

Updated in accordance with recommendations from Worcestershire Safeguarding team, based upon Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

**Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Policy
(Including Child Protection) - adopted by Blackwell First School**

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the governing body

**Reviewing Member of Staff: Mrs Anna Moss
Date Reviewed: Autumn 2024
Date Approved By Governors: Autumn 2024
Review Date: Autumn Term 2025
Committee: Education**

Signature:

(Chair of Governors)

Print Name: Mrs Isabel Welch

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Section 1 Child Protection and Safeguarding Leads and Key Dates

Governors' Committee Responsible:	Education and Full Governing Body
Governor Lead:	Mrs D Wilson
Designated Safeguarding Lead of Staff:	Mrs A Moss
Deputy Safeguarding Leads:	Miss H Townsend
Prevent Lead:	Mrs A Moss
Child Exploitation GET SAFE Lead:	Mrs A Moss
Filtering & Monitoring Lead:	Mrs A Moss
Status & Review Cycle:	Statutory Annual
Next Review Date:	September 2025

Section 2 Safeguarding Statement

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

The School's Safeguarding Policy draws upon duties conferred by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, The Children and Families Act 2014, S175 of the 2020 Education Act, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (for independent schools), the Non-maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 (for non-maintained special schools) and the guidance contained in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), the DfE's statutory Guidance - [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023](#)

Key Personnel

- **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Mrs A Moss**
Contact details: email: office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk Telephone: 0121 445 1622
- **The Deputy DSLs are: Miss H Townsend**
Contact details: email: office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk
- **The nominated Safeguarding Governor is: Mrs D Wilson**
Contact details: email: office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk
- **The Data Protection Office is: Mr A Hulse (Worcestershire Hills Trust)**
Contact details: email: enquiries@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk Telephone: 01386 765588

Other named staff and contacts:

- Designated Teacher for Children in Care: Mrs A Moss
- Online Safety Co-ordinator: Mrs A Moss
- Safeguarding in Education Adviser, WCC: Denise Hannibal
- Local Authority Designated Officer/Position of Trust: LADO Team 01905 846221
- Channel Chair: Paul Kinsella, Advanced Public Health Practitioner
- Family Front Door: **01905 822666** (core working hours)
Out of hours or at weekends: **01905 768020**

Section 3 Introduction

Blackwell First School recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support children in School. The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our children's welfare, safety, health, and well-being by creating an honest, open, caring, and supportive environment. The children's welfare is of paramount importance. The school recognises that 'children' includes anyone under the age of 18.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Keeping Children Safe in Education has been extended from early years, schools and colleges to cover 16-19 academies (and apprenticeships). There is reference to the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 which amends the Education Act 2002 and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and places safeguarding duties on 16 to 19 academies and further education to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are understood and prohibiting funding being given if safeguarding requirements not complied with.

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- Where a school or college has charitable status, Charity Commission guidance on charity and trustee duties to safeguard children is available at [Charity Commission Guidance](#)
- [NSPCC's whistleblowing advice line](#) dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by our school. The NSPCC whistle blowing helpline number is also available (0800 028 0285).
- Staff can call 0800 028 0285 - line is available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk [NSPCC - When to call the Police](#)

Part 1 Safeguarding Information for all staff

1.0 What School and College Staff Need to Know

All staff are aware of systems within our school, which support safeguarding, and these will be explained to them as part of staff induction. This will include the:

- Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)
- Student Conduct (including Behaviour) Policy- [Behaviour guidance updated](#)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (including the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputies).
- Copies of policies and a copy of Part One (or Annex A in Keeping Children Safe if appropriate) of this document is provided to staff at induction.
- **All our** staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring - at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, **all** staff will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

- **All our** staff will be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- **All our** 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 our staff** will be made aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the 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.
- **All our** staff know what to do if a child tells them they are 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 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 our** staff are able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Our staff are aware of:

[West Midlands procedures:](#)

Welcome to your West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual

Within the West Midlands, there are twelve local areas that collaborate with regards to child safeguarding procedures. With the introduction of *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*, each local area's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are led by the statutory safeguarding partners/organisations: local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and the police.

These child protection and safeguarding procedures are for nine participating areas and are effective from 31st March 2017.

Background

A project proposal was successfully submitted to DfE on behalf of the West Midlands Safeguarding Children Partnerships to develop regional safeguarding procedures. It was felt that it would be sensible to move to a more regional approach to multi-agency working around safeguarding, especially in light of the fact that so many partner organisations (including Police, Probation, Health and many others) span an area that crosses local authority boundaries.

Introduction

[WCF Levels of Need threshold](#)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) requires the safeguarding partners to publish a threshold document which sets out the local criteria for action when an early help response and the criteria for making a referral to local authority children's social care. Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to identify children and families who would benefit from early help undertake an assessment of the need for early help provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child. Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency cooperation to improve the welfare of all children. The terms 'Early Help' and 'Early Intervention' are often used interchangeably, and this can cause confusion.

The Department for Education and Ofsted both use the term 'Early Help' and this has also been adopted by Worcestershire. The term refers to the support which is needed for children and families at the first sign of additional unmet needs, at any point in the child's life from pre-birth through to 18 years. Providing the right help at the earliest opportunity can help to solve problems before they become more pressing and complex and avert the need for statutory intervention later on in their life. This document is intended to assist professionals to make decisions about how to respond to the needs of the children, young people and families they are in contact or working with. It is not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive or is a definitive way to open or close a gateway to a particular service or range of services. Every child and family

are unique, and their needs should be considered on a case-by-case basis and decisions made using professional judgement, supported by this guidance.

All our staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training will be regularly updated. In addition, all our staff will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

1.11 Indicators of Abuse and neglect

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

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including 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 by another child or children.

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

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

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All our staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.⁸ can be signs that children are at risk.

Our staff are also aware of the following safeguarding issues:

1.12 Online safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate children, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. All staff are aware that abuse can take place solely online.

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

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and

Commerce: - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your children or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group [APWG | Unifying The Global Response To Cybercrime](#)

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

1.13 Online safety policy

In our school we have a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology.

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

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (eg consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your children or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Considering the 4Cs (above) will provide the basis of an effective online policy. Our school has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology.

As an education setting, we are directly responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the

effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on e-security is available from the [National Education Network](#). In addition, schools and colleges should consider meeting the [Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK](#). Broader guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at [Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK](#).

1.14 Remote education

We are in regular contact with parents and carers. These communications are be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents and carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems schools and colleges use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will asked to access and be clear who in our school, their child is going to be interacting with online.

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

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending, and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your children or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

We ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures including how online safety is reflected in other relevant policies. We consider online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role, and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and engaging with parents/carers to raise an awareness in order to support their children.

1.15 Filters and monitoring

Blackwell First School and its governing body are reasonable and need to Insure the limit of children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. Our governing body will ensure our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly reviews their effectiveness. We will ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. We also consider the age range of our children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

1.16 Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

In our school children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

As part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum Relationships and Sex Education (for all primary children) and Health Education (for all children in state-funded schools). The statutory guidance can be found here: [Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education \(RSE\)and health education](#).

1.17 Safeguarding in the Curriculum

Children are taught about safeguarding in schools. The following areas are among those addressed in PSHE/SRE and in the wider curriculum. These key aspects are also addressed through the school Collective Worship rota, specifically how children can keep themselves safe, online safety (including bullying).

- Bullying/Cyber Bullying
- Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Abuse

- Online Safety / Mobile technologies
- Stranger Danger
- Fire and Water Safety
- Child-on-Child
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Road Safety
- Domestic Abuse
- Healthy Relationships / Consent
- So called Honour Based Violence issues (HBV) eg Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSE)
- Child Exploitation of Children
- Extremism and Radicalisation (in line with the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014)¹.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-smsc>

1.18 Children with special educational needs, disabilities, or health issues

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. We ensure our Safeguarding Children Policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can 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 condition without further exploration
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding - being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) and the SENDCO.

The School considers extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

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

And from specialist organisations such as:

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

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

- [Mencap](#) - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people
- [Children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)
-

1.19 Private fostering - LA notification when identified

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

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

See DfE statutory guidance [Children Act 1989](#) Private Fostering for comprehensive guidance on private fostering.

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

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

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

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

1.2 Children Looked After and Previously Children Looked After

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

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

1.21 Statutory Children's Social Care Assessments and Services

Concerns about a child's welfare should be referred to local authority children's social care. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, Blackwell First School will make a referral to children's social care and if appropriate the police will be made aware immediately. Referrals will follow the local referral process. Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, Blackwell First School provide as much information as possible as part of the referral

process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextualised Safeguarding](#)

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

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

[Escalation Policy: Resolution of Professional Disagreements](#)

1.22 - Mental Health

Blackwell First School is aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Trained staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

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

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

The school has access to a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience among children.

If school staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken, following our Safeguarding Policy and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

The school will seek advice and guidance from [Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#)

1.3.0 Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

1.3.1 Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

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

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

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and

about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

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

1.3.2 What school and college staff look out for

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

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

1.3.3 Children Missing from Education

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

Children at risk of missing in education are:

- Children of compulsory school age who are:
 - Not on a school roll
 - Not being educated other than at school
 - Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (4 weeks)

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

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

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

The school's duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance:

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

[Statutory guidance children missing in education](#)

Guidance on school attendance 'Working together to improve school attendance' including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).

Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time-Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges](#).

General information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the Government's [Missing Children and Adults Strategy](#).

[Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#)

1.3.4 Elective Home Educated

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. At Blackwell First School we expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However we know this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

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

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

1.3.5 Domestic Abuse

[Ending Domestic abuse Save Lives](#)

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of sex or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

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

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

At Blackwell First School, where we identify a victim of domestic abuse being high risk we will consider a referral to MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference). The purpose of MARAC is to share information and establish a multi-agency action plan to support the victim and to make links with other public protection procedures, particularly safeguarding children, vulnerable adults and the management of offenders. We will continue to provide help and support in order to safeguard children. This will usually be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. MARAC does not replace a referral to children social care.

[Worcestershire children first Domestic abuse guidance](#)

1.3.6 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) is aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases we will consider homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it must 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16- and 17-year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.

[16-and-17-year-olds-who-may-be-homeless-and-or-require-accommodation](#)

1.3.7 Children with Family Members in Prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. In this event, the school will work closely with the child and their parent/carer to support the child during this period.

1.3.8 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 a school, we ensure that children are aware how to keep themselves safe from a variety of risk factors which include road safety, the dangers of open swimming and other risks that may be posed within the community. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

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

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

1.4.1 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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.

1.4.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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 eg through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

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.

1.4.3 County Lines

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

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, student referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

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

When the school identifies a child may be at risk of exploitation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with, support and consider completion of a GET SAFE risk assessment which will be referred to Worcestershire

Children First GET SAFE team for further assessment and support. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also consider referral to Worcestershire Children First Family Front Door as part of our school's and local safeguarding procedures. More information can be found: [Get Safe - keeping children and young people safe from criminal exploitation](#)

[County lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

1.4.4 Operation Encompass

Blackwell First School receives Operation Encompass Notifications. The purpose of Operation Encompass is to highlight that a Domestic Abuse Incident has taken place and the police have been called. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform Worcestershire Children First, who then inform the School (usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is so we have up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. The school will monitor any child affected by a notification and will log changed behaviour and anything out of the ordinary.

1.4.5 Honour-Based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

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. We are 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 are handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

[The right to choose: gov guidance on forced marriage](#)
[2023 Forced Marriage Guidance](#)

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. The school produces and distributes a pamphlet for all staff on this specific safeguarding issue.

1.4.6 FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they must not be examining children or children, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#)

Teachers must and will personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless a teacher has good reason not to, we will still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through

disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty [FGM Fact Sheet](#). The school produces and distributes a pamphlet for all staff on this specific safeguarding issue.

1.4.7 Forced Marriage

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

A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Staff at Blackwell First School understand we could potentially play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#), pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmua@fco.gov.uk. 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 school produces and distributes a pamphlet for all staff on this specific safeguarding issue.

1.5.0 Preventing Radicalisation

Blackwell First School staff know that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk must be a part of a school's or college's safeguarding approach. As part of our whole safeguarding approach we include and consider the following:

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

As defined in the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-extremism-strategy>.

As defined in the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>.

As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents>

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff use their

judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

1.5.1 The Prevent Duty

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

The Prevent duty is part of our school's wider safeguarding obligations. Designated Safeguarding Leads and other senior leaders are familiar with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#). The school produces and distributes a pamphlet for all staff on this specific safeguarding issue.

1.5.2 Channel

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

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

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

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

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

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#). This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The ETF Online Learning environment provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, support staff and Governors, outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

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. DfE guidance for local authorities on Elective home education sets out the role and responsibilities of LAs and their powers to engage with parents in relation to EHE. Although this is primarily aimed at LAs, schools should also be familiar with this [Worcestershire Children First home education](#)

1.5.3 Human Rights Act

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

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information

(including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found at Human Rights | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com).

Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk), it may also be useful for colleges. For further information Equality Act guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com).

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

All our staff who are working with children, maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child.

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, we act on them immediately. If staff have a concern, we follow this Safeguarding Children Policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).

Options will then include:

- Managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes.
- Undertaking an early help assessment; or
- Making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.

1.6.1 Early Help

Any child may benefit from Early Help and our staff are experienced and appropriately trained to early identify the potential need for Early Help for a child who:

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

Our Early Help Offer is accessible on our school website, as part of our Early Help Offer/Supporting Families, we support children and young people by completing an Early Help Assessment.

[Worcestershire Children First Early Help information page](#)

1.6.2 Children with Additional Vulnerabilities

There are many children who have additional needs or whose living arrangements may mean that they are more vulnerable to harm, for example children with special educational needs, disabled children, children in public care or privately fostered children. It is essential that the school knows who shares parental

responsibility for children and has effective relationships with partner agencies in relation to these children (for example, Virtual School for Children in Care).

Blackwell First School will ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge and guidance so that they are aware of the additional challenges faced by these children and the impact of their additional vulnerabilities. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a child's disability without further exploration; no single point of contact for the school as a child has a number of care-givers and involved professionals; assumptions that state approved care-givers are providing safe care for the child; communication needs of a child which can lead to over reliance on parental accounts and interpretations.

1.6.3 What should schools do?

Blackwell First School will contact Family Front door when they have a concern about a child. They should contact Family Front Door If the concerns are based on more concrete indicators - ie, the young person says this is going to happen to them, or disclosure that it has happened to them or to an older sister - schools should make a child protection referral and inform the Police as required by the mandatory reporting duty. Schools should not:

- Contact the parents 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 or Breast Ironing 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.

1.6.4 The 'one chance' rule

In the same way that we talk about the 'one chance rule' in respect of young people coming forward with fears that they may be forced into marriage, young people disclosing fears that they are going to be sent abroad for FGM are taking the 'one chance', of seeking help.

It is essential that we take such concerns seriously and act without delay. 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.

1.7.0 Protecting Children

- Blackwell First School will do all we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, the governing body will ensure the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.
- We will safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors take into consideration the age range of children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.
- The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools/colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: [UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring](#).
- Guidance on e-security is available from the [National Education Network](#). Support for schools is available via the: [schools' buying strategy](#) with specific advice on procurement here: [buying for schools](#).
- Blackwell First School's approach to online safety includes a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G in particular, and the school will carefully consider how this is managed on their premises.

1.8.0 Relationships and Sex Education

This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary children) and Health Education (for all children in state-funded schools) which was made compulsory from September 2020. The statutory guidance can be found here: [Statutory guidance: relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education.](#)

The following resources may be helpful:

- [Child Exploitation and Online Protection command](#): is a law enforcement agency which aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and abuse. Online sexual abuse can be reported on their website and a report made to one of its Child Protection Advisors
- The NSPCC provides a helpline for professionals at 0808 800 5000 and help@nspcc.org.uk. The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff and will be especially useful for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and their deputies)
- Support from specialist sexual violence sector organisations such as [Rape Crisis](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#)
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance has developed [guidance for schools about Sexual and sexist bullying](#). Online: Schools and colleges should recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online (either in isolation or in connection with face-to-face incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation. Online concerns can be especially complicated and support is available from:
- The UK Safer Internet Centre provides [Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre](#) for professionals at 0344 381 4772. The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff with regard to online safety issues
- [Internet Watch Foundation](#): If the incident/report involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
- [Childline/IWF Report Remove](#) is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online
- [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice](#): Advice for education settings working with children and young people on responding to reports of children sharing non-consensual nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting and youth produced sexual imagery).
- [Thinkuknow](#) from NCA-CEOP provides support for the children's workforce, parents and carers on staying safe online
- [LGFL 'Undressed'](#) provided schools advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.
- Public Health England: Rise Above Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary children) and Health Education (for all children in state-funded schools) which will be compulsory from September 2021. Schools have flexibility to decide how they discharge their duties effectively within the first year of compulsory teaching and are encouraged to take a phased approach (if needed) when introducing these subjects.

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

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

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, schools 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. Schools should refer to our Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

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.

1.8.2 Child on Child Abuse

All our staff are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer or child-on-child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All our staff understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges 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 Deputies).

All our staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boy being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, 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.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between 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 standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes' images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- 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).

All our 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.

All our staff will be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased 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 our staff are 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. 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](#).

All our staff are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include but may not be limited to:

- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- 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)

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

1.8.3 Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also 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.

Blackwell First School will respond to reports of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

For detailed information on what sexual violence and sexual harassment constitutes, important context to be aware of, related legal responsibilities for schools and colleges, advice on a whole school approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment and more detailed advice on responding to reports see departmental advice:

[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges](#).

1.8.4 Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

The school will carefully consider any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. We will support victims to be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.

At Blackwell First School we recognise the term 'victim' to refer to those who have been subjected to abuse. But we recognise that not every victim will view themselves as such, also we use the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)'. Though they caution the use of this term as in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- The ages of the children involved
- The developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?

- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature)

1.8.5 Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made

Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim, and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator(s) is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator(s) will be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The school must also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school premises (including during any before or after school-based activities) and on transport to and from the school, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of all children involved and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s).

For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school premises and school transport, must be considered immediately.

In all cases, the initial report will be carefully evaluated. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

1.8.6 Options to manage the report

The school will consider every report on a case-by-case basis. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that must be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, we will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not us from taking immediate action to safeguard children, where required. There are four likely scenarios to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

1. Manage internally

In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or that referrals to statutory services are not required, and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support.

Whatever the response, it will be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

2. Early help

In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB (harmful sexual behaviour) and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support.

Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school or college policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.

Schools and colleges, as relevant agencies, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as

part of the local arrangements. Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, and designated safeguarding leads (and their deputies) will need to familiarise themselves with this document.

Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: a school could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).

Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that there is zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

3. Referrals to local authority children's social care

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to local authority children's social care.

At the point of referral to local authority children's social care, the school will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of local authority children's social care.

If a referral is made, local authority children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.

Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school (especially the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) will work alongside, and cooperate with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.

The school will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a local authority children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with local authority children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report, and all children at the school will be immediate.

In some cases, local authority children's social care will review the evidence and decide that a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) will be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm or if circumstances change. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.

Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

4. Reporting to the Police

Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to local authority children's social care (as above).

It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this will be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator(s) is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. The following advice may help schools and colleges decide when to engage the Police and what to expect of them when they do: When to call the police.

Where a report has been made to the police, the school will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

At this stage, the school will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of local authority children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.

In some cases, it may become clear very quickly that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the school continues to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required.

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school takes do not jeopardise the police investigation.

If the school has questions about the investigation, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the school as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).

Whatever the response, it will be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

1.8.7 Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s)

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- The school has a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, we need to safeguard the victim (and the wider student/student body) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, we will safeguard and support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions.
- We will consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s) and nature of the allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- We will consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. Harmful sexual behaviours in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. More information on harmful sexual behaviours can be found at paras 16-20 of the detailed advice, [Sexual Violence And Sexual Harassment Between Children at Schools and Colleges](#). Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- If an alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), we will inform the new educational institution of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file.
- The National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA) provides support for professionals involved in work with, or related to, sexual offending.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

We understand the importance that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. We know that evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff are aware of the importance of:

- 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”
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

It is important that school staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

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

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

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

1.8.8 Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos
- Sexualised online bullying
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and upskirting

1.8.9 Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. The initial response to a report from a child is important. 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.

1.9.0 Use of School or College Premises for Non-School/College Activities

Blackwell First School will ensure that when/if we hire out our school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by Blackwell First School under the direct supervision or management of our school the arrangements for safeguarding will apply.

Where an external body is providing community or extra-curricular activities the school will ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements to liaise with Blackwell First School on these matters where appropriate. The school will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (ie 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.

1.10.0 Alternative Provision

Blackwell First School is aware of the additional risk of harm that their children may be vulnerable to.

Where the school places a student with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that student and will be satisfied that the placement meets the student's needs.

The cohort of children in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their children may be vulnerable to.

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

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

1.11.0 Other Relevant Policies

The Governing Body's statutory responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond compliance with safeguarding procedures. The safeguarding duty is relevant for the discharge of all functions and activities. This policy needs to be considered in conjunction with the following policies:

- Student Conduct (including Behaviour, Anti-Smoking, Anti-Drugs and Electronic Device Policies)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (for Children)
- Attendance Policy (including Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School)

- Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (including School Information Report)
- First Aid
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions
- Mental Health
- Online Safety
- Transgender Children
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children
- Health and Safety
- Teaching & Learning
- Relationships, Health & Sex Education
- Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities
- Working at Blackwell First School(Staff Handbook)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Allegations & Concerns in Relation to Staff, Supply Staff, Contractors and Volunteers
- ICT User Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Equality
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection
- Complaints Procedure
- Whistleblowing

1.12.0 Information Sharing

At Blackwell First School, we recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. We have ensured arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within our school and with WCF children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

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

The school's Governing Body is aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. The school will follow ICO guidance which includes information about the school's obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.

In addition, Blackwell First School follows the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which supports school staff, governors and trustees in understanding how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

This is overseen by the school's Data Protection Officer.

This includes:

- We are confident of the processing conditions which allow us to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and is treated as 'special category personal data'.
- Understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff understand The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

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

1.13.0 Records, Monitoring and Transfer

All staff are clear about the need to record and report concerns about a child or children within the school. Staff know to include the child's words as far as possible and reports will be timed, dated and signed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Where children leave our school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and **within 5 days** for an in-year transfer or within the **first 5 days** of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained, this will be transferred separately from the main student file.

The receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named persons with oversight for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.

Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect are stored apart from normal student or staff records. Normal records sometimes have markers to show that there is sensitive material stored elsewhere. This is to protect individuals from accidental access to sensitive material by those who do not need to know.

Child protection records are stored securely, with access confined to specific staff, eg Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Headteacher.

Child protection records are reviewed regularly to check whether any action or updating is needed. This includes monitoring patterns of complaints or concerns about any individuals (eg child who repeatedly goes missing) and ensuring these are acted upon. Each standalone file should have a chronology of significant events.

A record of any allegations made against staff is kept in a confidential file by the Headteacher.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded on CPOMS. Information is kept confidential and stored securely.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff will discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).

Part 2 The Management of Safeguarding

2.1.0 Management of Safeguarding

Blackwell First School policy applies to all our staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors to our school. Child protection is the responsibility of all our staff. We will ensure that we will comply with our duties under all relevant legislation We will ensure this policy and our procedures are effective and comply with the law at all times, this includes training for all staff.

We will ensure that all our parents and working partners are aware of this policy by mentioning it in our school prospectus, displaying appropriate information in our reception and on the school website and by raising awareness at meetings with our parents/carers.

In our school our Governing Body will ensure we facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. Ultimately, all our systems, processes and policies will operate with the best interests of the child/children at their heart. Where there is a safeguarding concern, our Governing Body and school leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems will be in place for children to express their views and give feedback.

Raising concerns/complaints. We respond robustly when concerns are raised or complaints made (from children, adults including parent/carers) as we recognise that this promotes a safer environment and we seek to learn from complaints and comments. The school will take action and seek to resolve the concerns in a timely way, keeping people informed as to progress wherever possible. The school's complaints procedures are available on the school website.

All our staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

Statutory guidance contains further information on: [The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#)

2.1.1 Filter and Monitoring

Our Governing Body will ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from our school Leadership Team, is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This is explicit in the role holder's job description.

Our Governing Body ensures 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 postholder will be given the additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively. We ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction. The training will be regularly updated. Induction and training will be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners

The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

To support schools and colleges to meet this duty, the Department for Education has published [filtering and monitoring standards](#) which set out that schools and colleges should:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

We review the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support schools and colleges in meeting this standard.

[The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#) and Home Office Additional guidance on filtering and monitoring can be found at: UK Safer Internet Centre: "appropriate" filtering and monitoring.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring>.

South West Grid for Learning (swgfl.org.uk) have created a [tool](#) to check whether a school or college's filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content, Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content).

Blackwell First School uses the following filtering and monitoring systems:

Securus Digital Monitoring

The Securus software solutions monitors devices attached to the network against their proprietary library of words and phrases and our own customised library.

Should any online/offline activity in applications and browsers identify any violation against these libraries, a screenshot is created along with all identifying information, called a 'capture'. This capture is sent to the Securus Cloud Console for review by the safeguarding team.

RM Safety Net

RM SafetyNet is a leading internet filtering solution used by thousands of UK schools, libraries and local authorities. By default, our single RM SafetyNet filter policy will apply to all devices and users, including staff. That means everyone using the school internet gets the same protection and restrictions when browsing.

With the additional user-based filtering, RM SafetyNet can identify who is logged in to a device by name and apply the relevant filter policy. As a result, we can report on an individual's web browsing activity, either for their own protection or the school's.

RM Tutor

RM Tutor is our IT classroom management tool developed to monitor and control internet and application use. IT staff are able to restrict children to only the chosen websites or applications during their lesson.

Trend Micro Cloud App Security

Advanced threat and data protection for our Microsoft 365 tenancy. The solution scans emails to uncover ransomware, phishing, business email compromise (BEC), and other malicious attacks. It finds malware through pre-execution machine learning and artificial intelligence.

All our staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, concerns should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Statutory guidance contains further information on: [The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#)

2.1.2 Head Teacher

The Headteacher of Blackwell First School will ensure that:

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

2.1.3 School Governors/Trustees

In accordance with the Statutory Guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” September 2023 our Governing Body will ensure that:

- Child protection/safeguarding policy, procedures and training are in place which are always effective and comply with the law. The policy is made available publicly.
- We will ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole.
- The policy will be reviewed at least annually or more often, for example in the event of new guidance or a significant incident.
- **Governors in maintained schools have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS.**
- Using the free Employer Secure Access sign-in portal via the Teaching Regulation Agency’s (TRA), we carry out a section 128 check for school governors, because a person subject to one is disqualified from being a governor.
- We check if a person we recruit as a governor is barred because of being subject to a section 128 direction.
- We operate safer recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers. Furthermore, the Headteacher, a nominated Governor and other staff involved in the recruitment process have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers/people in a position of trust.
- There is a senior member of the school’s leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection (the “Designated Safeguarding Lead”) and there is always cover for this role (at least one deputy) with appropriate arrangements for before/after school and out of term activities.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes effective Local Authority training (in addition to basic child protection training) and this is refreshed every two years. In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals (at least annually) via safeguarding e-briefings etc.
- The Headteacher, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate training which is regularly updated (at least every year); and that new staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school’s arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities (including this policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022). Training will include FGM/Prevent/Child Exploitation.
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in these arrangements brought to the attention of the Governing Body will be rectified without delay.
- The Chair of Governors (or, in the absence of a Chair, the Vice Chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher, with advice and guidance from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Effective policies and procedures are in place and updated annually including a behaviour “code of conduct” for staff and volunteers - [“Professional and Personnel Relationships \(safeguardingchildren.co.uk\)”](https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk)
- Information is provided to the Local Authority (on behalf of the WSCP) when requested, for example through the Annual Safeguarding Return (eg Section 175 audit)
- Our school Governing Body ensures that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. This as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- There is an individual member of the Governing Body who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and provide information and reports to the Governing Body.
- The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2018 including providing a co-ordinated offer of Early Help for children who require this. Early Help may be offered directly through [our school early help provision](#) or via referral to an external support agency. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WCSP).

- GDPR- Our governing body is aware that among other obligations, the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information we hold safe and secure in [Data protection: toolkit for schools](#) .
- The school complies with all legislative safeguarding duties, including the duty to report suspected or known cases of FGM and the duty to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism. In conjunction with the Head and DSL they should assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk

In our school we will:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities (specifically through PHSE/ ICT/RSE, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse (including online) and to know where to get help.
- Ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers and colleagues from other agencies.
- Operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children including identity, right to work, enhanced DBS criminal record and barred list (and overseas where needed), references, and prohibition from teaching or managing in schools (s128). For senior leaders in Academies/Independent schools and for Governors in maintained schools (Since September 2018)
- As Education Safeguarding Practitioners we will liaise with the three safeguarding partners in line with Working Together 2018.
- Criminal history and suitability to work with children information will only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted.
- As part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider conducting an online search as part of their 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 or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.
- Please follow this link to identify crime statistics in your local area <https://www.crime-statistics.co.uk>. The crime statistics for the local area (June 2022) have been examined and there are a range of issues mostly linked to violence and sexual offences and anti-social behaviour.

2.1.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

Blackwell First School will ensure an appropriate senior member of staff from our school is on our Leadership Team, in the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Our Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This DSL role is explicit in their job description

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

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

During term time, our Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a Deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Where appropriate our Designated Safeguarding Lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies have undertaken training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role.

In addition to our formal training as set out above, their knowledge and skills will be updated (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

2.1.5 Multi-Agency Working

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

In our school, our leaders/Governing Body understand our local safeguarding arrangements and work with partners from Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnership WSCP to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. The Worcestershire Children First (WCF) WCF Headteacher Safeguarding Steering Group represents all phases of education as part of our WSCP and makes all schools/colleges aware and follow the local arrangements for local protocol and assessment policies and procedures. We are also prepared to supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners. [Worcestershire Children First \(worschildrenfirst.org.uk\)](http://worschildrenfirst.org.uk)

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

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

Part 3. Safer Recruitment

3.1.1 Safer Recruitment and DBS checks - Policy and Procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

The SCR will be monitored and checked by the DSL/HT/Safeguarding Governor on a regular basis, throughout the academic year: Example half termly

Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity (KSCIE 23)
 - Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Secretary of State section 128 direction A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts an unsuitable individual from participating in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. An individual who is subject to a section 128 direction is unable to:

- *Take up a management position in an independent school, academy, or in a free school as an employee.*
- *Be a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body of an independent school; or*
- *Be a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities.*
- *A person subject to a section 128 direction is also disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school*
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.
- Staff and volunteers who provide early years or later years childcare and any managers of such childcare are covered by the disqualification regulations of the Childcare Act 2006 and are required to declare relevant information - see statutory guidance: Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018).
- In addition, as part of our shortlisting process we will consider carrying out an online search as part of their 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 or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview. We will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks. See Part two - Legislation and the Law for information on data protection and UK GDPR

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

- We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:
 - An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
 - An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

- Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

- Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

Volunteers (a reminder that DBS for checks on volunteers are free)

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK **must** undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges (set out in paragraphs 213). This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK. In addition, schools and colleges **must** make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Following the UK's exit from the EU, schools and colleges should apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world

Governance

All members of the governance will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information and section 128 check. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Part 4 Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors

4.1.0 Procedures for Managing Concerns

Blackwell First School adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Safeguarding Worcestershire <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/>

Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the [West Mercia Consortium inter-agency procedures](#) and the [WSCP Levels of Need Guidance](#).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the Deputy Designated Lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

All concerns about a child or young person are to be reported without delay and recorded in writing using the agreed template.

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

All referrals will be made in line with [local procedures](#) as detailed on the [Worcester Children First Website](#).

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral is made to Children's Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Headteacher. Concerns will always lead to help for the child at some point.

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

- The situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their Deputy and the Headteacher are all unavailable.
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

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

4.2.1 Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors

At Blackwell First School we have our own procedures for dealing with allegations against a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor. These procedures are consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance and have regard to this guidance. In the event of an allegation made against a member of staff the school will follow the procedures laid out in its Staff Disciplinary Procedure and Allegations & Concerns Raised in Relation to Staff, Supply Staff, Contractors and Volunteers Policy. The following guidance issued by Worcestershire Children First is guidance that will be taken into consideration when dealing with any such allegation.

In the event of an allegation, a "case manager" will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or, where the Headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the Chair of Governors. An allegation is described as a situation in which an individual may have:

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

4.2.2 Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

If an allegation does not meet the threshold, we will manage appropriately to safeguard young people.

4.2.3 The initial response to an allegation

Where we identify a child that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, we will contact children's social care services and as appropriate the police immediately as per the processes explained in Part one of this guidance.

We will consider when an allegation is made:

Looking after the welfare of the child: the Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk, referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as described in Part one of this guidance.

Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation: the case manager will discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

When dealing with allegations, we will:

- Apply common sense and judgement
- Deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently
- Provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation

Blackwell First School will ensure all staff understand the local authority arrangements for managing allegations, including the contact details and what information the LADO will require when an allegation is made. Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. For example:

- Was the individual in the school at the time of the allegations?
- Did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the child?
- Are there any witnesses?
- Was there any CCTV footage?

Blackwell First School is familiar with what initial information the LADO will require. This information can be found in local policy and procedural guidance provided by the LADO service.

When to inform the individual of the allegation should be considered carefully on a case by case basis, with guidance as required from the LADO, and if appropriate children social care and the police.

If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or children's social care services will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance: [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

If the allegation is about physical contact, for example restraint, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the LADO should take into account that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour. Further information about the use of reasonable force can be found on GOV.UK. Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the LADO should discuss the next steps with the case manager.

4.2.4 Supply teachers

In some circumstances the school will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply; for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business.

Whilst the school is not the employer of supply teachers, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances will we decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. The case manager (usually the Headteacher) will discuss with the supply 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.

Agencies must be fully involved and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social services. The school will 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 or proprietor 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.

When using a supply agency, the school will inform the agency of its process for managing allegations. In the case of an allegation against a supply teacher, the agency's human resource manager or equivalent will be invited to meetings and kept up to date with information about the relevant school policies.

4.2.5 Governors

If an allegation is made against a Governor, we will follow their own local procedures. Where an allegation is substantiated, we will follow the procedures to consider removing them from office.

4.2.6 Suspension

Suspension is not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. All options to avoid suspension will be considered prior to taking that step. The case manager **must** consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school, or until the allegation is resolved. It should be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from their personnel adviser and the LADO, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staff's family, they should discuss these concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the Designated Safeguarding Lead to make a referral to children's social services.

Where the school is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order, in respect of an individual who works at the school, we will take immediate action to ensure the individual does not carry out work in contravention of the order. This means that pending the findings of the TRA investigation, the individual **must not** carry out teaching work. Blackwell First School has clear policy on pay arrangements whilst the person is suspended or where there is an interim prohibition order in place.

In many cases, an inquiry can be resolved quickly and without the need for suspension. The employer will decide on whether the individual should continue to work at the school, based on consultation with the LADO who will provide relevant information we receive from the police or children's social care on whether they have any objections to the member of staff continuing to work during the investigation of the case. The case manager should be as inventive as possible to avoid suspension.

Based on advice from the school's HR provider and/or a risk analysis drawn up with the LADO, the following alternatives will be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- Redeploying to alternative work in the school so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or
- Temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or where available, work for the local authority or academy trust.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension, this will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation. The case manager will consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees that can result from suspension **where an allegation is later found to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, malicious or false.**

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the case manager must record the rationale and justification for such a course of action. This will also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected.

Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be given within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. It is not acceptable for an employer to leave a person who has been suspended without any support. The person should be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details.

Children's social care services or the police may give their view to the LADO but they cannot require the case manager to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer, although the case manager should give appropriate weight to their advice. The power to suspend is vested in the governing body or proprietor who are the employers. However, where a strategy discussion, or initial assessment, concludes that there should be enquiries by the children's social care services, and/or an investigation by the police, the LADO should canvass police and children's social care services for views about whether the accused member of staff should be suspended from contact with children. Police involvement does not make it mandatory to suspend a member of staff; this decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment about whether the person poses a risk of harm to children.

School Procedure in Relation to Allegations Against Staff

Blackwell First School has processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns about staff members (including supply staff and volunteers).

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

- Where there are concerns/allegations about the Headteacher, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors

The school will comply with guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones. Children' allegations or concerns about staff conduct will be taken seriously and followed up in a transparent and timely way.

The school will comply with guidance where it is alleged that anyone working in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and other members of staff, including supply staff and volunteers, will be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse will also be referred to the police.

The school has a duty of care to their employees. We will ensure we provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide them with a named contact if they are suspended. Where Blackwell First School is not the employer of an individual, they still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately and that they liaise with relevant parties (this includes supply teachers and volunteers, see paragraphs on supply teachers below). It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in a school is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Concerns and or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold

The school's Governing Body has policies and processes to deal with any concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold, referred to as 'low-level' concerns.

Low Level concerns

At Blackwell First School we ensure that the school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of our school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

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

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

4.2.7 What is a low-level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- Humiliating children.

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

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. 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.

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

4.2.8 Managing Professional Disagreements

On occasions there will be disagreements between professionals as to how concerns are handled, and these can impact on effective working relationships. We will support staff to promote positive partnerships within our school and with other agencies and will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns and disagreements if appropriate and use the WSCP escalation procedures if necessary.

4.2.9 The Use of 'reasonable force' in Schools and Colleges

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff of Blackwell First School to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between children or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.

- Departmental advice for schools is available Use of reasonable force in schools guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

Annex A: Logging a Concern about a Child’s Safety and Welfare - all staff and visitors (Form 1)

Student’s Name:	DOB:	Year:
Date:	Time:	
Name: Print Signature	
Position:		
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.		
Details of concern/incident - record the who/what/where/when factually (use reverse or continuation sheet if necessary):		
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)		
Action taken		
Reporting staff signature Date		
DSL - Response/Outcome		
DSL signature Date		

Check to make sure your report is clear now - and will also be clear to a stranger reading it next

Annex B: Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff from the school or college 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. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Manage referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- Refer cases to the channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- 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 as required; and
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required. Work with others

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- As required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per part four) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- Liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, and SENDCOs, on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.

Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide Designated Safeguarding Leads with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- 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 these effectively when required to do so;

- Ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation;
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- 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 SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support send children 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.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Raise Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

- Ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this; and
- Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Their role could include ensuring that the school and its staff know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment, and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

Child protection file

Where children leave the school (including for in-year transfers) the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and SENDCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also 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 and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Availability

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to define what “available” means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.