarding risk
- behaviour or changes in presentation, including changes in school attendance, which gives rise to suspicions that a child may not be receiving adequate care or may be suffering harm
- hint or disclosure of abuse about or by a child
- concerns that a person(s) who may pose a risk to children is living in a household with children present
- concerns about online abuse including cybercrime, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, sharing nudes and semi nudes and/or where any adult appears to be sexually communicating (e.g., email, text, written note or verbally) with a child
- concerns about child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- information which indicates that the child is living with someone who does not have parental responsibility for them (this is known as private fostering)
- concerns that a child is at risk of domestic abuse or so-called 'honour-based' abuse, including forced marriage, marriage, or civil partnership under the age of 18, female genital mutilation (FGM), breast ironing, virginity testing or hymenoplasty
- concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation, including county lines; or that a child or their parent/carer may be a victim of modern slavery (trafficked)

5.2 There will be occasions when there may be the suspicion that a child may be at risk, but there is no 'real' evidence. For example:

- the child may need support with their mental health.
- the child's behaviour, play and or appearance may have changed
- attendance at school may have reduced
- the child's ability to concentrate and focus may have altered

- other behavioural and or physical indicators but inconclusive signs

5.3 In these circumstances, the adult should try to give the child the opportunity to talk as the signs noticed may be due to a variety of factors.

5.4 It is not the responsibility of the school/college/trust or its staff to determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. This is the responsibility of children's social care at the Local Authority. All staff however have a duty to recognise where extra support is needed or where there are complex needs or child protection concerns requiring intensive or specialist support.

5.5 Ensure all early concerns are recorded early using *CPOMS* If a child or adult does begin to reveal that a child is being harmed, follow the advice in the section *'If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about a concern or abuse'* is to be followed.

5.6 These concerns should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy. Do not presume someone else will do this or has done so.

5.7 Professionals in all agencies have a responsibility to submit a C-SPOC referral via the online portal website when it is believed or suspected that a child is a:

Child in Need:

- needs more complex interventions from statutory children's services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development
- has a permanent and substantial disability which significantly limits their everyday lives

Child in Need of protection:

- has suffered significant harm
- is likely to suffer significant harm

5.8 If a child chooses to tell an adult about a concern or abuse

5.8.1 It takes a lot of courage for a child, parent, carer, or other significant adult to disclose that they are worried or have concerns. They may feel ashamed, the abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. It is important they are reassured that they are being taken seriously, and that they will be supported and kept safe. They should not be made to feel they are creating a problem, blamed or ashamed for making a report. Reports, particularly those about sexual violence and harassment, should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one being the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy); however, this might not be possible in all cases.

5.8.2 If a child or adult talks about any risks to a child's safety or well-being they will need to be told that this information will be passed on – secrets are not allowed to be kept. The point at which you tell them this is a matter for professional judgement.

5.8.3 During the conversation with the child (or their parent/carer or significant adult) the staff member will:

- allow them to speak freely, listen to what is being said without interruption and avid asking leading questions

- keep questions to a minimum and of an open nature (tell me, explain, describe) i.e., 'can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'did x hit you?'
- remain calm and do not overreact – they may stop talking if they feel that they are upsetting you
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- avoid admonishing them for not disclosing earlier. For example, saying 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing'; this may intend to be supportive but be interpreted as they have done something wrong
- do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child or adult
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what do other family members think about all this
- do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort; this may not be comforting to a child who has been abused
- at an appropriate time tell the child or adult that to help them you must pass the information on
- tell them what will happen next. The child or adult may agree to go with you to see the Designated Safeguarding Lead, if not, let them know that this staff member will come to see or contact them before the end of the day
- ensure that children are not asked to write statements about abuse or any concerns that may have happened to them or sign the staff record

5.8.4 Key points to remember

Any adult with a concern about a child's welfare (from the conversation or beyond this) will:

- in an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- do not assume a colleague or another professional will share information that might be critical to keeping a child safe. Early information sharing is vital in keeping children safe, whether this is when problems first emerge, or when a child is already known to children's social care at the Local Authority.
- report your concern, including any possible private fostering arrangements, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy as soon as possible (by the end of the day at the latest) *using CPOMS*
- if you are unsure speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy/report verbally to them.
- if the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy is not present, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the school/education setting that day. The concerns and any action taken must then be shared with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as it is possible.
- if the concerns are about sharing nudes and semi-nudes do not view, copy, print or share the images.
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends, or family.
- formally record in writing the conversation or record of concerns and this should be on the same day/before the child leaves the premises using *CPOMS* and give a copy of the written record to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed. This may be sometime after the disclosure . (Employee Assistance)

Remember: If you are unsure, you should always have a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy

5.9 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy following identification of concerns

5.9.1 Whenever the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy receives information regarding concerns about a child, including via police domestic abuse notifications via Operation Encompass, they will:

- review information received and assess if any urgent actions are needed, i.e. medical, actions to secure a child's immediate safety
- check what is known about the child, for example, when they arrived (or not) at school today, how they present physically and emotionally, any changes in behaviour
- consider what is already known about the child and their family, including whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff or if they are already known to children's services at the Local Authority (targeted Early Help or Social Care)
- consider what 'checks' need to be carried out and how best these can be achieved
- inform relevant school staff who have a specific need to know, i.e., class/form teacher, relevant support staff
- where appropriate use relevant national, local, and education-based risk identifying, assessment tools and guidance to support the identification of needs and decision making, such as: school records, assessments, and chronologies, including any contextual factors/placed based risks. *(Appendix B)*
- use national guidance and assessment tools, e.g. Stop it now (sexual behaviours), Contextual safeguarding tools, Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (2024). The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool is a safeguarding tool focused specifically on identifying, understanding, and responding to children's sexual behaviours. It is used in situations that involve potential child on child abuse (also known as peer-on-peer abuse) but also in broader safeguarding contexts where a child might be experiencing abuse from an adult.
- not directly approach a child or parent/carer about an incident when the school/setting have received a domestic abuse notification and instead make general enquiries with the child about how they are.
- follow the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and use the Southend Threshold document to support decision making about the child's needs and the appropriate level of support and intervention. Possible options include internal support via school/education setting pastoral systems, Early Help Assessment and referral to statutory services such as the children's services at the Local Authority
- consider whether the matter should be discussed with the child's parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm
- if unsure about the action to take, including if a Child Protection referral should be made, seek advice from children's social care at the Local Authority or another appropriate agency
- if the concerns are about radicalisation or violent extremism, contact the Local Authority Education Performance, Partnerships and Safeguarding team for advice and where appropriate make a referral to the police Prevent Team
- where the child has complex needs or where there are child protection concerns, refer as appropriate to children's services at the Local Authority via agreed processes, providing a copy of the Early Help Assessment, action plan and any other relevant assessments

- notify the appropriate Children's Services at the Local Authority of any private fostering arrangements, to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child. Notifications will contain the information specified in Schedule 1 of The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 and made in writing
- if a child is at risk of immediate harm, and/or where it is believed a criminal offence has been committed, including sexual violence and harassment, referring to the police. See NPCC When to call the police; guidance for schools and colleges. Safeguarding considerations must take priority and include how screening, searching, and confiscating powers will be used safely, proportionately, and appropriately, including undertaking a police strip search on a child and the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult.; see Searching, screening and confiscation at school guidance (2022)

5.9.2 For more information about the Early Help Assessment see the Southend Early Help Framework. The term Early Help Assessment is used in this policy however all settings will have their own arrangements to identify early needs and which informs support.

***5.10 Responding* to concern or disclosure.**

5.10.1The Designated Safeguarding Lead reviews all available information and uses this to triage the case and take appropriate action in line with the local authority thresholds. This includes referring cases of suspected abuse and neglect to the children's social care at the Local Authority and support to staff who make referrals to:

- children's social care at the Local Authority
- the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the police as required (NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police).

5.10.2 Recording concern or disclosure: The Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures records are a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern. This includes:

- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome, referencing the local authority thresholds
- ensuring that Child Protection files are kept up to date, stored securely and confidentiality
- keeping concerns and referrals in a separate Child Protection file for each child.
- ensuring a 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, when children leave the school
- ensuring receipt of a Child Protection file for any pupil new to school subject to statutory safeguarding intervention

5.10.3 Where there is concern for the welfare of a child and a professional is unsure whether the need warrants a referral for statutory involvement at level 4, the practitioner can call the C-SPOC consultation line on 01702 215007 Option 1. Pre-contact consultations can be anonymous unless they become of high concern during the consultation, in which case, the professional who sought the consultation will be asked for the child's details or advised to inform the parent to contact Children's Social Care. A contact record will then be created.

5.11 Notifying parents/carers
The school/college/trust will normally seek to discuss any needs or concerns about a child with their parent or carer. Where an Early Help Assessment would benefit the child and their family the most appropriate member of staff should approach the parent/carer to take this forward. In situations where there are serious needs or Child Protection concerns the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will contact the parent or carer. However, if the setting believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children's social care at the Local Authority.

5.12 Pastoral/school-based support (universal support/low level needs)
In all cases, the school/college/trust setting will consider what support could be offered via pastoral support processes. *Fairways pastoral team.* Support is kept under constant review to ensure that it is effective.

5.13 Early help support and assessment (emerging needs)
Where a child is likely to require co-ordinated support from a range of Early Help services, or where there are concerns for a child's well-being or a child's needs are not clear, not known or not being met, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will support the completion of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) and if needed, co-ordinate a team around the family (TAF).

Whenever a child and their family are supported via an EHA, the school/education setting will keep this under constant review and should the child's situation appear not to improve worsen, consideration will be given to a referral to children's services at the Local Authority.

5.14 Referral to children's social care at the Local Authority
Non urgent concerns about a child's welfare will be referred to children's social care at the Local Authority Children's Services Portal using the agreed referral process as outlined in the Southend Threshold document.

If there are concerns that a child is at IMMEDIATE risk of significant harm professionals should telephone the Children's – Single Point of Contact (C-SPOC) immediately on 01702 215007.

Requests for Support made on the telephone must be followed up with a written C-SPOC referral form via the online portal website immediately following the phone referral.

Where there is imminent danger call the emergency services on 999.

Anybody can make the referral!

In exceptional circumstances, such as in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action hasn't been taken, any staff member can refer their concerns directly to children's social care at the Local Authority using the online portal; however, they should also inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy (as soon as possible).

5.15 Female genital mutilation (FGM)
If the referral is about a 'known' case of female genital mutilation (FGM), in addition to a referral to children's social care at the Local Authority, the individual teacher also has a mandatory reporting duty; see Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation; procedural information (2015). Under this duty, 'known' cases of FGM where a girl under 18

informs the person that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or where physical signs appear to show that an act of FGM was carried out, this must be reported to the police on 101. This is a personal responsibility in addition to the referral to children's social care at the Local Authority and the professional who identifies FGM and/or receives the disclosure should make the report by the close of the next working day.

5.16 Action following a referral by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputy or other appropriate member of staff will:

- where a referral was made by phone, follow up the referral in writing using the online referral system. This is within 48 hours and attaching any existing assessment e.g., the EHA. In all cases the school/education setting will also include information held about any place-based risks (harm outside of the home)
- be aware that children's social care at the Local Authority should make a decision within one working day of the referral being made about what course of action they are taking and let the school/setting know the outcome. If the information is not forthcoming, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (deputy/alternative) should follow this up
- maintain contact with the allocated social worker and support them or other agencies following any referral
- contribute to any strategy discussion or meetings
- support any Section 47 enquiries or statutory assessments that are carried out
- provide a report for, attend, and contribute to any initial and review Child Protection Conference. This includes sharing any reports with parents/carers and where appropriate, the child
- share the content of this report with the parent/carer and if appropriate the child, prior to the meeting
- attend core group meetings for any child subject to a Child Protection plan or Child in Need meeting for any child subject to a Child in Need plan
- where a child on a Child Protection plan, Child in Need plan or who is Looked After moves from the school/education setting or if there are unexplained absences from school, immediately inform the child's social worker/key worker in local authority children's social care
- if after the referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the designated safeguarding lead should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves

5.17 Confidentiality and sharing information

The *school* recognises the importance of information sharing between the school/education setting and local agencies to effectively safeguard our learners. The setting operates with regard to HM Government Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2024), Information Commissioner's Office A 10 step guide to sharing information to safeguard children (2023) and DDSCP Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners (2022).

All staff will be mindful of the Data Protection Act (2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) obligations. Staff are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare, rather, they provide the legal framework under which information can, and in some cases, must be shared.

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

If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or deputy, who will seek advice from the Data Protection Officer as required

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

All information sharing outside of 'business as usual', should be recorded on the appropriate logs

Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy (or the most senior person on the premises in their absence), Headteacher or Chair of Governors/trustees (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That staff member will decide who else needs to have the information which they will share on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Consent will be sought to share information, where appropriate, however, where there are safeguarding concerns about a child, information will be shared with the appropriate organisations such as children's social care at the Local Authority in line with the law. In most cases concerns will be discussed with parents and carers prior to the referral taking place unless doing so would increase risk.

5.18 Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, including the rationale for those decisions, should be recorded in writing following the protocols in place by the school for safeguarding and Child Protection recording system CPOMS.This includes instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency, such children's social care at the Local Authority or the Prevent programme etc. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

Records of concerns documentation, referrals and other written safeguarding information are kept in a Child Protection file for each child and stored separately from each child's education file; this file is 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. Child Protection files are confidential and stored securely and only made available to relevant individuals.

Records will 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, the rationale for these, and the outcome, as well as a review of any progress made
- any professional differences of opinion about the safety of a child will also be recorded

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider if it is appropriate to share any information with the new education provider in advance of a child leaving the school/setting, e.g. children

who have or who have had a social worker and those receiving support through the Channel programme.

When a child leaves the school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure a copy of these records will be sent securely as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term) to any school or other education setting to which the child transfers and a confirmation of receipt obtained. The Child Protection file transfer will be separate to the main pupil file. This will allow the new provider to continue to support the child and have the support in place for when the child arrives.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputy and key staff, such as the SENCO, will be informed when a child's safeguarding/Child Protection file is received.

5.19Support for adults involved in a safeguarding/child protection concern
Child neglect, abuse and exploitation are devastating for children and can result in distress and anxiety for staff involved. Support to all concerned is by:

- offering employee assistance, such as providing details of helplines, counselling, or other sources of external support
- responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- nominating a link adult who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- nominating a 'case manager' where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child
- following the procedures laid down in policies, such as whistleblowing, complaints, and disciplinary procedures
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously

5.20 Staff Welfare, Support and Supervision
5.20.1 The School recognises that safeguarding work can be emotionally demanding. Appropriate welfare, supervision, debriefing and support arrangements will be available to staff involved in safeguarding and child protection matters.

5.20.2 Staff will have access to wellbeing support services, Employee Assistance Programmes (where available), Occupational Health advice and professional supervision where appropriate.

5.20.3 The School will promote a culture in which staff feel able to seek support following safeguarding incidents, disclosures, investigations or other child protection matters.

Section 6: Child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment

6.1 The attitude by all staff and adults of *'it could happen here'* is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse. Even if there are no reported incidents or concerns does not mean it is not happening.

If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy

6.2 The school/setting recognises that children may abuse their peers physically, sexually, and emotionally. There is a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse; abuse is abuse and this will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'boys being boys' or 'part of growing up' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

6.3 The School will maintain a clear distinction between behaviour incidents that can be addressed through behaviour management processes and incidents that require safeguarding intervention. Where safeguarding concerns exist, safeguarding procedures will always take precedence.

6.4 The school/setting take child-on-child abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and address it through the same processes as any safeguarding issue. All reports and concerns will be responded to, including those alleged to have taken place outside of the school and online. It is recognised that children who abuse others and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse are likely to have considerable welfare and safeguarding issues themselves.

6.5 What is child-on-child abuse?

6.5.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) defines child-on-child abuse as most likely to include but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying):
    - abuse within 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 and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and /or encourages sexual violence)
    - sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
    - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
    - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos
    - upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm
    - initiating/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)

6.5.2 Incel ideology and its associated behaviours are not legally defined as "child on child abuse" in themselves; rather, they are a radical, extremist online subculture that can lead to behaviours that constitute child on child abuse (also known as peer-on-peer abuse) when they manifest offline.

6.5.3 Child-on-child abuse can also include causing someone to engage in extremist or radicalising behaviour. Child-on-child abuse exists on a continuum, and different forms of abuse may overlap. It can affect children of any age, sex, be between two children or through a group of children abusing a single child or group of children. Sometimes vulnerable children are targeted. For example:

- those living with domestic abuse or with intra-familial abuse in their histories
- young people in care
- those who have experienced bereavement through the loss of a parent, sibling, or friend
- black and minority ethnic children are under identified as victims but are over identified as perpetrators
- there is recognition it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys are likely to be perpetrators. However, both girls and boys can experience child-on-child abuse, but they are likely to experience it differently e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to homophobic taunts/initiation/hazing (rituals and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group)
- evidence shows that children with disabilities or children identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning are at greater risk

6.5.4 Child-on-child abuse is influenced by the nature of the environments in which children spend their time - home, school/education settings, peer group, online and community - and is built upon notions of power and consent. Power imbalances related to gender, social status within a group, intellectual ability, economic wealth, social marginalisation etc, can all be used to exert power over a peer.

- child-on-child abuse involves someone who abuses a ‘vulnerability’ or power imbalance to harm another and has the opportunity or is in an environment where this is possible
- while perpetrators of child-on-child abuse pose a risk to others, they are often victims of abuse themselves

6.6 Preventing child-on-child abuse

6.6.1 There is a whole school/setting approach to preventing child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment; this forms part of the whole school/education setting approach to safeguarding. The school/setting will seek to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by ensuring an approach that prepares learners for life in modern Britain. The establishment has a clear set of values and standards which are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life.

6.6.2 The school/setting:

- provides a safe environment
- promotes a culture of positive standards of behaviour
- takes steps to address inappropriate behaviour

- has effective systems in place where children can confidently raise concerns knowing they will be taken seriously
- provides safeguarding through the curriculum via relationships education/relationships and sex education, online safety, and other curriculum opportunities.

6.6.3 This may include targeted work with children identified as vulnerable or being at risk and developing risk assessment and targeted work with those identified as being a potential risk to others.

6.6.4 All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours will not be tolerated or passed off. Staff will maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here'* and all inappropriate behaviour will be addressed.

6.6.5 The school/setting deals with a wide continuum of behaviour by children on a day-to-day basis and most cases will be dealt with via school-based processes. These are outlined in the policies that can be found in the 'safeguarding suite', referenced previously in this policy, as well as policies such as:

- Behaviour, anti-bullying/online and prejudice-based bullying and school/education setting screening, searching, and confiscating powers. How they will be used safely, and appropriately, including police strip searches
- Online Safety Policy and other associated issues, including sharing nudes and semi-nudes and extremist material
- Relationships Education/Relationships and Sex Education Policy

6.7 Procedures for children to report child-on-child abuse

As outlined in previous sections, even if there are no reports, all staff understand it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is not being reported. Children may not find it easy to tell staff about the abuse and children may have additional barriers to disclose. Children may show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice or react to. In some cases, victims may make indirect reports via a friend, or staff may overhear conversations. All staff will be trained to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it.

6.8 Action following a concern about child-on-child abuse

6.8.1 Child-on-child abuse may be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. Adults may be able to easily identify some behaviour/s as abusive however in some circumstances it may be less clear. Reports of sexual violence and harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. In all cases the initial response to a concern is very important. Members of staff will take all concerns seriously and reassure the child/family that they will be supported and kept safe, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward. Conversations should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one being the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy) wherever possible, however it is recognised that this may not be possible in all cases.

6.8.2 The victim will not be given the impression they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised. Abuse which has occurred online or outside of the school/setting is treated as seriously as that which has occurred within the school/setting.

6.8.3 Staff must follow discuss the concerns, seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead - see *Responding to concerns about a child's welfare*.

6.8.4 When an allegation is made by a child against another child, staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and/or alleged perpetrator may have low level, emerging needs, complex/serious needs, or Child Protection concerns. See *Responding to concerns about a child's welfare*.

6.8.5 Considerations for cases where child-on-child abuse is a factor include:

- what are the wishes of victims in terms of how they want to proceed?
- what is the nature, extent and context of the behaviour including verbal, physical, sexual (including sharing of nudes/semi-nudes) and/or online abuse? Was there coercion, physical aggression, bullying, bribery or attempts to ensure secrecy? What was the time, location, duration, and frequency? Is the incident a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse? Were other children and/or adults involved? Has a crime been committed and/or have any harmfully sexual behaviours been displayed? Remember there may be other forms of abuse, in addition to what has been reported.
- what is the child's age, development, capacity to understand and make decisions, (including anything that might have had an impact on this, e.g. coercion), family and social circumstances? What is the nature of the relationship between the children involved? Are they in a current or previous intimate personal relationship? Do they live in the same household or setting? Do they attend the same school/setting, classes, or transport?
- what are the relative chronological and developmental ages of the children? Does the victim or perpetrator have a disability or learning difficulty? Are there are any differentials in power, social standing, or authority?
- is the behaviour age appropriate or not? Does it involve inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation?
- are there any risks to the victim or alleged perpetrator themselves and/or others e.g., other children, adults, students, staff, others in the child's household (particularly siblings or other children around the child), extended family, peer group or wider social network? Are there any links to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation or gang related activity?

6.8.6 Immediate consideration should be given to how best to support and protect the victim and alleged perpetrator and any other children involved/impacted.

6.8.7 Where the report involves rape and assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator must be removed from any classes they share with the victim. A risk assessment or plan will lay out how to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator apart on school/setting premises (including any before or after school activities) and on transport to and from the setting.

6.8.8 For all other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment and forms of child-on-child abuse, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, school/setting's premises and transport should be considered immediately.

6.8.9 All decisions are made in the best interests of the child/ren involved and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt by the alleged perpetrator. In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis with the Designated Safeguarding Lead taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care Local Authority and the police as required.

6.8.10 The Designated Safeguarding lead will refer to guidance and advice, such as, but not limited to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) part five
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school
- Behaviour in schools
- School suspensions and permanent exclusion
- Southend Threshold Document
- Southend, Essex & Thurrock Safeguarding and Children Protection Procedures
- When to call the police – guidance for schools and colleges

6.8.11 The Designated Safeguarding Lead may seek further advice from local or national safeguarding contacts as outlined in *Key safeguarding contacts*

6.8.12 Whenever there is an allegation of abuse, including concerns about sexual harassment and violence, made against a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other appropriate staff will draw together separate risk and needs assessments and action plans to support the victim and the alleged perpetrator. These will consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support
- whether there have been other victims
- the alleged perpetrator/s
- all the other children (as well as staff and adult students) at the school/setting, especially any actions that are needed to protect them from the perpetrator/s or from future harms
- the time and location of the incident and any action required to make the location safer
- when information can be disclosed to staff and other adults, including the alleged perpetrator and parents/carers

6.8.13 Whenever children's social care at the Local Authority and/or the police are involved, the school/setting will work in collaboration to ensure the best possible support and protection is provided for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

6.8.14 All reports of child-on-child abuse (including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence) will be recorded in the child's safeguarding/Child Protection file. This will include all decision making, risk and needs assessment plans.

6.8.15 Where appropriate incidents may be managed internally (low level needs), via Early Help (emerging needs) or through children's social care at the Local Authority (complex/serious needs or Child Protection concerns); reports to the police will be run in parallel with children's social care as outlined in the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Safeguarding and Children Protection Procedures.

6.8.16 All risk and needs assessments, and any action plans, whether internal or multi-agency will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. If things do not improve or deteriorate the situation should be reconsidered.

6.8.17 Tools used to self-assess our response to harmful sexual behaviour are

- CPD: Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool (RSE) Course.
- The Contextual Safeguarding School Beyond Referrals Self-Assessment Toolkit & Guidance
- Stop it Now Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool

6.8.18 Where the victim or alleged perpetrator transfers to another school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the new provider are made aware of any on-going support needs (the most suitable way of doing this is discussed with the victim, and where appropriate their parent/carer), as well as sending the safeguarding/Child Protection file. In the case of the alleged perpetrator, where appropriate, this will also include potential risks to other children and staff.

Any suspicion or allegations that a child has been sexually abused or is likely to sexually abuse another child (or adult) or where there are concerns about any other form of abuse, a referral must be made immediately to children's social care at the Local Authority and, where appropriate, the police

Appendices

Appendix A: Example Concerns Form

School/college /trust must ensure that volunteers, staff, governors and trustees are able to record concerns about:

- The welfare of a child or young person; and
- The behaviour of a staff member, volunteer, governor/trustee or adult connected with the school/education setting

The following headings illustrate the minimum information that should be included in the local arrangements that is agreed within the individual education setting.

Principles
A statement should be included on the proforma used by the school/setting that confirms:

*"*Everyone, including staff, supply staff, governors/trustees, volunteers, visitors and contractors, *must record any concerns about a child or young person. This form must be completed as soon as possible after the discovery of the concern. If the concern is about:*

- *The welfare of a child, it must be sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy)*
- *The behaviour of any member of staff, it must be sent immediately to the Headteacher, or the chair of governors/management committee or equivalent. If the allegation is against the Headteacher/principal, or where the Headteacher/principal is the sole proprietor of an independent school, the allegation should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Please refer to the school/setting's Managing Allegations policy.*

If the concerns are immediate, please inform an appropriate adult straight away."

Concerns about a child or young person

Child's full name:		**Date of birth:**	
		Class/year/form:	
Concern identified by:		**Role:**	
Date of concern:		**Time of concern:**	
Witness/es:		**Place of incident:**	
Name of alleged person (s) responsible for the harm/potential harm:			
Not known		**Volunteer**	
Learner in this school/education setting		**Member of staff**	
Learner in another school/education setting, please specify		**Governor/trustee**	
Family member		**Other, please specify**	

Concern/Incident/Disclosure: Why are you concerned about this child? What have you observed and when? What have you been told and when? Please provide a description of any incident/s or anything you see or have been told by a child, or another person. Record any visible injuries or ask the child/young person to point to where else it is sore/hurts. Do not remove or lift clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment or take photos of injuries. If photos of injuries are required for evidence purposes, then this should be done by the police. Remember to make clear what is fact and what is hearsay/opinion. Note the language and terminology used by the child, or adult, and be clear about who has said what. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern? For example, child taken out of class, first aid

Name of person concerns reported to	**Date**

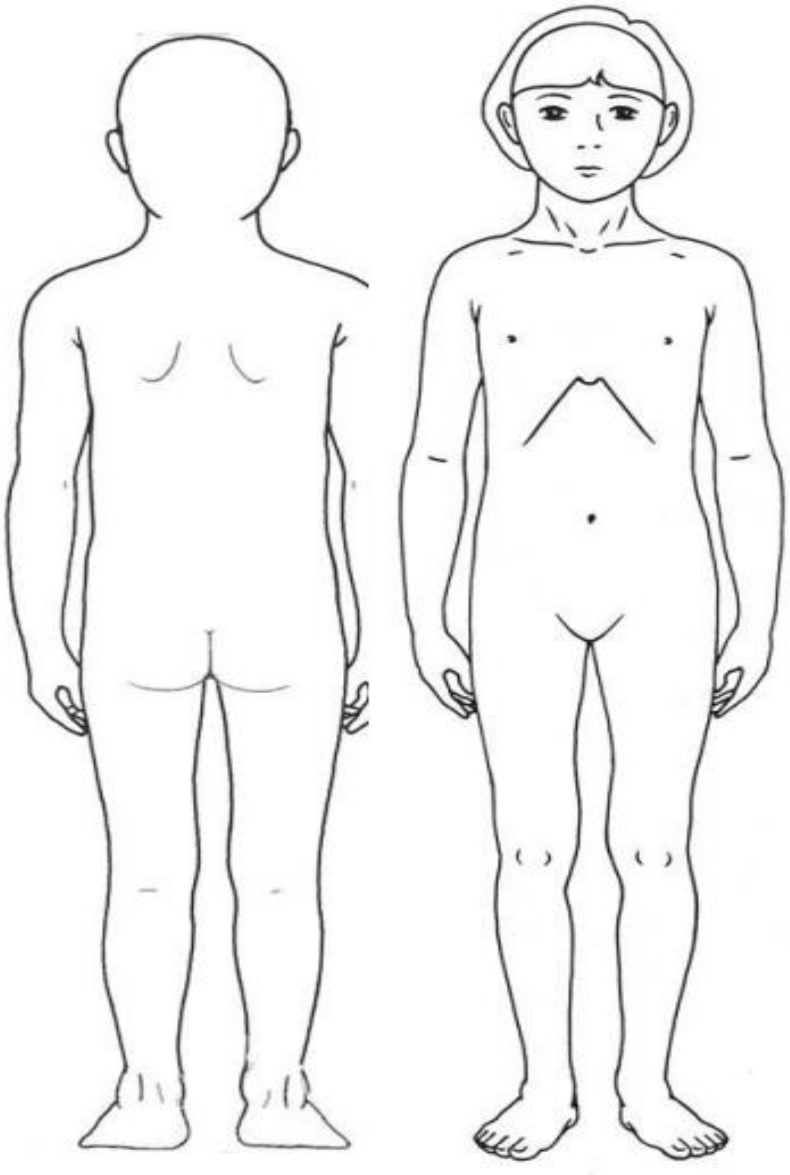
Action to be taken / recommendations from designated safeguarding lead

Name of person completing form	**Signature**	**Date and time**

Appendix B: Example Body Map

This body map is designed to accurately record any concerns about possible physical abuse particularly if it is felt that the injury is non-accidental or thought to be following a pattern, any injuries or marks should be recorded on the body map. The body map should be completed and stored alongside the concerns form in line with the school's policy.

Child's details			
Name		Date of Birth	
Person completing the form			
Name		Role	



Appendix C: Threshold Guidance Process

