



STAFFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Next Policy Review	1st September 2026
Reviewed by Governors	29.09.2025
Amended by SLT	1st September 2025
Next Governor Review	October 2026
Last whole-school Level One Training	24th May 2024
Next whole-school Level One Training	May 2027
Produced and monitored by	Mrs Lisa Griffiths (DSL)
Governors are always able to access the most up-do-date version of the safeguarding policy on the school website and in the shared Google Drive folder of policies.	
This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Staff Behaviour Policy Recruitment Policy Whistle Blowing Policy Email and Digital Communication Policy (staff) Digital Policy (pupils) PHSE (RSE) Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Child-on-Child Abuse Policy Behaviour Policy Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy New Staff Induction Policy Attendance and Register Policy	

This policy also applies to Stafford Preparatory School and EYFS.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The governors will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The DSL and SLT will amend as required in-line with changing guidance and legislation. The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team recognise the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. All staff are therefore encouraged to contribute to and shape the safeguarding arrangements as contained within this policy.

Named Practitioners

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*In the event of Ms Martin not being in school, SPS and EYFS safeguarding concerns will be dealt with by the DSL (Mrs L Griffiths) or a Deputy DSL.

CONTENTS

NAMED PRACTITIONERS	2
INTRODUCTION: STAFFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL’S COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING	7
SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN	9
Underpinning values	9
ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)	10
THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS	14
THE ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF	17
SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES: RESPONDING AND REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD	18
WHAT SCHOOL STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES WITHIN SCHOOL	19
RECORDING PROCEDURES	19
Record Keeping	20
STAFF GUIDANCE	21
CONFIDENTIALITY	22
ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD IN MAKING AN URGENT INITIAL ASSESSMENT	23
THRESHOLDS FOR REFERRAL TO CHILDREN’S SERVICES	24
MAKING REFERRALS TO CHILDREN’S SERVICES	27
ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES	28
SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK	29
IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE	30
Physical abuse:	31

Emotional abuse:	31
Neglect:	31
Sexual abuse:	32
CHILDREN IN NEED OF EARLY HELP	32
CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE (INCLUDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT BETWEEN CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS)	33
POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF ABUSE	35
DOMESTIC ABUSE	38
CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) & CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)	39
COUNTY LINES AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE	42
RADICALISATION - PUPILS DRAWN INTO TERRORISM (AND PREVENTION OF RADICALISATION)	44
PREVENT DUTY	46
HONOUR-BASED ABUSE	47
FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) AND FORCED MARRIAGES	48
FORCED MARRIAGE	50
THE MODERN SLAVERY ACT (2015)	51
CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN THE VICTIMS OF ABUSE	51
CYBERCRIME	52
MENTAL HEALTH	52
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES	53
CHILDREN ABSENT FROM OR NOT RECEIVING A SUITABLE EDUCATION (INCLUDING CHILDREN WHO RUN AWAY)	53
CHILDREN WHO NEED A SOCIAL WORKER (CHILD IN NEED AND CHILD PROTECTION PLANS)	55

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/CHILDREN IN CARE AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	56
PRIVATE FOSTERING	57
HOST FAMILIES AND HOME STAY DURING EXCHANGE VISITS	57
CHILD ABDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS	58
CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM	59
CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON	59
HOMELESSNESS	59
SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTING AGAINST SUSPICIOUS TELEPHONE CALLS	60
PUPILS IN WORK PLACEMENTS	60
USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	60
SCHOOL TRANSFERS	61
USE OF MOBILE PHONES, CAMERAS, IPADS AND DIGITAL MEDIA	62
E-SAFETY	62
PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE	65
ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST/CONCERNS RAISED IN RELATION TO TEACHERS, INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS, OTHER STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS	66
DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST/CONCERNS RAISED IN RELATION TO TEACHERS, INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS, OTHER STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS	70
PERSONAL DISQUALIFICATION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS	73
RECRUITMENT, SUPERVISION AND TRAINING FOR STAFF (TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SCHOOL'S RECRUITMENT POLICY)	74
RAISING PUPIL AWARENESS	76
STAFF SAFEGUARDING TRAINING	77

CONTACT NUMBERS	78
SAFEGUARDING RECORD OF CONCERN	81
RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM RISK ASSESSMENT	83
SUMMARY FOR REFERRAL PROCESS FOR STAFF, DSL, THE HEAD AND VOLUNTEERS:	86
SAFEGUARDING TEAM TRAINING	87

Introduction: Stafford Grammar School's Commitment to Safeguarding

Stafford Grammar School is committed to its legal duty to safeguarding under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all children. The school recognises that effective safeguarding work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to safeguarding and child protection situations.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred, considering at all times **what is in the best interests of the child**.

All teaching (including supply teachers), non-teaching staff and volunteers who have any information about a child that has been given, or overheard, must pass it on to the DSL or a Deputy DSL, named above. This is to ensure an effective early help process.

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership team ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part 1 of 'Keeping Children safe in Education' (September 2025).

KCSIE now applies to providers of post 16 education as set out in the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021.

Stafford Grammar School operates Safeguarding procedures in-line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures (**Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board**).

Stafford Grammar School contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

Statutory guidance defines a child as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. For some Sixth Form students at Stafford Grammar School, procedures for vulnerable adults may need to be considered in line with advice from Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).

This Safeguarding Policy adheres to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidelines which underpin our safeguarding procedures:

1) Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-Agency Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/procedures/>

2) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: Department for Education'. 2023.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

- 3) **‘Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)’: Department for Education. This includes:**
 - ‘Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006’ (June 2016)
 - What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (March 2015)
- 4) **Guidance for Safer working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People (June 2017)**
<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/working-together-to-safeguard-children/>
- 5) **‘Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales’ (2023).**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e5a5bd3f69457ff1035fe2/14.258_HO_Prevent+Duty+Guidance_v5d_Final_Web_1_.pdf
- 6) **Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (July 2020)**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>
- 7) **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (September 2021)**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>
- 8) **RSHE statutory guidance (July 2025)**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/687a3d473f4bde279ef4528c/RSHE_statutory_guidance_-_July_2025_.pdf

This policy seeks to make professional responsibilities clear to all staff (teaching and non-teaching), Governors and volunteers, temporary and supply staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board requirements and procedures.

The School Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for safeguarding will be reviewed on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting of the Governing Body. A yearly review will ensure that the policy and procedures are efficiently discharged. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will contribute anonymised information about safeguarding cases to the Governor for Safeguarding, who will also be responsible for leading the review of the Safeguarding Policy with the Governing Body.

If any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding / child protection arrangements are identified, they will be remedied immediately and changes in policy will be submitted for review and approval at the next Governors’ meeting.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

The definition of Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in KCSIE (September 2025) is:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring 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.

Stafford Grammar School and its staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children.

Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk. Where children need support from other agencies, this will lead to inter-agency work making use of EHA/CAF and TAC approaches.

Underpinning values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, Stafford Grammar School will work in accordance with the principles outlined in the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Safeguarding procedures (see documents listed above):

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.
- Each child is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs.
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of practitioners to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Parents will be advised about the Stafford Grammar School Safeguarding Policy in the school prospectus and on admission to the school. A copy of the policy is available on the school website.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare.
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf in an age appropriate way. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings. However, it may not always be possible to respect a child/carer's request for confidentiality. If a child may be at risk of significant harm, there is a duty on the school to share information with Children's Social Care. This will be explained to the child or family member and appropriate reassurance given.
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential,

personal information is necessary in order to protect a child. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict 'need to know' basis.

- Practitioners should be aware of the effects of outside intervention upon children, upon family life and the impact and implications of what they say and do.
- Explanations by Practitioners to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free. Unavoidable technical and professional terminology should be explained in simple terms.
- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation.
- Early intervention in providing support services under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) is an important principle of practice in inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is the most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

The key elements of the role of DSL (with reference to Annex C of KCSIE) are to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection;
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters; and
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings (and/or support other staff to do so) and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- To keep children safe whilst they are online at school and lead online safety awareness at school (including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

All deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL and all references to the DSL should be taken to include deputy DSLs. Whilst the activities of the DSL are sometimes delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding remains with the DSL.

Manage referrals:

The DSL and deputies will:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to the local authority children's social care;
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service and to the **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)**; and
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

Work with others:

- May liaise with the Headteacher as appropriate to inform them of issues, especially on-going issues under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible>
- As required, liaise with the 'case manager' and the LADO (Designated officer or team of officers) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a member of staff); and
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff;
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead (School Nurses) where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- Should understand the relevant data protection legislation and regulations (especially the DPA 2018 and GDPR);
- Should understand the importance of information sharing both within school, with LSP (Local Safeguarding Partners), other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. NPCC- When to call the police should help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do. [When to call the police PDF](#)
- Work with the Headteacher, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school.

Undertake training:

- The DSL (and any deputies) undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role at least every two years.
- The DSLs have also undertaken Prevent awareness and Channel training.
- In addition to this formal training the DSLs knowledge and skills are refreshed at regular intervals e.g. via e-bulletins, meetings and discussions or reading and digesting relevant safeguarding developments.
- The DSL will have additional training to help them understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident they can keep children safe whilst they are online at school. The DSL will also recognise the additional risks that children with SEND can face online.

This training is to ensure that the DSL and deputies:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes, such as early help assessments;

- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to them effectively when required to do so;
- Understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands this safeguarding policy and school safeguarding procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs or young carers;
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and concerns;
- Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school;
- Can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school may put in place to protect them; and
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Raising Awareness:

The DSLs will:

- Ensure the school's safeguarding policy is known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure the school's safeguarding policy is reviewed at least annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this;
- Ensure the safeguarding policy is available publically and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and
- Link with the local safeguarding partners / local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency.

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice.

- Where children leave the school, the DSL ensures their safeguarding 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. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.
- The DSL should also consider whether it is appropriate to share information in advance of a child's move if it ensures the new school or college can continue to support victims of abuse and have support in place when the child arrives.
- The DSL will also request any safeguarding information from the previous school or college of a child who joins Stafford Grammar or Preparatory School.
- DSL, where a parent chooses to remove their child/ren from school to EHE (Elected Home Educators) will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the EHE Team within Staffordshire County Council and inform other professionals who may be involved with that child.

Availability

- The DSL or deputies will always be available during school hours to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- The DSL or deputies can be contacted by telephone or email outside of school hours if necessary.
- In the exceptional circumstances that the DSL and Deputy DSLs are not available staff should not delay in taking appropriate action and should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children's social care. Any member of staff can make a referral / contact Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally known as first response). Any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as possible.

The role of Governors

The Governing body should ensure it facilitates a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Governing body and SLT should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

All Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This training equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is regularly updated.

Governors are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

The Governors' responsibilities are to:

- Have an effective and legally compliant safeguarding policy in place at all times;
- Audit compliance of the policy and review it annually, including a full report to Governors' meeting;
- Contribute to inter-agency working;
- Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority (LA), as set up by the Local Safeguarding Partners / local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements);

- Nominate a Governor to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and responsible for monitoring the safeguarding policies of the school;
- Ensure that a member of the governing body liaises with the LA and any other partner agencies on issues of safeguarding if an allegation of abuse is made against the Headmaster;
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against members of the staff and volunteers;
- Refer allegations against staff and volunteers to the local authority designated officer (LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers));
- Have procedures in place to make referrals to the DBS if a person has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns (this is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence);
- Recognise the expertise staff build by undertaking training and managing safeguarding concerns and as such provide the opportunity for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements;
- Ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning;
- Whilst considering the above training requirements, governing bodies and proprietors should have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils;
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to limit children's exposure the risks from the school's IT system, considering the age range of the pupils and their number;
- Ensure internet filtering is not over-blocking which could place unreasonable restrictions on what children are taught with regards to safeguarding and online safety;
- Ensure that this policy reflects the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse and also ensure that 'consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos' and the school's approach to it is reflected in this policy.
- Ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.
- Ensure the designated safeguarding lead has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. The role carries a significant level of responsibility and the post holder should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively.

The Governing Body should ensure the school:

- Contributes to multi-agency working (in-line with Working Together 2023)

- Understands their role in the new safeguarding partner arrangements, e.g. they will be fully engaged, involved and included
- Is aware that the LSPs will name schools as relevant agencies and engage with individual institutions in a meaningful way
- If named as a relevant agency, they are under a statutory duty to cooperate with published arrangements
- Policies and procedures will contain local criteria for action and local protocol for assessment.

The Governing Body should also:

- Be prepared to supply information as requested by the LSPs
- Ensure staff induction and training is in-line with advice from LSPs

The Governing Body should ensure arrangements are in place setting out processes and principles for sharing information:

- In school
- With LSPs and other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required

The Governing Body should also ensure relevant staff:

- Have due regard to data protection principles
- Are confident of processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and GDPR, storage and sharing of information for safeguarding purposes including 'special category data'
- Are aware that the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information (e.g. without consent if gaining it would place a child at risk)

The specific role of the Safeguarding Governor:

- Be the lead person who understands the safeguarding requirements.
- Support the work of the designated safeguarding lead
- Meet regularly with the designated safeguarding lead and any other relevant other staff
- Report back to the governing body about his/her activities to inform them in order to facilitate scrutiny and impact of safeguarding; and ensure compliance with statutory duties
- Ensure that safeguarding deficiencies are brought to the governing body
- Ensure that the safeguarding and child protection policy is being followed in practice; and to be involved in any policy review
- Report to the governing body so that they can ensure resources are effectively allocated or where changes might be required
- Ensure that the training programme for staff reflects the needs of the school and statutory regulations.
- Ensure that the governing body are kept aware of the safeguarding risks to young people in the school
- Ensure that records are kept securely and in one place
- Ensure that there is appropriate monitoring and tracking in place for vulnerable students

- Ensure that there are appropriate safeguards in place for students placed with Alternative Providers
- Ensure that there is a consistent approach to safeguarding and child protection across the school.
- Ensure that the curriculum for safeguarding reflects the risks for the young people in the area
- Ensure that safer recruitment processes are in place
- Ensure that the Single Central Record is compliant

The Role of School Staff

School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating. All school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. The DSL will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties.

All school staff are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. In the first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the DSL. Staff may be required to support other agencies and practitioners in the early help assessment. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

All staff are aware of systems within the school which support safeguarding and these are explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes the:

- safeguarding and child protection policy, which amongst other things also includes the policy and procedures to deal with child on child abuse;
- behaviour policy;
- anti-bullying (child on child abuse) policy (which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- staff behaviour policy (code of conduct); including low- level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing.
- safeguarding response to children who are absent from education; and
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).
- the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

All staff read and understand at least part 1 and annex B of KCSIE 2025.

All 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.

All staff 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 a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should 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.

All staff are able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

All staff are 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 be 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 DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

Any member of staff who is aware of an individual (whatever the association) who directly or indirectly poses a threat of harm to a child must take appropriate action e.g. by reporting the individual to the police, the local authority children's services, or if the threat is to a child in the school to the DSL and/or Headmaster.

School Safeguarding Procedures: Responding and Reporting Concerns about a child

This section outlines what staff should do if they have concerns about a child.

In most cases concerns about a child will be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL who will make an assessment.

If you ***have any concerns about a child's welfare or*** hear, see or are told anything that makes you concerned about a child's welfare you should record it and report it ***immediately by speaking*** to a member of the Safeguarding Team and logging it on MyConcern, or using the Record of Concern form. A member of the Safeguarding Team will contact the Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally known as First Response) and police if necessary. If the DSL or a deputy is not available staff should not delay taking appropriate action and should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or taking advice from local children's social care.

The school uses MyConcern to record and manage safeguarding concerns. The school also has a physical form for instances where someone needs to report a concern but does not have a MyConcern account. The **'Safeguarding Record of Concern'** form (found at the end of this policy) can be completed and passed on to the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible. There must also always be a conversation, as soon as possible, with the DSL or Deputy DSL.

A Child in danger or at risk of immediate harm:

Anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare or safety can make a referral. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support referral should be made to children's social care (formally known as First Response) and the police if required immediately. **Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed, as soon as possible and without delay, that a referral has been made.** The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press for reconsideration to ensure that the concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

For referral to the **Staffordshire Local Authority service, Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally known as First Response) phone 0300 111 8007 and speak to the operator and ask for the Duty Officer noting their name and time of the call.**

Anyone with concerns about a child's welfare should ensure that a referral is made. Referrals can be made without parental consent, although parents are informed unless doing so would put the child at greater risk.

Feedback to staff who reported concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Rules of confidentiality mean that it may not always be possible or appropriate for the DSL to give feedback to staff who report concerns to them. Such information will be shared on a "need to know" basis only and the DSL will decide on which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare or to prevent jeopardising investigations into a prosecution. However, staff who have concerns should follow these up and check that they are being dealt with even if they cannot expect detailed feedback about them.

What school staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within school

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. Any such concerns will be taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team. Where a member of staff feels unable to raise such a concern, other whistleblowing channels are open to them, such as the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk.

RECORDING PROCEDURES

Recording should include:

- Detail what your concern is
- How and why your concern has arisen
- Identify if you believe the child might be at risk
- Include the child's name, age, year group
- Make a note of exactly what was said using the child's words wherever possible.
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.
- Record who was present, time, date and place.
- If completing a physical form, ink rather than pencil should be used
- This should be done as soon as possible and passed to the DSL immediately (or certainly within 24 hours)
- Date and sign the record (if completing the physical form)

If no specific disclosure has been made, you might be asked to keep records over an agreed period of time, perhaps on the advice of social services. The following information may be useful:

- Behaviour and emotional state and any changes
- Relationships with other children and staff
- Attendance
- Appearance and dress, especially where neglect is suspected
- Any comments, drawings or accounts of family life or parental behaviour
- Any injuries or marks on the body, showing location, date and the explanation of the injury.
- Any unexplained injury should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding lead.

Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions are logged on MyConcern.

If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the DSL or deputy. The DSL or deputy will assess all reported cases and ensure that the following are included:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- The child's name, date of birth, any disability or special needs.
- Have there been any previous concerns
- Whether there are any other agencies or practitioners involved with the child.
- Whether concerns have been discussed with parents or carers and their reactions.
- What the child wants to happen, once he/she has confided in you
- Is the child currently or previously been a child in need or on a child protection plan?
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- Action taken, by whom, when, decisions reached and outcome.

Safeguarding information is kept confidential and stored securely and separately from the child's academic records by the DSL, in separate child protection files for each child.

STAFF GUIDANCE

Talking and Listening to Children - Guidance for staff:

A child will very often find it very difficult to confide in someone about their abuse as they will feel that they are 'telling on' someone more powerful than they are, and so will become very adept at covering up abuse and explaining plausibly what has happened. A child may have to betray someone who is close to them and loved by them and they may also be afraid that you will not believe what they are telling you.

If a child wants to confide in you, you SHOULD

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace. Do not interrupt or prompt
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell and that they are not to blame;
- Remain calm
- If they confide in you in a group situation, make a time to speak to them in private as soon as possible
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- If they are in immediate danger or need emergency medical care make sure that the relevant emergency service is contacted
- Make sure that the child is safe;
- Make a careful record of what was said.
- Report what you have been told to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible (or to a senior member of staff in their absence). This **must** be on the same day.

You should NEVER

- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping secrets to children;
- Never take photographs or examine an injury
- Never examine marks/injuries solely to assess whether they may have been caused by abuse
- Ask leading questions (i.e. questions requiring only a 'yes' or 'no' answer)
- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Never ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (The Designated Safeguarding Lead)

What information do you need to obtain?

- School staff are not responsible for investigating safeguarding concerns in the way that social workers or police do. However, they **do have a duty to listen carefully**, clarify basic details if needed, and ensure **accurate, timely referrals** are made to the DSL or safeguarding team.
- Never prompt or probe with leading questions. Your role is to **listen, record and refer**. Use **open questions only** where essential to understand the basic context — *who, what, where, and when* — but avoid exploring the details.
- At the end of the conversation or observation, you should be able to ask yourself: **“Might this be a safeguarding matter?”**
If the answer is **yes** or **you are unsure**, record and pass on your concern to the DSL **immediately**.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and is not ok?

- **Never** ask closed questions (i.e. ones where children can answer yes or no to. E.g. Did he touch you?)
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc.
- If we must, use only **minimal prompts** such as: Tell, Explain, Describe (T.E.D)
- Timescales are very important: **“When was the last time this happened?”** is an important question.

What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- We need to think carefully about our own body language - how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal.
- Be prepared to answer the “what happens next” question.
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we know that (child...) tells lies.
- Think about how you might react if a child DID approach you in school. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity.

Confidentiality

Staff must manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL or deputy and children’s social care.

You can never guarantee confidentiality to a child as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

“I will keep our conversation confidential and agree with you on what information I can share, **unless you tell me something that will affect your personal safety or that is illegal, but I will tell you if I am going to pass information on and who to.**”

Practitioners can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, including social service departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 2018 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared.

Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. It is not necessary to seek consent to share information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child provided that there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required.

Under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, schools can withhold a child's education record where sharing that information would be likely to cause serious harm to the child or another individual. For example, if a child is living in a refuge to escape domestic abuse, and a parent requests access to their educational data, the school may refuse that request if disclosing the information would risk revealing the child's location or put them in danger. This is known as the **serious harm test**, and schools should apply it where necessary to protect a child's safety.

The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies also have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the County Legal Services Department.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Stafford Grammar School has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

Further details on information sharing can be found:

Working together to safeguard children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

Data protection: toolkit for schools

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in making an urgent initial assessment

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will carry out an urgent initial assessment of all cases referred to them. This is carried out by triaging concerns reported through MyConcern.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer to the confidential files on issues of safeguarding. All safeguarding information is stored on MyConcern. Where there are physical files (from school transfers or from the schools previous safeguarding record-keeping system), files are kept in a locked cabinet accessible only to the DSL and deputies. They will refer to registers and pupil files. School Nurses may be asked to share relevant medical information as required. They may talk discreetly with staff or pupils to ascertain relevant information without revealing the nature of the enquiry. This is not an investigation. A written record of the urgent initial assessment will be made, including signed statements where appropriate, which will be kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. On the basis of the urgent initial assessment the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide an appropriate course of action which might involve referring the matter to an outside agency or implementing disciplinary procedures with staff. The decision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be recorded on the urgent assessment report.

The urgent initial assessment must be completed promptly and within 24 hours of the allegation or suspicion being reported. If a welfare agency does need to be informed, this must also happen within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

If it is clear that the nature of the case is a safeguarding matter then the referral must be made immediately. All telephone referrals must be followed up with relevant paperwork within 48 hours. The DSL may choose to ring the Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) team or other agency for advice on a specific case. The agency may request it to be escalated straight to a safeguarding referral.

Thresholds for referral to Children's Services

Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers that a referral to Children's Services may be required, there are two thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

- 1) Is this **child in need**? Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 says that it is if;
 - they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.
 - their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
 - they are disabled.

2) Is this a **child protection matter**? (Section 47 of the Children Act 1989)

The local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- Is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order
- Is in Police Protection
- Reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A Practitioner making a child protection referral under Section 47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Any member of staff is able to make a referral themselves (informing the DSL when they have done so) and the procedure for doing so is outlined periodically on staff training days.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration should be given to the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration.

Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development. In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

It should also be considered whether:

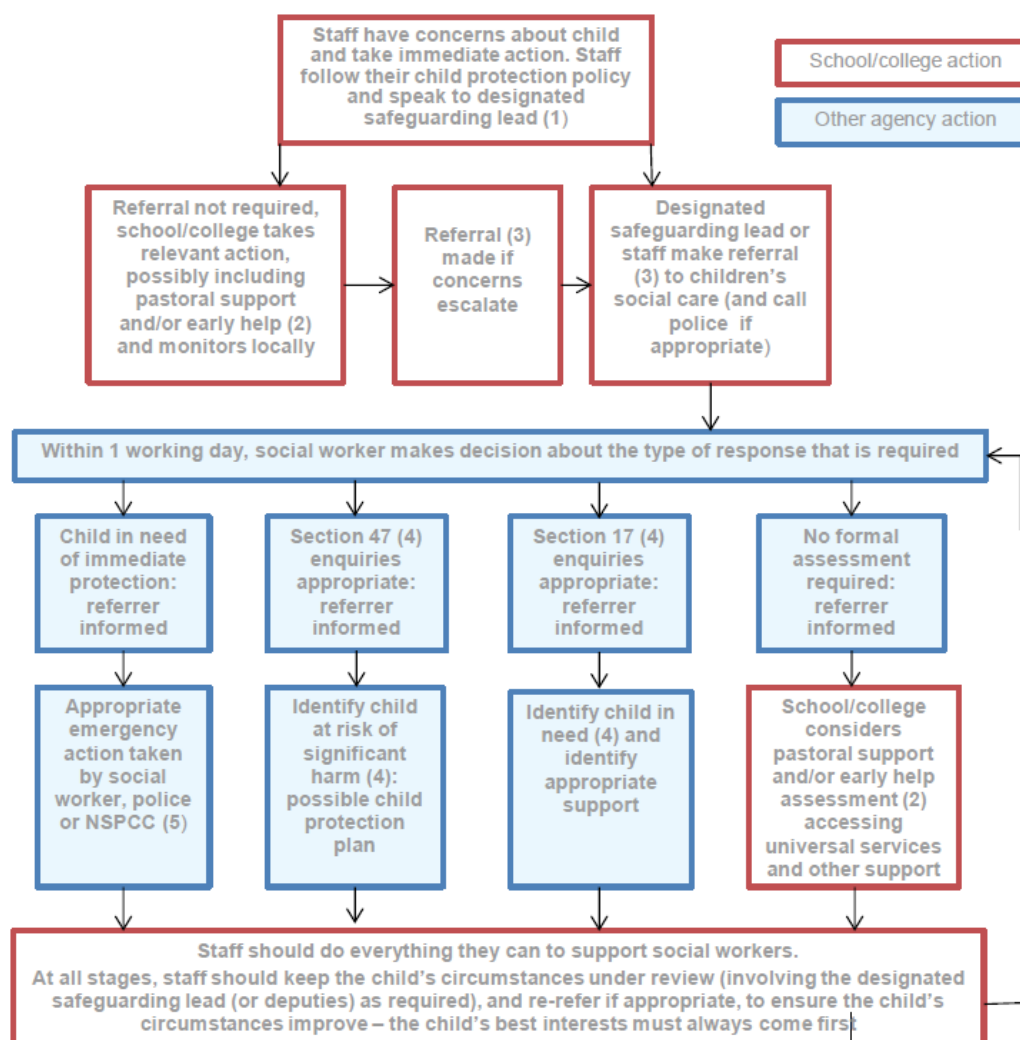
Is this a child with additional needs where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? Staffordshire Children and Young People's Framework says practitioners should complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) /Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the EHA/CAF trained practitioner in your school, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for the EHA/CAF to be completed. Pupils over the age of 18 might be able to give their own consent if they are sufficiently competent to do so. The School's EHA/CAF co-ordinator may need to make a referral directly to other agencies, or request the support of Staffordshire County Council Local Support Team (LST). Staff will follow the guidance of the SSCP Threshold Document - accessing the right help at the right time

(www.staffsscb.org.uk – procedure 1E). The school will inform the LST Co-ordinator when EHA/ CAF is started, and when it is closed, irrespective of whether or not there is an LST worker involved with the family.

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).

A Summary of the reporting procedure:

Child in need > DSL > children's social care

Child at risk > DSL > children's social care / police if crime committed – immediately / within 24 hours or one working day

Making referrals to children's services

1) Child in Need / Section 17 Referrals

A child in need is defined under the children act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of services or a child who is disabled.

It is important that the relevant information is sent to the correct agencies. It is very important, therefore, that the home address of the child is taken into account. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a 'Child in Need' referral is appropriate, he/she will speak with parents / young person and obtain their consent for referral to the Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support Service (formally known as First Response) to request an assessment, unless doing so would put the child at risk. **If parents refuse to give consent, but the child's needs are not being met, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss the issues with the Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support.**

Appropriate School staff should be invited to participate in Child in Need (CIN) meetings convened by Children's Social Care when children are deemed to require section 17 services.

Some children in 'acute need' (see SSCP Threshold guidance) may require Section 47 support. This could include children who self-harm or disclose an intent to commit suicide (SSCP procedure 4U). Where the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, from harm it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

2) Child Protection / Section 47 Referral (*Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm*)

Children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm include those where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, FGM or other so-called honour-based violence and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

This referral must be made if it is felt that the child is at risk and should be made immediately. The SSCP/ Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally known as first response) should be contacted immediately. The CAF / Multi Agency Referral Form should still be completed and sent as soon as possible, certainly within 24 hours.

You do not require the consent of a parent / carer or child to make a child protection referral. A parent / carer should, under most circumstances, be informed by

the referrer that a child protection referral is to be made. The criteria for not informing parents / carers are:

- Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child / children
- Because in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede an investigation that may need to be undertaken
- Because there would be undue delay caused which would not serve the child's best interests

The best interest of the child is the primary consideration. Whilst Stafford Grammar School seeks positive working relationships with parents, fear of jeopardising that relationship by making a referral is not sufficient justification for not telling parents that you are making a referral.

As per statutory government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2024), anyone can make a referral. However, due to the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, this member of staff may be party to additional and pertinent information and therefore is best placed to do so. If it is not possible to speak to the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, or there would be an unwarranted delay by doing so, the member of staff should contact the Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support Team (formally known as First Response) to discuss concerns. In these circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed about the referral as soon as possible.

For referral to the **Staffordshire Local Authority service, Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally known as First Response) phone 0300 111 8007 and speak to the operator and ask for the Duty Officer noting their name and time of the call.**

You will need to follow this up with written confirmation on the Multi-agency referral form within 48 hours for CIN and 24 hours for CP.

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/procedures/>

Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools and colleges 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:

[contextual-safeguarding](#)

Guidance for this procedure is provided by SSCP. Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally First Response) may refer to an adjoining Authority e.g. Telford and Wrekin, if the child lives in that Authority, but attends Stafford Grammar School or you will need to refer directly to the Authority in which the child lives.

If after referral a child's situation does not appear to be improving local escalation procedures should be followed and the DSL should press for a reconsideration to ensure that the concerns of the DSL have been addressed so that the child's situation improves.

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

The DSL or their deputy will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference and provide a written report. A suggested template for this report is available on the Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice document. Parents should be informed of what is in the report before the Conference is held.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher or Head of House to attend the subsequent core group meetings and they will be given appropriate support around safeguarding issues by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in this particular case.

Supporting Pupils at risk

Stafford Grammar School recognises that children who are abused or who witness abuse or violence may find it difficult to have a positive outlook on life and to have high self-esteem. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school they may still present with challenging and defiant behaviour. It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a measured, careful approach so that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

Stafford Grammar School will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of the school behaviour management policy.
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which is displayed.
- Regular liaison with other Practitioners and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, wherever possible and as long as it is in the child's best interests to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable pastoral staff trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

We recognise that children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. It must also be noted that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be particularly vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some

cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience. As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, school should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children

Departmental advice: 'what to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for Practitioners' provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect:

[What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused.](#)

The NSPCC website also provides useful additional information on types of abuse and what to look out for.

It is not easy recognising signs of abuse. Even practitioners struggle at times. If your suspicions are aroused, it is your responsibility to act on your concerns, ***passing them on to the DSL***

Your knowledge of the child will help you to determine any signs of physical abuse or behavioural problems. Do not ignore what your judgement is telling you. If a child in your care is showing signs listed below you should seriously consider the possibility that abuse is taking place. All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and

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

Neglect:

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health, or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2023)

Sexual abuse:

This includes forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This situation could occur in the context of child sexual exploitation through the process of grooming, trafficking or forced prostitution. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, anal or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This category of abuse also includes intended or actual acts resulting in female genital mutilation. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women and children can commit acts of sexual abuse. ***(Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2023)***. If members of staff have concerns about any child they must make them known to the DSL or Deputy ***immediately*** in accordance with reporting and recording procedures.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse (see section on child-on-child abuse later in this policy).

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside the school, inside and outside the home, and online.

Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff are aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Physical abuse:

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

Children may also show signs of self-harm when they are suffering from abuse. Therefore, all cases of self-harm should be made known to the School Nurses or Safeguarding Team. ***(Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2023)***

Emotional abuse:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. ***(Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2023)***

Risk outside of the home:

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. **Extra-familial harms** take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal

exploitation, on-line abuse, teenage relationship abuse, serious youth violence and radicalisation.

What are the effects of child abuse?

Often children are frightened and confused by abuse and do not know who to ask for help or who to trust. The effects of abuse can be wide-ranging and profound and can include the following symptoms/effects:

- Behavioural problems, often being aggressive or withdrawn in school
- Educational problems, such as difficulty concentrating or under-achieving
- Mental health problem e.g. depression
- Relationship difficulties
- Being smelly, unkempt or emaciated through neglect
- Drug and alcohol problems
- Suicide or other self-harm
- In extreme cases, death following abuse

Children in Need of Early Help

Any child may benefit from early help, but staff must 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 EHC plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing / goes missing from education, home or care
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse and/or has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage

If early help is appropriate the DSL or deputy DSLs will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up inter-agency assessment as needed. Staff may still be required or support other agencies and practitioners in an early help assessment and in some cases act as the lead practitioner.

Child-on-Child Abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools)

All staff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This will be highlighted to all staff on staff training days and via email updates periodically.

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. All staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should be aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from prep. through to senior and sixth form. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature.

Stafford Grammar School has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

It is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone 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 nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- Hate crime
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Gang association and serious violence - County Lines
- Radicalisation

All staff are clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Staff are be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report

Staff must report any information about such cases to the DSL or deputy.

All children, whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being 'at risk.'

Please refer to the School's Anti-bullying Policy and Child-on-child Abuse Policy for more information including:

- Procedures to minimise the risk of bullying (child-on-child abuse).
- The systems in place to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.
- How allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with.
- Clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported.

Possible indicators of Abuse

The NSPCC's child protection fact sheet 'Signs of child abuse' provides further information: www.nspcc.org.uk/signsofabuse

It should be noted that some forms of abuse can take place online or technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Physical Abuse:

There can never be a definitive list of indicators of physical abuse but the following are cause for concern. The indicators can be divided into physical and behavioural indicators:

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises, marks, welts, lacerations, abrasions:
 - On face, lips, mouth
 - On torso, back, buttocks, thighs
 - In various stages of healing
 - Clustering forming regular patterns
 - Reflecting shape of article used e.g. belt, buckle, and electrical flex
 - On several different surface areas
 - Regularly appear after absence, weekends, or holiday
- Bite marks or fingernail marks
- Cigar, cigarette burns especially on soles, buttocks, palms or back
- Immersion burns, where hands and feet or body have been forcibly immersed in very hot water
- Patterned like electrical burner, iron etc.
- Rope burns on arms, legs, back or torso
- Unexplained fractures to nose, skull, and facial structure in various stages of healing

Behavioural/Emotional indicators:

Significant changes in the child's behaviour, Difficult to comfort, Apprehension when other children cry, Above normal crying/irritability, Frightened of carers/parents, Afraid to go home, Rebelliousness, Behavioural extremes - aggressiveness-withdrawal – impulsiveness, Regresses to child-like behaviour, Apathy, Depression/poor peer relationship, Panics in response to pain, Refusal to discuss/improbable excuses given to explain injuries, Talking about punishment which seems excessive, Fear of parents being

contacted, Self-destructive tendencies, Chronic running away, Children's comments which give cause for concern.

Emotional Abuse:

Failure to thrive, Not growing or putting on weight, Delays in physical development or progress, Physical, mental and emotional developmental delay, Talk about being punished in a way that seems excessive, Over react to mistakes, Develop sudden speech disorders, Show fear of new situations, Show inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations, Demonstrate neurotic behaviour - rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking, Self-mutilation, Fear of parents being contacted, Show extremes of passivity or aggression, Become involved in drink/drug abuse, Chronic running away, Compulsive stealing, Scavenging for food, Be seen to 'buy' affection, Deterioration in general well-being .

Emotional abuse causes damage to emotions and feelings and because it is difficult to measure it is the most difficult form of abuse to prove. Parents and carers can emotionally abuse children by being cold and unloving and not giving or returning love and affection. They may show an active dislike of a child by being rude and unpleasant all or most of the time, being negative and always complaining instead of praising. Equally they can be inconsistent by being loving one day and very unpleasant the next. Often one child in the family becomes the 'scapegoat' or focus of family unpleasantness.

Neglect:

Neglect is not always easy to recognise, but the following may cause concern when considered in relation to the age of the child:

Constant hunger, Poor hygiene, Inappropriate dress, Consistent lack of supervision, Poor state of clothing, Unattended physical problems or medical needs, Abandonment, Weight problems, Stealing food, Constant fatigue, listlessness, Problems in relationship with care-giver, Regularly not collected on time from school, Frequent lateness, non-attendance at school, Destructive tendencies, Low self-esteem, Neurotic behaviour - rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking, Begging.

Sexual Abuse:**Physical indicators:**

Pregnancy, Sickness, Excessive crying, Difficulty in walking/sitting down, Stained or bloody underclothing, Pain or itching in genital area

Behavioural / emotional indicators:

The possible emotional/behavioural signs of possible sexual abuse are likely to vary according to the extent of the abuse, the duration of the abuse and their age. Children of different ages have different levels of knowledge and understanding about sexual matters this means that sexual abuse will impact differently on a young child compared to an adolescent.

Children aged 11+

- Hint about secrets they cannot tell
- Say that a friend has a problem

- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you something
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught
- Have unexplained sources of money
- Start wetting/soiling
- Show sudden, inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities such as music, sport, and gym
- Be reluctant to undress for PE
- Become fearful of, refuse to see certain adults for no apparent reason
- Act in a sexual way inappropriate to their age
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse
- Write about sexual acts that is inappropriate to their age
- Seem old beyond their years
- Develop eating disorders
- Become depressed and even attempt suicide
- Have a poor self-image, self-mutilate
- Continually run away
- Regress to younger behaviour patterns
- Surround themselves with previously discarded cuddly toys
- Say that they are no good, evil, dirty
- Engage in criminal behaviour
- Use drink and drugs to excess
- Unable to concentrate
- Have low self esteem
- Sexually abuse themselves

Domestic Abuse

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

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Domestic abuse continues to be a prevalent risk factor identified through children social care assessments for children in need. 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.

Domestic abuse could be physical violence against the child but it is also important that staff are aware that a child witnessing abuse of another adult or child (e.g. parent / sibling)

is also emotional abuse and should be treated just as seriously. Key indicators and signs would be the same as those for physical / emotional abuse.

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. 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 the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

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

Exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects

Refuge – 'what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children'

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000 247

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of

violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

CSE and CCE 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 CCE 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.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE and CSE where children:

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

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

Child Sexual Exploitation

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse 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 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.

CSE 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. It can range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

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

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

All staff must be aware of the threat of CSE and the signs that may be displayed by a child that is a victim of it. As stated in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

Like all forms of child sex abuse, CSE:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Stafford Grammar School recognises that no community or social group is immune to the risk of CSE or CCE, including on-line, and it can affect both boys and girls. Children can be perpetrators as well as victims. We provide sensitive, age appropriate education, including for younger children, on these issues. For example, drama performances from visiting theatre companies and presentations by outside speakers. This accompanies existing initiatives in PSHE lessons around on-line safety, sexuality and development, choice and consent, healthy relationships, harmful social norms and recognising abusive behaviours. Pastoral care practitioners, including the school nurses, raise awareness and parents are educated about risks.

There are particular concerns within the local area of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire about the rising number of cases of this sort of abuse. **Concerns of this nature would be reported to the SSCP without delay**, and to the police. The school also educates children about the dangers of CSE and CCE through the PSHE programme.

Underlying Risk Factors for CSE:

The following are typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse:

Poor school attendance, Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance misuse, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality), Substance abuse/parental substance abuse, Mental health issues, Learning disabilities, Recent bereavement or loss, Unsure about sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to families, History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of so-called honour-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect), Living in residential care, hostel or bed and breakfast environment, Criminality, Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang associated CSE only), Homeless, Lacking friends of the same age group, Living in a gang neighbourhood, Low self-esteem and self-confidence, Young carer.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance, Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

County Lines and Serious Violence

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

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

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

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

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

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Stafford Grammar School is aware of the potential for children to be used in a 'county lines' scenario.

If any member of staff believes that a county lines situation exists, they must inform the DSL or a Deputy DSL without delay.

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplainable and/or persistent absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

If any member of staff believes that a pupil is involved in serious violent crime in any form, they must inform the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

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.

RADICALISATION - Pupils drawn into terrorism (and prevention of radicalisation)

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of a schools' safeguarding approach.

- Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to: (1) negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; (2) or undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).
- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- 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.

Extremists often target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow divisions between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justifying discrimination towards women and girls; seeking to persuade others that minorities are inferior; or arguing against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

As part of our safeguarding ethos and Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development (SMSC)/British Values Audit, we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views.

This section of Stafford Grammar School's Safeguarding policy takes due regard of HM Government's Prevent Duty Guidance document (2015) and Channel Duty Guidance (2015) and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015. Stafford Grammar School understands its responsibility to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a Prevent referral.

Pupils are encouraged to regard people of all faiths and none, races and cultures with respect and tolerance. Whilst different people may hold different views about 'right and wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law. At Stafford Grammar School we will promote fundamental British values and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils by:

- Enabling students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Enabling students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Encouraging students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely

- Enabling students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- Furthering tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures
- Encouraging respect for other people, and
- Encouraging respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

Stafford Grammar School is, however, mindful of existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

Some vulnerable students may become isolated or marginalized and as such could be at risk of exploitation by extremist groups. As part of our Safeguarding responsibility to ensure that all children are safe, we will work with other agencies such as Channel, to ensure that young people and their families are supported.

All staff complete the on-line Prevent Awareness training as part of their induction. All teachers complete Prevent Referrals training as part of induction. All staff know to treat concerns over radicalisation as a safeguarding issue and to follow the standard procedures for this. They can also report concerns directly to Children's Services or the police. Referrals can also be made to the 'Channel' programme.

Visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by children themselves, are checked to ensure their suitability and are appropriately supervised (see Recruitment policy). This is recorded on the Visiting Speaker Log.

Stafford Grammar School already focuses on children's personal, social and emotional development but teaching children about fundamental British values is conducted in an age appropriate way (especially for those children at SPS), through ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.

Prevent Duty

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept. 2025) – it is clear that radicalism is one of a number of safeguarding concerns.

CHANNEL DfE helpline 0207 340 7264

The Local Police can also be contacted on 101 and speak to the Prevent Manager.

Staffordshire Police Prevent team: call 01785 232054 website [Prevent | Staffordshire Police](#)

Dealing with reports of radicalisation / extremism:

1. Discuss with Safeguarding Team

2. Discussion with Headteacher

3. Referral to Social Care

4. Phone call to Police

5. Phone call to parents after the above has taken place and if advised to do so.

Prevent Referral Forms should be emailed to:

ctu_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk

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 are assessed and 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 the school or college 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.

The designated safeguarding lead 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.

Channel aims to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals.
- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.
- The Channel programme focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's participation in the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.
- Schools have a duty to cooperate with the Channel programme in the carrying out of its functions, and with the Police in providing information about an individual who is referred to Channel (Section 38, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015).

Guidance Documents:

- The Prevent Duty.
- Educate Against Hate
- ACT Early | Prevent radicalisation

See Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment towards the end of this policy

Honour-based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Practitioners in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. If in any doubt at all, staff should speak to the DSL without delay.

Through our PSHE programme, we deal with 'Education against Hate' as part of our membership of the Safer Schools initiative. At Stafford Grammar School we have arranged sessions run by Communities Against Crimes of Hate (CACH).

Resources are used from:

www.educateagainsthate.com

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

In conjunction with our Missing Child Policy, where a child is missing from school or taken abroad, consideration must be given to the potential motivation for the child's absence from school.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriages

This policy and the procedures at Stafford Grammar School follow the 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Any indications that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Forced Marriage are imminent, or have already taken place, will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. In support of this provision, we will do everything that we can to ensure that:

- Our school is an 'open environment', where students feel able to discuss issues that they may be facing;
- The DSL and Deputies are aware of the issues surrounding FGM and Forced Marriage;
- Advice and signposting is available for accessing additional help, e.g. the NSPCC's helpline, ChildLine services, Forced Marriage Unit
- Awareness raising about FGM is incorporated in the school's safeguarding training.

FGM (sometimes referred to as Female Genital Cutting (FGC) or female circumcision) is an illegal and life-threatening form of abuse. It involves the removal of part or all of the external female genitalia, or any injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It typically happens to girls between 5 and 8 years old, although it has been performed on babies, and can take place any time before a young woman is married. UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyan, Somali, Sudanese, Sierra Leone, Egyptian, Nigerian and Eritrean, as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani. Obviously, this not to say that all families from the communities listed above practise FGM.

As FGM is a very hidden form of abuse, teachers and school staff are often the only Practitioners that can identify children at risk of this and they play a vital role in protecting them from harm.

Examples of signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM:

- A child's family being from one of the 'at-risk' communities for FGM (mentioned earlier)
- Has an older sibling, or someone else in the family who has undergone FGM
- Talks about having a 'special ceremony' or a 'special procedure' to become a woman
- School holidays are a particular time of risk for a girl to be taken abroad for the purpose of FGM. Teachers may have cause for concern where:
- A young person talks of going abroad to be 'cut', or get ready for marriage
- A girl is going abroad but may seem vague about where they are going and how long for, is reluctant to talk about the holiday, or seems upset and scared when discussing it but will not say why.
- Parents ask to take their daughter out of school before the holidays begin and/or are uncommunicative or become aggressive when asked about their plans

Examples of signs that a pupil may be the victim of FGM:

- Is absent for a long time from school
- Goes to the toilet more than usual or stays in there for an unusually long time
- Is not able to cross her legs when she is sitting down on the floor
- Tries to get out of doing PE
- Suffers urinary tract infections
- Is in pain and clutches her body
- Bladder or menstrual problems e.g. Is absent from school for a week when on her period (if she has started)
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as the child being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Finding it difficult to sit still, and looking uncomfortable

- Complaining about pain between their legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Disclosure

Why is FGM carried out?

Reasons cited include social acceptance, family honour, ensuring a girl is 'marriageable', preservation of a girl's virginity or chastity, custom and tradition, and the mistaken belief that it enhances fertility and makes childbirth safer. There is a common misconception that there is a religious element to FGM. This is not the case – FGM is not a requirement of any religion. Within FGM-practising communities there is a belief among many that it is the right thing to do. Parents may think that if they do not carry it out their daughter will be an outcast. The pressure for girls to be cut is immense, as is the pressure to stay silent about the practice, with some even being threatened with violence if they speak out.

What to do / mandatory reporting duty:

It is essential that all staff know that FGM is not a cultural issue but one of child abuse, which **they have a legal duty to report.**

Teachers and other healthcare Practitioners are required to report cases of FGM in girls under 18 which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police (if a girl tells you that she has had FGM or other signs indicated that she has had FGM).

Staff must raise any FGM related concerns with the DSL. Reporting is a personal duty: the person who identifies FGM / receives the disclosure must make the report. This can be done by ringing the non-emergency crime number, 101, as soon as possible but definitely by the close of the next working day. School staff must not examine a pupil. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

As with any safeguarding concern, children's social care must be informed. If the concerns are based on more concrete indicators – i.e. the young person says this is going to happen to them, or disclosure that it has happened to them or to an older sister – a child protection referral should be made.

If there is a disclosure of abuse of this kind, or staff are concerned for any other reason, they are advised:

- To alert the DSL to their concerns. This member of staff will then refer concerns to children's social care, who will inform the police if they need assistance. If a pupil has disclosed that they are at risk in this way, the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the pupil's wishes.

Staff should not:

- Contact the parents or community before seeking advice from children's social care.
- Make any attempt to mediate between the child/young person and parents.

It is important to keep in mind that the parents may not see FGM as a form of abuse; however, they may be under a great deal of pressure from their community and or family to subject their daughters to it. Some parents from identified communities may seek advice and support as to how to resist and prevent FGM for their daughters, and education about the harmful effects of FGM may help to make parents feel stronger in resisting the pressure of others in the community. Remember that religious teaching does not support FGM.

It is essential that we take such concerns seriously and act ***immediately***. Never underestimate the determination of parents who have decided that it is right for their daughter to undergo FGM. Attempts to mediate may place the child/young person at greater risk, and the family may feel so threatened at the news of their child's disclosure that they bring forward their plans or take action to silence her.

Forced Marriage

Forcing another person into marriage is illegal. It can affect both males and females and has involved all age groups. Arranged marriages only occur with the consent of both parties. A forced marriage is one entered into without the free and full consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional or psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent, for example if they have learning disabilities. It often leads to sexual, physical and emotional abuse. The effects on the victims can lead to isolation, depression, self-harm and even suicide.

Schools play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

This should be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will then contact the police if it is known that this abuse is happening, children's social care/MASH team if the child is vulnerable, and the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) if it is known a forced marriage is about to occur/has occurred, this includes even if the child has already been taken abroad.

Due to the potential honour based killing or further abuse if the victim is found to have informed the authorities, the situation must be dealt with very carefully. Speak to the Forced Marriage Unit and see the Forced Marriage survivors' handbook for guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/survivors-handbook>

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

The Modern Slavery Act (2015)

Any form of slavery is against the law. The Modern Slavery Act places a statutory duty on public authorities, including schools, to notify the National Crime Agency (NCA) (Tel: 0370 496 7622) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to modern slavery e.g. suspected cases of human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. It is important to know that children do not need to give their consent to be referred to the NCA. All members of staff who have any relevant concerns should speak to the DSL immediately. The DSL should contact the NCA and also the local authority safeguarding team.

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

Children who have been the victims of abuse

Children who have been the victims of abuse or have witnessed violence or trauma may need additional support and care in order to develop their self-esteem. Their behaviour may be challenging and Stafford Grammar School will endeavour to support the pupil in a number of ways:

- Appropriate curriculum
- Maintaining an ethos promoting a positive, secure and supportive environment to build pupil self esteem
- Ensuring that the Behaviour Policy provides support for vulnerable pupils
- Liaison with other agencies and professional services (e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) etc.
- Ensuring that if any child on the Child Protection register leaves Stafford Grammar School that their information is transferred to the new school and the child's social/case worker is informed. If no explanation for leaving is given, the school will inform the LEA.

Cybercrime

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

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,

- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and remote access trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above

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

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

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Mental Health

All staff 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. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

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 these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Stafford Grammar School aims to prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of a whole school approach to social and emotional wellbeing, through a variety of strategies including Life and Wellbeing lessons, the Be Someone Tutor programme, assemblies and access to our school nurses, etc.

Our fully qualified school nurses are particularly knowledgeable and skilled in promoting well-being and mental health and in supporting pupils and staff with mental health support and signposting. Several members of staff have achieved mental first aid qualifications.

Useful advice and guidance:

Mental health and behaviour in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. ***Children with SEND are more prone to peer group isolation than other children and additional pastoral support will be considered as appropriate.***

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

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Children absent from or not receiving a suitable education (including children who run away)

This section of the Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Missing Child Policy.

Safeguarding Procedures must always be implemented if there is a child protection concern regarding the missing child.

Children who are not receiving suitable education are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk, and this can include engagement in anti-social or criminal behaviour, social disengagement and/or sexual exploitation, child criminal and sexual exploitation and county lines.

Below is a list of children who are likely be absent from education:

- Children at risk of forced marriage;
- Children entering or leaving the independent schools sector;
- Young people who have committed criminal offences and/are returning from custody;
- Children living in women's refuges;
- Children in homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, houses of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast accommodation;
- Young runaways;
- Children with long-term medical or mental health needs,

- Children who have particular social and behavioural difficulties and have personalised learning plans: this means that, by arrangement, they do not attend their usual school full-time;
- Children who have complex needs and no suitable school place is available;
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees, or the children of asylum seeking families;
- Looked after children;
- Children from Gypsy/Roma/Traveller background and alternative provision has not been made;
- Young carers;
- Children and young people from transient families, i.e. pupils who have experienced high levels of mobility between different education providers;
- Teenage mothers of compulsory school age;
- Children permanently excluded from school;
- Children informally excluded from school and/or those placed on long-term part-time timetables;
- Children and young people of statutory school age who rarely attend school and have personalised learning plans as part of attempts to reintegrate them into full-time education;
- Children taken off their school roll following a lengthy absence due to an unapproved extended family holiday taken in term-time;
- EC nationals who have the right of abode in the UK – this now includes a significant number of asylum seekers granted status by other EC countries and who have subsequently moved to the UK;
- Others who have come from abroad to live and/or work in the Borough are waiting a school place;
- Children in private fostering arrangements.

A child running away or going missing from school and or from home is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or abduction.

Safeguarding procedures are in place within the registration systems at Stafford Grammar School, to identify children who may have gone missing/run away:

- Parents are requested to inform school, by 9 a.m. if their child is not going to be attending school that day.
- In the first instance, if no contact has been made by the parent, the school receptionist will try to phone the parent directly.
- If no contact has still been made by the second day, the school will take investigative procedures including: asking the friends of missing pupils for any current information, checking with the pupil's named emergency contacts/telephone numbers, checking all school records to see if a change of address has been entered.
- By the third day, if contact has still not been made or the pupil's whereabouts not confirmed, then the LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers) will be contacted and advice and guidance taken from them.

The local authority should be informed when a child has been absent for 10 days or more without the school's permission. The school should, where reasonably possible, hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student.

If the parent/guardian is spoken to and says the child is receiving education overseas and offers for you to speak to them on the phone, decline. Tell them that the child is reported as absent from education and must be taken to the nearest British Embassy/consulate. The child may be under duress or you may not actually be speaking to the child you think you are.

If/when a child returns to school, a return to school interview should be conducted with the parents and the pupil.

It is crucial that staff follow the procedures for dealing with children that are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse or neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risk of being absent in future. (refer to the Attendance and Register Policy)

Children who need a Social Worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

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.

The DSL (and deputies) should hold information about children with a social worker so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. 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).

Review of children in need

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-children-in-need/review-of-children-in-need>

Looked after children/children in care and previously looked after children

Looked after and previously looked after children are particularly vulnerable groups of children and prompt action should be taken by all agencies where it is necessary to safeguard them.

Training needs will be reviewed annually depending upon whether looked after children are on roll at Stafford Grammar School. If such children are on roll, governors will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority. This will include ensuring that the main DSL has responsibility for their welfare and progress and has up to date assessment

information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents, and delegated authority to carers.

Staff will be informed of information on a need to know basis to preserve confidentiality. The DSL will share as much information as is required to ensure these children are kept safe. Statutory guidance to local authorities about how they are to support schools with the care and education of these pupils can be found in the document: Promoting the education of looked after children. Copies can be found at www.gov.uk and in the Safeguarding area on the school network.

The statutory guidance document for designated teachers for looked after children takes into account changes arising from the Children and Social Work Act (2017). 'Previously LAC' is defined as a child who is no longer LAC because they have been adopted, placed under a special guardianship order, or a child arrangement order. The guidance refers to the higher likelihood that such young people will experience periods of mental ill-health as a result of their early experiences. In particular, designated staff should have a good understanding of attachment issues, and should raise awareness of these issues with staff.

It is very important to listen to the voice of the child as indicated by the guidance from Staffordshire Virtual School Pupils:

- Be available, take the time to get to know me
- Notice if I am upset or angry and listen to me when I need help
- Understand that although I have had a different past than most people, it doesn't mean I need to be treated differently
- Understand my experience of being looked after
- Understand that my past will affect my present and future behaviour, even if I don't notice.

Private Fostering

By law, the contents of the school admissions register must contain the personal details and information regarding parents and carers of every pupil in the school – including any private fostering arrangements. Private fostering is an arrangement made between the parents of or person with parental responsibility for a child/young person under the age of 16 years (18 years if disabled) and someone other than a parent or relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

The Children Act 1989 (C.A.1989) defines a relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt (by blood or marriage) or step parent. It is not a private fostering arrangement when a child/young person is cared for by anyone defined by the Children Act 1989 as a relative. (A step-parent is a guardian that replaces a mother or father, but to be a legal step-parent you have to marry one of the parents.) An arrangement where a child is cared for, for 28 days or more by a member of their extended family who is not according to this definition a relative e.g. a cousin, great-aunt, great grandparent, is a private fostering arrangement – and this is deemed as private fostering irrespective of whether a financial payment is made to the carer or not.

Private foster carers may be from the child's extended family, they may be family friends but they may also previously be unknown to the child or child's parent. As there is no register of private foster carers, families have to find these carers themselves. Parents have no access to criminal record checks and most will have little understanding of the risks they may face. Children privately fostered are a diverse and potentially vulnerable group.

A private foster carer becomes responsible for day-to-day care which promotes the safety and welfare of the fostered child. However, it is the legal duty of the local authority to ensure the safety and wellbeing of privately fostered children in their area and to ensure that unsuitable persons are prevented from fostering a child privately.

The local authority does not formally approve private foster carers or register them as private foster carers, but is required to satisfy itself that private foster care arrangements are safe and satisfactory in every respect – and to this end it is vitally important that all staff are aware of their duty to inform the DSL at their site about any private fostering arrangements which come to their attention, so that this can then be reported to the Local Authority MASH team.

Host Families and Home Stay During Exchange Visits

Stafford Grammar School rarely makes arrangements for foreign exchange visits.

The School has a responsibility for the safety and welfare of children during any exchange arranged and for considering how best to minimise risk of harm to those children involved. This would include when organising for the care and accommodation of a child with a host family (known as homestays) as part of the exchange.

School arranged homestay – suitability of adults in UK host families

When arranging a homestay, the school should consider the suitability of the adults in the respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay.

In rare circumstances where the school arranges for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK (including where they engage a company to make those arrangements) in the home of a family to which the child is not related the responsible adults will be engaging in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases the school would be the regulated activity provider. A regulated activity provider commits a criminal offence if it knows, or has reason to believe that, an individual is barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from engaging in regulated activity but allows that individual to carry out any form of regulated activity. The School should obtain a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information. In addition to those engaging in regulated activity, the school may choose to also obtain a DBS enhanced certificate in respect of anyone aged 16 or over in the household where the child will be staying.

Where the child's parent(s) or a student themselves arranges their own homestay, this would be a private arrangement therefore the school would not be the regulated activity provider.

Homestay – suitability of adults in host families abroad

It is not possible for the school to obtain criminality information from the DBS about adults who provide homestays abroad. The School should liaise with partner schools abroad, to establish a shared understanding of the arrangements in place both before and during the visit. The School should also satisfy itself that these are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard effectively every child who will take part in the exchange. The School may contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK.

Additional action for extended homestays

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more, for a child aged under 16 years of age (under 18 years of age if the child has disabilities), this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act 1989. In these cases the school should notify the local authority of the arrangements.

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 they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Stafford Grammar School provides outdoor safety lessons as part of the Life and Wellbeing Programme. These lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

Further information is available at:

www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds

www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Stafford Grammar School understands the stress that these circumstances can cause for its pupils and will seek to support pupils throughout the school day, providing flexibility where necessary and access to the school nurses when needed.

Children with Family Members in Prison

Stafford Grammar School recognises that these children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The school will be alert to these children's needs, provide the support available in school and seek external support for these children if needed through the local partnership arrangements referral procedures.

Homelessness

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

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the DSL (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Safeguarding Pupils' confidentiality and Protecting against suspicious telephone calls

In order to protect children from suspicious contact made with the school, no change to pupils' details (including medical details) will be taken over the telephone. Changes to pupils' details must be in writing and delivered in person by the parent/guardian or the child themselves. Pupils' details are not to be discussed over the telephone when the

origin of the call is uncertain i.e. staff should make every effort to be sure that they are speaking to the parent/guardian.

Pupils in work placements

The work experience co-ordinator organises work experience of one week for Year 11 pupils with insurance provision. No pupil undertakes long-term work experience. All reasonable safeguards are taken such as visiting Year 11 pupils while working and setting up the placements formally.

Some pupils also undertake Volunteering in the Community for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award or as part of their sixth form programme.

The pupils are aware of which teacher to contact if a problem or uncomfortable situation occurs. (See Work Experience Policy for more details)

Alternative Provision

Where the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and takes steps to ensure it is satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs. This includes: gaining written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate staff safeguarding checks have been carried out, as well as written information about any arrangements that may put the child at risk; having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend; regularly reviewing any alternative provision placements to make sure the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. If safeguarding concerns occur, the placement will be immediately reviewed and ended if necessary.

Use of school premises for non-school activities

Where school premises/facilities are hired or rented out to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) Stafford Grammar School will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The school will therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The school will also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The school will expect that providers follow the guidance on Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings.

School Transfers

Stafford Grammar School is legally required to inform the Local Authority about the details of:

- All children and young people admitted to or removed from the roll of their school;
- Any children and young people who have been out of school without the schools' permission (i.e. marked unauthorised absence) for a continuous period of 10 school days or more;
- Any child who is absent regularly;
- Any children and young people on part-time education arrangements;
- Any child taken out of school to be educated by their parents or outside the school system e.g. home education (where this is the parents intention it is recommended that LAs, schools, and other key professionals work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker).
- Any child who has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- Any child whom has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe that they will be returning to school at the end of that period; or
- They have been permanently excluded.

If a pupil fails to attend on an agreed or notified date, the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going absent from education.

The grounds for deleting a pupil from the school roll will be recorded and the LA will be informed. We also inform the LA within 5 working days of a new pupil joining the school roll. It is essential that this happens so that the local authority can identify children of compulsory school age who are not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Use of mobile phones, cameras, iPads and digital media

Children at Stafford Grammar School have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for developmental records, as well as for use in educational activities and school displays. Stafford Grammar School may also use photographic

images in publicity but will ensure that such images are in no way demeaning to the child. Stafford Grammar School has a separate ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

All pupils (except Sixth Form students) are not permitted to use mobile phones during school hours. If pupils need to bring a mobile phone to school, they are expected to place it into their Yondr phone pouch, where it will be locked inside until the end of the school day. Pupils found to be in possession of a mobile phone out of the phone pouch will receive a school sanction and the mobile phone will be confiscated. Students are also permitted to hand their phones into the school office, where it can remain until the end of the day.

Staff are encouraged not to use their mobile phones where avoidable during lessons and during regulated activities. Under no circumstances should any staff be expected or allowed to use their personal equipment (including their mobile phones) to take images of pupils at or on behalf of the school. It is commonplace for staff to wish to take photos of pupils for marketing and other school business purposes but this must be done using a school device.

EYFS: The use of mobile phones and cameras is restricted in the EYFS setting. Staff, pupils or visitors should not use their personal mobile phones or have mobile phones and other devices that accept calls, messages and video calling, in sight in the EYFS setting. Staff must not use personal cameras in the EYFS setting to photograph children. The only photography in the EYFS setting will be photography for marketing purposes, using school cameras or pupil portraits with parental consent. Staff may also take photographs using an EYFS iPad on a regular basis as evidence for their Learning Journeys. More information can be found in the EYFS phone policy.

E-Safety

The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever developing variety of devices place an additional risk on our children.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Stafford Grammar School adopts a whole school approach to online safety to protect and educate pupils, students, and 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, disinformation, misinformation, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism. (Disinformation is the deliberate creation and spread of false or misleading content, such as fake news. Misinformation is the unintentional spread of this false or misleading content).
- **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;
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If pupils or staff are at risk it should be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group <https://apwg.org/>

Internet gaming, various apps and social media can be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arranging to meet them. Video apps have the potential to be abused by people who bully youngsters into behaviour that is filmed and displayed online which also leaves them vulnerable to blackmail by those who have filmed them.

The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with pupils at this school. Access to abusive images is not a 'victimless' act as it has already involved the abuse of children. Recent legislation makes it an offence to ask young people to send inappropriate pictures of themselves via computers and mobile devices.

Pupils can engage in or be a target of bullying using a range of methods including text and instant messaging to reach their target. Mobile phones are also used to capture violent assaults of other children for circulation. Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes has become a frequent occurrence, as has the posting of pictures on the internet. The sending of images and messages via the internet has the potential for misuse in the context of bullying and the collection of 'followers' or 'likes', and the act of 'following' others is of particular concern as young people do not always know their contacts personally. The technology changes rapidly, and we need to be aware of constant change, and changing trends.

The best protection is to make pupils aware of the dangers through curriculum teaching particularly PSHE and sex and relationship education. E-safety issues i.e. the use of mobile phones and social media, will also be covered in relevant areas of the curriculum, and legal aspects of sending inappropriate forms of communications will also be taught.

In accordance with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy, electronic devices can be obtained for investigation purposes, without consent with the likelihood of them being sent to the police. This will be applicable to all devices held by pupils.

Pupils in Year 8 and Year 10 complete an age-appropriate on-line course about on-line safety for which they receive a certificate.

Protection is Prevention

- Software (Smoothwall) is in place to minimise access and to highlight any person gaining access to inappropriate sites or information.
- The DSL and IT Manager meet regularly to review Smoothwall reports and any actions needed and to review the effectiveness of filtering and security protection.

- Pupils will be encouraged to discuss openly their use of technology and anything which makes them feel uncomfortable. (If this results in child protection concerns the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately)
- Pupils should not give out their personal details, phone numbers, schools, home address, computer passwords etc.
- Pupils should adhere to the school policy on mobile phones which requires them to leave their mobile device in the main school office during the school day.
- Pupils who abuse technology and are found to have inappropriate material on their mobile devices are likely to be suspended from school.
- The Safeguarding Team will address new parents to the school on a biennial basis to inform them and advise about current concerns and trends as part of a safeguarding awareness information evening. Regular on-line safety newsletters are communicated to parents.

Safeguarding and Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The school recognises the evolving landscape of digital technologies, including the growing use of **Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)** tools. In line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)** and the DfE guidance on 'Generative AI: product safety expectations', Stafford Grammar School's online safety provisions extend to the safe and responsible implementation of these technologies. Our filtering and monitoring systems, including Smoothwall, are continuously reviewed to ensure their effectiveness in mitigating risks associated with generative AI, such as the creation or access of inappropriate content. We are committed to supporting the safe use of these tools while ensuring robust safeguards remain in place to protect our pupils.

The Police and Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support (formally First Response) will be involved if there is any criminal element to misuse of the internet, phones or any other form of electronic media.

In response to on-going concerns regarding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire areas, the DSL and School Nurses give a talk to new parents regarding e-safety and preventing the exploitation of children on-line. As well as using the PSHE programme to address and educate everyone about the dangers facing young people today, the school's ICT team ensures that students are prevented from accessing inappropriate material and material that could cause radicalisation on line.

Use of 3G, 4G and 5G in school: in order to limit the access to 3G, 4G and 5G Stafford Grammar School does not permit pupils (except Sixth Form students) to use mobile phones during school hours. If pupils need to bring a mobile phone to school, they are expected to hand it in to the school office upon arrival and collect it at the end of the school day. Pupils found to be in possession of a mobile phone will have it confiscated until the end of the school day and will receive a school sanction. In the Sixth Form, students are allowed to have their mobile phone with them and to use it in designated areas, such as the Sixth Form Common Room or their destination classroom at break time or between lessons. Sixth Form students are required to sign a code of conduct which includes reference to not accessing inappropriate sites (i.e. those that would be blocked by a school filter) via 3G or 4G. The only exception would be social media sites

and apps, such as Facebook or Twitter, which are blocked by school filters but Sixth Form students are allowed to use.

Staff are encouraged not to use their mobile phones where avoidable during lessons and during regulated activities.

Whilst it is essential to ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, we are careful that 'over-blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.

All staff are aware that they must follow usual safeguarding procedures and reports if:

- they witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed
- they can access unsuitable material
- they are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering logs
- there is failure in the software or abuse of the system
- there are perceived unreasonable restrictions that affect teaching and learning or administrative tasks
- they notice abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material

Stafford Grammar School will conduct an annual review of their approach to on-line safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by pupils.

Please see our e-safety policy for further information.

Protecting yourself against allegations of abuse

You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following precautions can be taken when working alone with children.

Staff must:

- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open where possible.
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally.
- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguarding.
- not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses
- not give pupils lifts home in your cars
- not arrange to meet them outside of school hours
- not chat to pupils on the social websites
- not contact ex-pupils who are under the age of 21

Refer to the Staff Behaviour Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policy for clear guidance of social media contact.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil, even when the pupil is over the age of consent.

Any use of physical force or restraint against pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the **Searching, Screening and Confiscation policy**. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from hurting themselves or others, parents will be informed.

Children will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other physical or emotional abuse. All staff will be made aware of guidance from SSCP and Guidance for Safer working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People (May 2017) to ensure that their on-line communication is appropriate and safe.

Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors

Allegations that meet the harms threshold

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer should therefore be taken seriously.

All members of teaching, non-teaching staff and volunteers have a professional duty to report concerns about the conduct of other adults working in the school if there are indications that a child or children could be at risk of harm. Adults working in this school **must** raise any concerns about conduct or practice so that this can be addressed appropriately.

Allegations of abuse made against adults working in the school (i.e. allegations against teaching, non-teaching staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors, the Headteacher and the DSL), whether historical or current, should be reported to the Headteacher (or, ***if the allegation is against the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors***).

Adults working in the school **must** follow the School's 'Whistle Blowing Policy' if they feel unable to follow standard procedures relating to an allegation against staff. (Adopted from the SSCP website www.staffsscb.org.uk procedure 2D).

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors should contact **the LADO directly on 0300 111 8007**.

General guidance on [whistle blowing](#) can be found at this link

The NSPCC [whistleblowing helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/help/whistleblowing-helpline/) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 and the line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

In line with government guidance and SSCP procedures, the Headteacher/Chair of Governors will contact the LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers) to discuss the allegation if the concerns are that anyone working in a school, including supply teachers and volunteers, has:

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

This initial discussion will establish the validity of any allegation under SSCP procedures (www.staffsscb.org.uk procedure 4A) and if a child protection safeguarding referral is required due to a child having suffered or being at risk of suffering 'significant harm'. If this is the case a referral will be raised with the relevant Safeguarding team and a section 47 child protection strategy meeting will be convened that the Headteacher/ Chair of Governors should attend.

If an individual child is not identified but there are concerns about the behaviour of a person in a position of trust which require consideration by other agencies or organisations, the LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers) will convene a Joint Evaluation Meeting (JEM) to consider the issues and any action required.

The fact that a member of staff offers to resign will not prevent the allegation procedure and any necessary disciplinary action reaching a conclusion.

The decision of the strategy/Joint evaluation meeting could be:

- investigation by children's social care
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the Senior HR advisor for the School.

If the matter does not meet the threshold for intervention by other agencies, but concerns remain about the conduct of a person in position of trust working with children, the school will undertake investigatory and, if appropriate, disciplinary action. Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made by the school when necessary in line with current guidance. Referrals should be made as soon as possible, and ordinarily on conclusion of an investigation, when an individual is removed from regulated activity.

Summary of the referral process for allegations about staff that meet the harms threshold:

Staff, DSL, Volunteers > Headteacher > LADO

Headteacher > Chair or Safeguarding Governor > LADO (without informing head)

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (Low Level Concerns)

Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: 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.

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, Stafford Grammar School promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child **does not** meet the threshold set out below:

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

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 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 allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered 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;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

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.

It is crucial that any concerns are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately and confidentially. This should also protect those working in school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings and create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour which are set out in the staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

Sharing Low Level Concerns

Low-level concerns about a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor should be reported to the Headteacher. If the concern is regarding the Headteacher it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

If there is any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, the Headteacher should consult with their LADO.

Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency or a contractor, that concern should be shared with the Headteacher, and recorded in accordance with the school's low-level concern/staff code of conduct policy and their employer notified about the concern, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Recording Low Level Concerns

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing by the Headteacher. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms

threshold, should be referred to the LADO. Consideration should also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies will be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Such information will be retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Substantiated safeguarding allegations only will be provided in references. Low level concerns should not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) should not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it should be referred to in a reference.

Dealing with Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors

Duty of care

The welfare of a child is paramount and this will be the prime concern in terms of investigating an allegation against a person in a position of trust. However, when an allegation or safeguarding concern is being investigated it is likely to be a very stressful experience for the adult subject of the investigation, and potentially for their family members. SGS will offer appropriate welfare support at such a time and recognise the sensitivity of the situation. Information is confidential and should not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

In most cases the school will:

- manage and minimise the stress caused by the allegation
- inform the individual as soon as possible, explaining the likely course of action, guided by the LADO, and the police where necessary;
- advise the individual to contact their trade union representative, or a colleague for support;
- appoint a named representative to keep the person informed about progress of the case;
- provide access to counselling or medical advice where appropriate.
- not prevent social contact with work colleagues and friends, when staff are suspended, unless there is evidence to suggest this may prejudice the gathering of evidence.

Parents or carers of the child or children involved should be:

- formally told about the allegation as soon as possible. The case manager should consult the LADO and where involved children's social care and/or the police on what information can be disclosed;
- kept informed about the progress of the case, only in relation to their child - no information can be shared regarding the staff member;

- made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

Allegations that meet the harms threshold

If staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) posing a risk of harm to children then this should be referred to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, this should be referred to the chair of governors.

The 'Harm Test' as defined on the DBS website will be applied. A person satisfies the 'harm test' if they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm. It is something a person may do to cause harm or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

The governors adopt the following procedure for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers:

Quick resolution of the allegation must be a priority to all concerned. Allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records and any that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious should not be referred to in employer references. Pupils that are found to have made malicious allegations are likely to have breached school behaviour policies. The school should therefore consider whether to apply an appropriate sanction, which could include temporary or permanent exclusion (as well as referral to the police if there are grounds for believing a criminal offence may have been committed).

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed term contract; no longer engaging/ refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training or volunteering. It is important that reports contain as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Stafford Grammar School has a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information that they hold already but they do not have to find it from other sources.

The school also has a duty to consider making a referral to the **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)** where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed if he/she had not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The school should also consider whether a referral to the TRA is appropriate when a settlement or compromise agreement has been entered into.

Where a teacher's employer, including an agency, dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, they must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

If allegations have been made against a teacher and the welfare of a child is at stake, these concerns should be reported to children's social care in addition to the LADO (Designated officer or team of officers) and police.

The reasons such an order may be considered are: 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute', or a 'conviction at any time for a relevant offence. See further guidance on the TRA website.

Further advice can be found in the **KCSIE (September 2024)** document.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation – the test being the balance of probability;
- **Malicious:** there is clear evidence to prove that there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is false;
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated:** this is not the same as a false allegation. There is insufficient evidence to either to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the school should work with the LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers) to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school or college's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

Reporting to the DBS:

Where a teacher is removed or removes themselves from regulated activity because they have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, or they have been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence, the school has a legal duty to refer this to the DBS. Referrals should be made as soon as possible, and ordinarily on conclusion of an investigation, when an individual is removed from regulated activity.

The school will report to the DBS, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children, whether that person was dismissed or would have been dismissed.

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

Stafford Grammar School is aware that failure to take this action and make a report constitutes an offence. 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral

being made to the DBS when it is legally required nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation.

Records should be preserved by schools which contain allegations of sexual abuse for IISCA (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual abuse) for the term of the enquiry. All other records about allegations against staff should be retained until the accused reached pensionable age, or a period of ten years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

In the EYFS setting any allegations against people working at the premises, or any other abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises should be reported to Ofsted as soon as is practicable and within 14 days at latest.

Supply Teachers

Allegations about supply teachers must be dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process. Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the school are under the supervision, direction and control of the governing body when working in the school. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.

Responding and dealing with low level concerns

The Headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses

The information collected will help to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. All of this will be recorded along with the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Personal Disqualification of staff and volunteers

Those staff who work in (or employees who are directly concerned in the management of) childcare for under 5s and wrap-around provision for pupils under the age of 8 (namely early years or relevant later years) must sign a self-declaration and inform the Headmaster if they are personally disqualified as soon as a caution or conviction occurs,

even before the person is formally included on the children's barred list. Stafford Grammar School asks all relevant staff to sign a self-declaration annually.

Staff are reminded each September that if they fall within the scope of the legislation and their circumstances change, they should inform the Headmaster of such changes.

Where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed if they had not resigned) for 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or 'a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence' that would not reach the threshold for a DBS referral a referral to the **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)** should be considered. This may lead to a prohibition order if appropriate. Guidance on making an TRA referral can be found on the gov.uk webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/teacher-misconduct-referring-a-case> Tel: 0207 593 5393 Email: regulation.division@education.gsi.gov.uk

Recruitment, supervision and training for staff (to be read in conjunction with the school's Recruitment Policy)

When recruiting new members of staff, the school follows Staffordshire SSCP guidelines that adhere to government guidance '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**' (**September 2025**), and Safer Recruitment principles, and has due regard to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The school ensures that enhanced DBS checks and Prohibition checks are undertaken in line with government guidance and that appropriate references are obtained. The School will:

- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect of any disciplinary investigations)
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed (where the candidate is not currently employed a reference should be obtained from the most recent employer with the reason for leaving that employment also sought).
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer.

These references are verified by telephone. References will be followed up if insufficient information is provided. Qualifications are also verified. Accredited Safer Recruitment training has been undertaken by senior members of staff and appropriate Governors who sit on recruitment panels in accordance with statutory guidance.

As part of the shortlisting process the school will carry out an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2025): Part 1 & Annex B, must be read and understood by all staff (including all teaching, non-teaching staff and volunteers). All staff are required to sign an acknowledgement that the relevant parts of ***KCSIE (September 2025)*** have been read and understood.

Newly appointed teaching, non-teaching staff and volunteers will have a robust induction into the child protection procedures when they join the school (See New Staff Induction Policy), identifying the DSL and deputy DSLs and their roles. They will be made aware of the 'Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures' (www.staffsscb.org.uk) as part of that induction programme, and be given a copy of the school Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Behaviour Policy, acceptable use of ICT policy, anti-bullying policy, behaviour policy, children absent from education (referred to later in this policy) and ***'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2025)***.

Any reason for staff to be having personal, social contact with pupils at the school must be explained to the Headteacher with the rationale and any safeguarding actions required will be recorded (see Staff Behaviour Policy and SWPG disclosures). Staff will also attend the Level 1 Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People training within their first 3 months of joining Stafford Grammar School (unless they have completed the equivalent training within the last 2 years). The initial Level One Child Protection training given to each member of the organisation will be updated every two years and recorded. The DSL will attend (at least) two yearly training sessions. All staff will undertake Channel Prevent on-line training.

To supplement the regular formal training for staff and two yearly DSL training, other updates will be issued by the safeguarding team through staff meetings and email 'as required but at least annually'.

Any staff member, volunteer or governor who becomes the subject of a police investigation in relation to physical or sexual offences against adults or children, or are charged with such a criminal offence, must inform the Headteacher. Staff must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children whether received before, or during their employment at the school. The Headteacher will discuss any potential safeguarding matters with the LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers) and any required action will be agreed.

Any staff member, volunteer or governor whose own children become subject to child protection investigations must inform the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss with the LADO (Designated Officer of Team of Officers) in regard to procedures for dealing with allegations against persons who work in a position of trust with children. Appropriate action will be agreed.

The DSL and Deputies will attend Staffordshire Safeguarding Board Courses for inter-agency working at Level Three at least every two years (although Stafford Grammar School seeks to provide annual training updates for the DSL and deputy DSLs) in order to maintain continuous professional development and comply with statutory guidance and the SSCP training strategy. Level 3 courses are also available and advisable, in

order to address current safeguarding issues, e.g. e-safety and child sexual exploitation. SSCP facilitate this training as necessary. Application forms must be signed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Stafford Grammar School recognises the importance of professional reflective supervision when working with vulnerable children. Arrangements are in place for the DSL and Deputies to have regular and scheduled supervision. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies offer appropriate support to other staff within the school according to need, or at their request. Peer support between the DSL and deputies is imperative, and will continue to be effective at Stafford Grammar School.

Stafford Grammar School is fully committed to ensuring that safer recruitment practice is followed as outlined by our Recruitment Policy. We comply with the DfE regulations in all employment matters including the required pre-employment and DBS checks (including the '128' prohibition from management check from 2015, if applicable and the EEA check if applicable – see Recruitment Policy).

A person who is subject to a teacher prohibition order must not be appointed to a 'role that involves teaching work'.

Historic disciplinary sanctions that were imposed by the GTCE prior to 2012 should be checked through the teacher services system and can also be found on a DBS disclosure certificate.

Staff who apply to work in provision or management of pupils under the age of 8 (namely early years or relevant later years) will not be employed by Stafford Grammar School if they are 'disqualified'. The grounds for disqualification are not only that a person is barred from working with children (included on the children's barred list) but also include, in summary, that:

- They have been cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home or abroad
- Other orders have been made against them relating to their care of children
- They have had their registration cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering

Raising Pupil Awareness

We aim to promote the welfare and safety of children through a variety of means. These include maintaining the ethos of the school; the daily monitoring of pupils and regular Health and Safety meetings. We also take the opportunity to use information from official bodies to inform our PHSE and/or to pass on to parents. By being flexible we are able to address issues which are of concern nationally or of concern on a local, or even school, level.

The following list is therefore part of the picture:

- Display useful information such as help-lines – Samaritans; support for drug abuse; Child-line etc.
- Assembly time for visiting speakers such as Samaritans.
- Speakers for the Sixth Form have included a group from the Drug Unit and Samaritans.
- Anti-bullying posters and a well-known no tolerance from the school.
- Form Managers, prefects and duty teams pick up concerns from younger pupils and pass on to tutors.
- Mentors from the Sixth Form act as mentors to support pupils on a regular basis.
- Internet access is screened through Smoothwall software.
- PHSE schemes are used throughout the school in dedicated Life and Wellbeing Lessons and regular Form Time Programme. ***This includes the full Relationships, Sex and Health education requirements with a focus on preventative education.***

Government guidance on teaching online safety in schools which outlines how schools can ensure pupils understand how to stay safe online can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

Statutory Guidance on RSHE:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Reporting safeguarding concerns including abuse

It is important that all pupils feel comfortable and able to confidently raise any safeguarding concerns (including any form of abuse or neglect) they have with any member of staff, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing that they can safely express their views and give feedback. Stafford Grammar School aims to achieve this through a variety of strategies and systems including:

- Flexible and confidential access to fully qualified School Nurses on the school site.
- Welcome meetings with School Nurses for new pupils to the school.
- School Nurses involved in the delivery of some Life and Well-being lessons.
- Allocated Form Tutors and Heads of Section.
- Regular Life and Well-being lessons which focus on safeguarding themes, reinforcing reporting channels.
- Regular assemblies which focus on safeguarding themes and reinforce reporting channels.
- Regular communication of external agency support, including NSPCC

Staff Safeguarding Training

Stafford Grammar School takes safeguarding training for staff very seriously and follows guidance from the SSCP local partner arrangements.

All staff will receive Level 1 Safeguarding Training at least once every 3 years. All new staff will receive Level 1 Safeguarding Training within the first 3 months of their employment (if they have not got evidence of having done this within the last 3 years) during term time and this will be delivered by the DSL and/or Deputy DSLs. If level 1 was completed at a different setting, all staff will still receive a safeguarding induction session with the DSL/DDSL.

- Staff complete on-line training around Prevent duty.
- Targeted staff complete on-line training with regard to FGM, CSE and Online safety.
- The **New Staff Induction Policy** provides details of further training including that related to safeguarding and child protection (including online safety).
- Safeguarding Training is regularly updated at whole staff meetings, inset training days and via on-line training modules, email updates, etc.
- Regular safeguarding updates are circulated to all staff by the DSL and safeguarding is often an agenda item on all whole staff meetings and training events, including anti-bullying, online safety and sexual violence and harassment.
- Staff and Governors are also kept up to date with online safety information through receiving a copy of the monthly parents' on-line safety newsletter.
- Staff are also provided with email updates regarding safeguarding from the DSL.
- All staff are encouraged to take ownership over their own safeguarding CPD through access to external courses and in particular to the ABA Anti-bullying online courses, which many staff have completed.
- All staff are expected to read part one and Annex B of the latest KCSIE.
- All staff are expected to read and understand the School's Safeguarding Policy and other key policies. They are informed of any changes.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs

- The DSL and Deputy DSLs all initially receive Level 2 training (The Staffordshire way) and also Level 3 or Level 4 Safeguarding training at least once every 2 years.
- DSL attends Society of Heads DSL support events and termly updates delivered by the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.
- They also keep up to date through subscriptions to regular weekly briefings, including NSPCC, Casper, Andrew Hall specialist, etc.

CONTACT NUMBERS

Further advice on Safeguarding matters can also be obtained from:

Local Contacts

- Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice Service (ESAS) on 01785 895836 or email esas@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 111 8007
- Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support (SCAS) 0300 111 8007
- Emergency Duty Services (EDS-out of hours safeguarding concerns) 0345 604 2886 or email eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Staffordshire Police Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via 101, in an emergency please dial 999
- Stoke-on-Trent Children's Services: Chat and Advice Service (CHAD) 01782 235100 Emergency Duty Team: 01782 234234 (outside office hours)
- Staffordshire Police coordinator: Mark Hardern Tel: 07539 3636299 Email: mark.hardern@staffordshire.police.uk
- Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email prevent@staffordshire.police.uk
- PHSE Coordinator Natalie McGrath natalie@staffscvys.org.uk
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre CEOP & knowaboutcse.co.uk
- NSPCC– 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000
- [Stop It Now! child sexual abuse helpline](http://StopItNow.org)
- Women's Aid - 24 Hour Helpline: 0870 2700 123
- UNICEF – Support Care Team 0300 330 5580 (Mon – Fri 8am-6pm). If you think a child is in immediate danger, please call 999. Unicef

National Contacts

- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) [CEOP Safety Centre](http://CEOP)
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline – 0844 381 4772 [Safer Internet Helpline](http://SaferInternetHelpline)
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) – [Internet Watch Foundation](http://InternetWatchFoundation)
- Safer Internet Centre – helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
- Childline – 0800 1111 Childline
- Ofsted – General enquiries: 0300 123 1231

About Schools: 0300 123 4234

Concerns: 0300 123 4666

e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

- HM Government (advice on protecting children from radicalisation for parents, teachers, and leaders) www.educateagainsthate.com
- NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour project: 0844 892 0273

DfE Dedicated Helpline: 020 7340 7264

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285 and email: help@nspcc.org.uk



Safeguarding Record of Concern

Stafford Grammar School & Stafford Preparatory School

Date of Incident / disclosure / concern DD/MM/YY		Time of Incident / disclosure / concern			
Family name of child/young person		First name(s)		Year Group / Form	
Nature of concern (Brief outline, record in detail below)				Date that concern was raised DD/MM/YY	
				Time that concern was raised	
Name & role of person raising concern					
Who have you passed this information to?				On what date? DD/MM/YY	
Detail of concern (Please include as much detailed information in this section as possible. Remember - the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. If necessary, attach additional sheet)					
Signature of person raising concern		DateDD/MM		Time	

Details of all actions/ decisions taken in respect of this concern –
To be completed by Designated Safeguarding Lead OR Deputy DSL :-

Number of Previous Records of Concern		Has child been the subject of a CAF/EHA	Y / N	Is child known to other agencies	Y / N	Previously on Child Protection Register	Y	N
						*Child protection Plan	Y	N
						*Child in Need Plan	Y	N
Please record whether concerns have been shared with parents/carers or MASH and if not outline reasons: (If in doubt, contact Children's Social Care / SSCP)								
Action Taken				By who			Date & time Completed	
Outcome								
Action Taken				By who			Date & time Completed	
Outcome								
Action Taken				By who			Date & time Completed	
Outcome								
Name of Designated Safeguarding Lead OR Deputy DSL						Date		
Signature								

Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment

Prevent Objectives

1. Clear leadership and accountable structures are in place and visible throughout the organisation
2. Staff and the Governing Body have been appropriately trained according to their role
3. An appropriate reporting and referral process is in place and referrals are being managed effectively
4. A broad and balanced curriculum that helps protect students against extremism and promotes community cohesion and promotes British Values

Prevent Risk Assessment: Reviewed annually by Lisa Griffiths (DSL). Latest review: 01/09/25

Risk	Summary of potential risk	Response	Further Action
On-line Safety	Extremist organisations are able to radicalise pupils online and encourage them to commit acts of violence or incite others to commit acts of violence as 'lone actors'. Extremist organisations also exploit new technologies, such as Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), to create and disseminate radicalising material with increased sophistication and reach. Pupils (and staff) are able to access radicalising material which promotes extremist groups.	• Very strong internet filtering in place at school (Smoothwall) • DSL assesses filtering with IT Manager regularly • Pupils are taught about the dangers of extremism and radicalisation in PSHE and other lessons. • Pupils in Year 7 and 10 complete certificated on-line safety courses. • Staff training ensures staff awareness and vigilance. Ongoing education for staff and pupils on identifying and reporting suspicious online content or contact, including that which may be linked to radicalisation. • Parents are updated about on-line safety for pupils monthly and are invited to biennial on-line safety information evening	Investigate the possibility of introducing an on-line safety course for sixth form students. Review curriculum opportunities (e.g., PSHE, ICT) to explicitly incorporate teaching on the risks and safe use of Generative AI in relation to online radicalisation. Ensure parental communications specifically highlight the evolving risks of online radicalisation, including through AI, and provide resources for parents.
Partnership	The school does not establish effective partnerships with organisations such as the Local Authority, Police Prevent Team, DfE Regional Coordinator and others. The result is that the school is not fully appraised of national and local	• DSL (and Deputies) keep updated through weekly bulletins • DSL and/or Deputies attend regular SSCP safeguarding update sessions	None

	risks and does not have access to developing good practice advice or supportive peer networks.	• Safeguarding Governor is employed by the police and experienced in this area. • School works with agencies when required, e.g. social services and police	
Leadership	Leaders within the school do not understand the requirements of the Prevent Statutory Duty or the risks faced by the organisation and the Duty is not managed or enabled at a sufficiently senior level. The result is that the school does not attach sufficient priority to Prevent Action plans (or does not have one) and therefore action to mitigate risks and meet the requirements of the Duty are not effective.	• All SLT and safeguarding team have refreshed on the Prevent Duty in September 2024. • DSL & DDSL have completed Channel training. • DSL completed DfE Prevent training for DSLs May 2025. • SLT are updated by DSL of any Prevent developments. • DSL is nominated Prevent Safeguarding lead • Any cases are managed in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. • Where concerns have been raised they have been dealt with immediately with support from SLT	
Staff training and awareness	Staff are not aware of the factors that make people vulnerable to radicalisation and terrorism and are unable to recognise the signs of vulnerability and therefore are unable or unwilling to refer concerns. Leaders and staff feel unable or unwilling to challenge extremist narratives or exemplify British Values throughout the school. Staff are unclear on how to deal with or refer concerns resulting in individuals not being supported and potentially radicalisation remaining unchecked.	• All staff have completed Prevent Duty training. • Prevent Awareness Training is a requirement of new staff induction and Prevent Referral Training for all Teachers. • There is regular staff training/updates regarding Prevent explaining the process to refer concerns. • Staff are aware of their responsibility to exemplify British Values and several staff are involved in teaching this through PSHE • All staff receive on-line safety training and updates. • School values are communicated and lived out. • Open access to the safeguarding team for referrals and use of internal referral form • All staff read safeguarding policy and the latest KCSIE.	None
Speakers and events	Extremist organisations are given a platform to radicalise young people because the school has ineffective processes in place for vetting speakers and events. Inappropriate or extremist materials are shared with learners (face to face or via weblinks) because insufficient	• Visiting speakers are checked by the inviting member of staff • All visiting speakers and checks are logged on the visiting speaker log • All visiting speakers are approved by SLT	None

	checks are made of external speakers and materials that they promote or share.	• The visiting speaker must understand that they must abide by the school's equality commitments; no statements made which might cause offence to others, or undermine tolerance of faiths or beliefs and there must be no extremist material. • Content of the intended presentation must be discussed / checked by the responsible member of staff. • Visiting speakers should be supervised at all times and not left alone with pupils. • All visiting speakers must sign in and out of school at the School Reception and personal identification must be checked.	
Welfare & Pastoral Care	The school does not provide effective welfare and pastoral support which results in pupils (and staff) being unsupported and the risk of vulnerabilities being exploited.	• Pupils have access to Form Tutor, Head of Section, School Council, wellbeing centre and open access to 2 school nurses and the safeguarding team. • Open access to the safeguarding team for referrals • Open access to SLT for support and guidance	None
Prayer & Faith Facilities	Requirements of pupils (or staff) requiring faith support or the use of facilities are not met by the school resulting in individuals seeking external support of unknown suitability.	• Multi-faith room is being developed • Safeguarding team can access faith support from external organisations • A School Governor is a clergyman with multi-faith contacts.	Development of multi-faith room
Promoting British Values	The school does not have a culture and ethos where British Values are celebrated, which leads to a culture of disrespect and intolerance and where tensions are allowed to flourish. Staff and pupils do not understand BV (or feel confident about) and extremist views and narratives are allowed to flourish unchallenged.	• Staff complete SMSC audit annually which has a focus on British values • British Values, Extremism and Radicalisation are a significant area of PSHE and Form Time teaching and Assemblies. • The School Values link to British Values and are communicated and lived out by staff and pupils.	

Summary for referral process for staff, DSL, the Head and volunteers:

Staff, DSL, Volunteers > reported to the Head > LADO

Head > reported to Chair of Governors > LADO (without informing the Head)

Person dismissed or would have been dismissed > reported to DBS

Professional misconduct > reported to *TRA*

Removed from regulated activity > reported to DBS

Safeguarding Team Training

All members of the safeguarding team at Stafford Grammar School are trained in accordance with the requirements of ***‘Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024’***:

The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.”

Member of Staff and role	Date of last Safeguarding Training	Date of next Safeguarding Training	Notes
Mrs Lisa Griffiths Designated Safeguarding Lead	Booked Nov 2024	Nov 2026	Level 4 DSL training - SSCB
Mrs D K Shaughnessy Deputy DSL	November 2023	Nov 2025	Level 3 SSCB DSL Training
Ms C Martin Deputy DSL (SPS)	August 2025	Autumn Term (SSCB training)	Level 3 DSL training
Mrs V Eardley Deputy DSL and Senior School Nurse	September 2023	June 2025	Level 3 SSCB DSL training. Also has clinical supervision x4 year *
Mrs G Key Deputy DSL and School Nurse	October 2024	Oct 2026	Level 4 SSCB Training Also has clinical supervision x4 year *

*Stafford Grammar School pays for both school nurses to receive clinical supervision from the SSCP Named Nurse for Safeguarding. There are 4 meetings per year of 2 to 3 hours. This includes both supervision and training.

SGS also have Mental Health First Aiders: Cheryl Martin, Veronica Eardley, Gina Key, Lisa Griffiths, Roz Tarr, Dawn Shaughnessy, Spencer Gunnell, Carly Slater, Jemma Wedgwood.