

SAFEG-03-CHILD PROTECTION

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trust recognises its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, Trustees, leaders, parents, families, and students) are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and have an essential role to play in making this community safe and secure.
- 1.2 The Trust believes that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- 1.3 Staff working with children at the Trust will 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 and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.
- 1.4 The Trust recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment to help children to be safe and to feel safe. Within the Trust children are respected and are encouraged to talk openly. It will ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what safeguarding action to take and what services to provide.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- Prevention: positive, supportive, safe culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures.
- Protection: following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
- Support: for all students, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific interventions are required for those who may be at risk of harm.
- Working with parents and other agencies: to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise.

The procedures related in this policy apply to all staff (including Trustees, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers) and are consistent with those outlined within KCSIE 2022.

2 ROLE OF TRUST BOARD AND COMMITTEES

- 2.1 The Trust Board has a strategic responsibility for the Trust's safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation.
- 2.2 The Trust Board has regard to the KCSIE 2022 guidance and will ensure the Trust's policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times.
- 2.3 The Trust Board has a nominated Trustee for Safeguarding. The nominated Trustee will support the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and have oversight in ensuring that the Trust has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies, that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed, and that the policies are reviewed at least annually and/or when required.

- 2.4 The Trust Board will ensure that the DSL is supported in their role and is provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.
- 2.5 The Trust Board is committed to ensuring that a “safe” culture is developed and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our students and our staff. The Trust is responsible for ensuring that the Trust follows safe recruitment processes as outlined within guidance
- 2.6 The Trust Board will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- 2.7 All members of the Trust Board will access appropriate safeguarding training which covers their specific strategic responsibilities on a regular basis.
- 2.8 The policy forms part of the Trust’s development plan and will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board which has responsibility for oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.

3 ROLE OF PRINCIPAL AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)

- 3.1 The SLT have a strategic responsibility for the Trust’s safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation.
- 3.2 The SLT will appoint a member/several members of SLT to be the designated safeguarding lead or leads (DSL). One of the DSLs will be appointed Senior DSL (SDSL). The other DSLs will have delegated responsibilities and act in the SDSL’s absence
- 3.3 The SLT will appoint a member of SLT to be the Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL).
- 3.4 The leadership team will appoint a member of SLT to be the designated teacher for looked after children (DTLAC)
- 3.5 The SLT will ensure that the DSL is supported in their role and is provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.
- 3.6 The DSL and Principal will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the Trust Board. The Trust Board will not receive details of individual student’s situation or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.
- 3.7 SLT is committed to ensuring that a “safe” culture is developed and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our students and our staff. They are responsible for ensuring that the Trust follows safe recruitment processes as outlined within guidance.
- 3.8 SLT will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- 3.9 The Trust will follow relevant guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (Part Three, ‘Safer Recruitment’) and from The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and will maintain an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.

The Trust is committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.

- 3.10 The Principal and DSL will provide an annual report to the Trust Board at the end of each year detailing safeguarding training which has been provided to staff and maintain an up to date register of who has accessed and completed that training.

4 POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022 (KCSIE) which requires individual schools and colleges to have an effective child protection policy.

- 4.2 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes but is not limited to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (KCSIE),
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC),
- Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework' 2022,
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000,
- Solihull MBC Safeguarding Children Procedures,
- Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2022 (EYFS),
- The Education Act 2002,
- Education and Inspections Act 2006,
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014,
- The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015.

- 4.3 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic some members of the community may have been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases increased welfare and safeguarding risks. The Trust will work with local services, such as health and the local authority, to ensure necessary support is in place.

5 DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDING

- 5.1 In line with KCSIE 2022, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

- 5.2 The Trust acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):



- Abuse and neglect,
- Bullying, including cyberbullying,
- Children with family members in prison,
- Children Missing Education (CME),
- Child missing from home or care,
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE),
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE),
- Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home),
- County lines and gangs,
- Domestic abuse,
- Drugs and alcohol misuse,
- Fabricated or induced illness,
- Faith abuse,
- Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls,
- Hate,
- Homelessness,
- Human trafficking and modern slavery,
- Mental health,
- Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “Sexting”,
- Online safety,
- Child-on-child abuse (formerly referred to as peer on peer),
- Preventing radicalisation and extremism,
- Private fostering,
- Relationship abuse,
- Serious violence,
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment,
- So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage,
- Upskirting.

5.3 This policy is one in a series which the Trust has integrated to manage the many aspects of Safeguarding. It must be read and used in conjunction with those other policies which are listed in the Safeguarding Policy.

6 DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

6.1 The SDSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety). Whilst the activities of the SDSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.

6.2 It is the role of all of the DSLs to carry out their functions as identified in Annex C of KCISE 2022. This includes but is not limited to:

- Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns,
- Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns,
- Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children,
- When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children the DSL should have the details of the child’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in



the authority that looks after the child (with the DSL liaising closely with the designated teacher),

- Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE 2022 and WTSC 2018,
- Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of the West Midlands Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures including referrals, are followed, as necessary,
- Representing, or ensure the Trust is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences),
- Managing and monitoring the Trust's role in any multi-agency plan for a child,
- Being available during term time (during normal working hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns,
- Helping 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 all staff,
- Ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities,
- Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE:
 - All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training (including online safety) to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues; this training will be updated at least annually,
 - Safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, will be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of the whole safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning,
 - In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This will be accomplished via the following methods:
 - Newsletters and questionnaires,
 - Inset training,
 - Staff meetings,
 - Required reading.
- Informing the Principal of any significant safeguarding issues.

6.3 The SDSL has overall responsibility for online safety within the Trust but will liaise with other members of staff, for example IT technicians, curriculum leads etc. as necessary.

- All DSLs will respond to online safety concerns reported in line with the Trust's child protection and all safeguarding policies:
 - Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate,
 - Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with policies and procedures.

6.4 All DSLs will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. The DSLs' training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.

7 ALL STAFF

7.1 All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn,
- Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection,
- Know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child,
- Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or are at risk of developing mental health issues,
- Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help,
- Understand the early help process and their role in it,
- Understand the Trust's safeguarding policies and systems,
- Undertake appropriate training, which is regularly updated,
- Be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989,
- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality,
- Reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe,
- Contribute and shape the safeguarding arrangements in place in the school and the child protection policies. This should be via direct communication with the DSLs,
- Immediately, disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, court orders, cautions, reprimands, and warnings.

7.2 All members of staff will be required to read part one of KCSIE 2022. This will be provided via access on Safety Cloud 2.

- SLT including all the DSLs will read KCSIE in its entirety.
- All members of staff who work directly with children will read annex B.

7.3 All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood the national guidance shared with them. This information is stored on Safety Cloud 2 and can be downloaded on request.

8 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people (students) have a right to:

- Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account,
- Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback,
- Contribute to the development of the Trust's safeguarding policies,
- Receive help from a trusted adult,
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

9 PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- Understand and adhere to the relevant Trust policies and procedures,
- Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the Trust in their safeguarding approaches,
- Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online,
- Seek help and support from the Trust or other agencies.

10 RECOGNISING INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

10.1 All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. This is outlined locally within the West Midlands Regional Child Protection Procedures.

10.2 Abuse:

- Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm,
- They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children,
- It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

10.3 The Trust recognises that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

10.3.1 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,
- Signs that **may** indicate physical abuse:
 - Bruises and abrasions around the face,
 - Damage or injury around the mouth,
 - Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes,
 - Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks,
 - Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso,
 - Bite marks,
 - Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries),
 - Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns,
 - Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts),
 - Covering arms and legs even when hot,
 - Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts,
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

10.3.2 Sexual abuse:

- This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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 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 (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- Signs that **may** indicate sexual abuse:
 - Sudden changes in behaviour and performance,
 - Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate,
 - Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide,

- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal,
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance,
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby,
- Distrust of familiar adults e.g., anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger,
- Unexplained gifts or money,
- Depression and withdrawal,
- Fear of undressing for PE,
- Sexually transmitted disease,
- Fire setting.

10.3.3 Emotional abuse:

- This is defined as 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,
 - Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include:
 - Interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability,
 - Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning,
 - Preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
 - Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another,
 - Serious bullying (including cyberbullying),
 - Causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger,
 - 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.
- Signs that may indicate emotional abuse:
 - Over reaction to mistakes,
 - Lack of self-confidence/esteem,
 - Sudden speech disorders,
 - Self-harming,
 - Eating disorders,
 - Extremes of passivity and/or aggression,
 - Compulsive stealing,
 - Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse,
 - Fear of parents being contacted,
 - Unwillingness or inability to play,
 - Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection.

10.3.4 Neglect:

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

- Signs that **may** indicate neglect:
 - Constant hunger,
 - Poor personal hygiene,
 - Constant tiredness,
 - Inadequate clothing,
 - Frequent lateness or non-attendance,
 - Untreated medical problems,
 - Poor relationship with peers,
 - Compulsive stealing and scavenging,
 - Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking,
 - Running away,
 - Loss of weight or being constantly underweight,
 - Incontinence,
 - Low self-esteem.
- 10.4 The Trust recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.5 The Trust recognises abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff must always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.
- 10.6 Parental behaviours can indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff must be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours, this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
- 10.7 Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers, or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.
- 10.8 Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside the Trust. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.
- 10.9 Technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face and in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online.
- 10.10 By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

11 RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

11.1 If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to:

- listen carefully to the concern and be non-judgmental,
- only use open questions to clarify information where necessary, e.g., who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED),
- not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Children's Services,
- be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed,
- record the concern in line with Trust's record keeping requirements - as outlined in the internal procedure SAFEG-P03-1-Child Protection–Managing Concern-00.
- inform the DSL (or deputy), as soon as practically possible.

11.2 A DSL should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available, this must not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff must speak to a member of the SLT and/or take advice from Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). In these circumstances, any action taken must be shared with a DSL as soon as is practically possible.

11.3 The Trust will respond to concerns in line with the West Midlands Regional Child Protection Procedures:

- The full West Midlands child protection procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on here:
<https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

11.4 Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger, a 'request for support' will be made immediately to Integrated Children's Services (via the MASH) and/or the police, in line with West Midlands child protection and safeguarding procedures.

- The Trust recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns for a child as identified in line with Threshold Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency, but to act in line with West Midlands procedures which may involve multi-agency decision making.

11.5 A DSL may seek advice or guidance from a social worker within MASH who are the first point of contact for Children's Services.

11.6 All staff are aware of the process for making request for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

11.7 Where it is identified a child may benefit from early help support a DSL will generally lead as appropriate and complete an early help assessment in partnership with the child/young person and their family in consultation with MASH.

11.8 A DSL will keep all early help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to escalating concerns to the MASH if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

- 11.9 If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving or there is a concern regarding decisions made, the DSL will consider following Solihull LSCP's escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.
- 11.10 The Trust is an Operation Encompass School. This means it works in partnership with West Midlands Police to provide support to children experiencing domestic abuse.

12 PARENTAL CONSENT

- 12.1 In the event of a request for support to MASH being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by West Midlands child protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Parents/carers will be informed of this, unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation.
 - A decision by any professional not to seek parental permission before making a referral to Children's social work services will be recorded and the reasons given.
- 12.2 Where a parent has agreed to a referral, this will be recorded and confirmed on the children and families inter-agency referral form. Where the parent is consulted and refuses to give permission for the referral, further advice will be sought from MASH, unless to do so would cause undue delay. Any further advice and decision making will be fully recorded.
- 12.3 If, having taken full account of the parent's wishes, it is still considered that there is a need for a referral:
- The reason for proceeding without parental agreement will be recorded,
 - Children's social work services will be told that the parent has withheld her/his permission,
 - The parent will be contacted by the referring professional to inform her/him that after considering their wishes, a referral has been made. The timing of this contact will be agreed with Children's social work services.

13 USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- 13.1 The Trust uses a wide range of technology. This includes computers, laptops, tablets and other digital devices, the internet, CCTV, and email systems.
- All Trust owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our Acceptable Use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place.
- 13.2 The Trust recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile and smart technology, including mobile/smart phones, cameras and wearable technology. In accordance with KCSIE 2022 the Trust has appropriate mobile and smart technology and image use policies in place, which are made available to all members of the community via the website.

- 13.3 The Trust will ensure an appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place, in order to safeguard our systems as well as staff and students. Further information can be found in Acceptable use policies and the E-safety policy. In addition, there are 'software' policies in place which control access to software, digital storage drives, and password requirements. The effectiveness of these systems is kept under constant review.

The Trust will do all it reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online risks through the IT systems it provides and will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place. We are now using "Smoothwall Monitor" which not only provides both monitoring and filtering software; it also manages the surveillance of the users within its service.

- Learners will use appropriate search tools, apps and online resources as identified following an informed risk assessment and/or Data Protection Impact Assessment
 - Learners' internet use will be supervised by staff according to their age and ability.
 - All users are required to sign an age-appropriate Acceptable Use Agreement which informs them of their responsibilities and that the system is monitored, in line with data protection, human rights and privacy legislation.
- 13.4 If a user discovers inappropriate material is accessible within school, they are required to notify the Network Manager either directly (staff) or indirectly (student).
- 13.5 Users who use the computer system inappropriately should be reported to the Network Manager. If the use gives rise to a safeguarding concern, it must be reported to the DSL.
- 13.6 Access to illegal material must be reported to e.g., the Internet Watch Foundation and the police.
- 13.7 The Trust aims to build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware and alert of the potential online benefits and risks for children by information in the induction booklet and links on the website. Learners will be directed to use age-appropriate online resources and tools by staff.
- The Trust aims not to "over block" by unreasonable restrictions which reduce students' access to appropriate learning material,
 - Monitoring and filtering are only one part of tackling online safety concerns.

14 REMOTE LEARNING

- 14.1 The Trust will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements.
- 14.2 All communication with students and parents/carers will take place using the approved communication channels, for example, work email accounts and phone numbers and/or agreed systems, parent mail, email via PARS, communication via Teams.
- Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with must be discussed with the DSL.
- 14.3 Staff and students will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in the staff code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policies.

- 14.4 Staff and students will be encouraged to report issues experienced at home and concerns will be responded to in line with the safeguarding policies.
- 14.5 When delivering remote learning, staff must continue to follow the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Key messages and expectations related to remote learning must be emphasized:
- Remote teaching will be delivered via Microsoft Teams, or similar software which has been approved by the school:
 - When learning via Teams students are required to follow the same AUP, rules and requirements as face-to-face learning,
 - When teaching via Teams all members of staff are required to follow the same AUPs, rules and requirements as face-to-face teaching.
 - Students will not be able to use the camera – this ensures that no member of staff sees a student’s private space.
- 14.6 Parents/carers will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access. The Trust will continue to be clear which staff their child is going to be interacting with online.
- 14.7 Parents/carers will be encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parental controls are implemented at home.

15 STUDENTS WHO CANNOT GET HOME

- 15.1 A student who has not been able to get into their home at the end of the working day must be supported using the internal procedure SAFEG-P03-2-Student who cannot get home.
- 15.2 The Trust will monitor the situation. If this occurs frequently:
- The Trust will arrange a formal meeting to discuss the problem with the parent/carers,
 - The DSL will keep the case under review.

16 RECORDING AND STORING CONCERNS

- 16.1 The procedure for recording concerns is detailed in the internal procedure SAFEG-P03-1-Child Protection – Managing Concerns.
- 16.2 The procedure for storing concerns is in the internal procedure SAFEG-P03-1-Child Protection – Managing Concerns

17 TRANSFERRING SCHOOLS

- 17.1 If a child transfers to another place of education the Child Protection Records must be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child’s new place of education, under confidential and separate cover 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.
- 17.2 In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new school or college in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue to provide support.

17.3 If the Trust receives child protection files, the DSL will ensure key staff such as the special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs)/ named person with oversight for SEN, will be made aware of relevant information as required.

17.4 The process for transferring concerns is details in SAFEG-P03-1-Child Protection – Managing Concerns.

18 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

18.1 Some students who move to EHE become less visible to the services which exist to keep them safe and supported.

18.2 The Trust will inform the Local Authority (LA) of all deletions from the admission register when the student is taken off roll.

18.3 If the parent/carer expresses their intention to pursue EHE for their child the LA, The Trust and other key professionals will co-ordinate a meeting with parents/carers:

- Before the final decision,
- To ensure that the best interests of the child are considered,
- Paying particular attention to all needs (SEND, vulnerable children or those with a social worker).

18.4 Using the DfE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>

19 MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

19.1 The Trust recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the West Midlands Child Protection and Procedures safeguarding arrangements.

19.2 SLT and the DSLs will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.

19.3 The Trust recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children’s welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to West Midlands processes as required, such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including child protection conferences, core groups, strategy meetings, child in need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings

20 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

20.1 The Trust recognises its duty and powers to hold, use and share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within KCSIE 2022.

20.2 The Trust has an appropriately trained and supported Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that the Trust is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. The DPO can be contacted on dataprotection@heart-england.co.uk.

20.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 and 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 (KCSIE 2022). DfE “Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners” (2018) provides further detail: this can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf .

20.4 The Principal and DSL will disclose relevant safeguarding information about a student with staff on a ‘need to know’ basis.

20.5 All members of staff must be aware that:

- They have duties to keep information confidential, in line with the Code of Conduct policy,
- They also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children,
- This may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate,
- All staff are aware they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child’s safety or wellbeing.

21 SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

21.1 The Trust is aware of a range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. In addition to Part One, DSLs, SLT and staff who work directly with children must read Annex B of KCSIE 2022 which contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

Where staff are unsure how to respond to specific safeguarding issues, they should speak with the DSL or a deputy.

21.2 Navigation Aid

The following table is to assist with finding the essential information quickly and easily.

<u>Child-on-child</u>	<u>Child-on-child sexual violence or harassment</u>	<u>Nude and/or semi-nude image sharing by children</u>	<u>Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)</u>	<u>Domestic abuse</u>
<u>So-called “honour-based” abuse (HBA).</u>	<u>Preventing radicalisation: Prevent Duty</u>	<u>Cybercrime</u>	<u>Safeguarding children with Special Education Needs or Disabilities</u>	<u>Children requiring Mental Health Support</u>
<u>Children missing from education</u>	<u>Children who need a social worker</u>	<u>Looked after child, previously looked after</u>	<u>Online Safety</u>	



HEART OF ENGLAND

Creating Futures

		<u>children and</u> <u>care leavers</u>		
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21.3 Child-on Child Abuse

- 21.3.1 All members of staff at The Trust recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, and that it can happen both inside and outside of the Trust and online.
- 21.3.2 The Trust has a zero-tolerance to abuse. It must never be ignored or dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.
- 21.3.3 The Trust recognises that even if there are no reported cases of Child-on-Child abuse, such abuse is still likely to be taking place.
- 21.3.4 The Trust recognises that Child-on-child abuse can take many forms. Many of these are listed at the beginning of this policy. A reminder here includes, but is not limited to:
- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying,
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers,
 - Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm,
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment,
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery),
 - 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,
 - Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves looking up/lifting up or 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,
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- 21.3.5 All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. Staff recognise that that some child-on-child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved, however it is important to avoid any kind of gender bias and accept that abuse of any kind, to every person can happen.
- 21.3.6 Concerns about student’s behaviour, including Child-on-child abuse taking place offsite will be responded to as part of a partnership approach with students and parents/carers. Offsite behaviour concerns will be recorded and responded to in line with existing appropriate policies, for example anti-bullying, acceptable use, behaviour, and child protection policies. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers a statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises e.g., when children are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, to such extent as is reasonable.
- 21.3.7 The Trust want children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated Trust policies, including child protection, anti-bullying, and behaviour. Students who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.
- 21.3.8 In order to minimise the risk of Child-on-Child abuse, The Trust will provide the following mechanisms to aid the reporting of abuse:
- Education and training on how to handle abuse via assemblies and the age-appropriate Sex and Relationship Education (SRE);
 - A form tutor who is available during registration to talk to and who has an email address which students can use,
 - A pastoral and an academic manager, for each year group, to talk to and who has an email address which students can use,
 - School nurses and the youth service “Kooth” who run a text-based support service and with whom students can book an appointment,
 - Parents and students can contact any of their academic and pastoral carers using the school system Insight which is available 24 hours a day,
 - The Trust also has an anti-bullying policy.

- 21.3.9 The Trust requires all staff to respond to reports of child-on-child abuse, whether by victims, perpetrators, those who've had it reported to them (commonly parent/carers) or witnesses and to offer support:
- All reports will be taken seriously,
 - The children's voice will be heard and recorded accurately,
 - There is no room for victim blaming,
 - Appropriate pastoral support will be provided,
 - Working with parents/carers,
 - Reviewing procedures/approaches to improve outcomes,
 - If necessary, informing the police, advice can be found here https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf?mc_cid=52348ed9fb&mc_eid=74f9381011.
- 21.4 Child-on-child sexual violence or harassment. Heart of England School has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- 21.4.1 When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, the Trust will follow the guidance outlined in Part Five of KCSIE 2022 and the DFE's *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges* guidance.
- 21.4.2 The Trust recognises sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable.
- 21.4.3 All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report. We will never downplay the seriousness of abuse that occurs online or outside of school
- 21.4.4 When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).
- The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, adult students (if appropriate) and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
 - Reports will initially be managed internally by the Trust and where necessary will be referred to MASH and/or the police.
 - We acknowledge that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Staff are aware that children's behaviours may suggest that they have been harmed or something is wrong. Reports of abuse may be indirect through friends or overheard by others. All concerns will be acted upon immediately and discussed with the DSL or their deputy.
 - The decision making and required action taken will vary on a case by case basis, but will be informed by the wishes of the victim, the nature of the alleged incident (including whether a crime may have been committed), the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse, if there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or staff, and, any other related issues or wider context.
- 21.4.5 If at any stage the DSL is unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from MASH.

21.5 Harmful sexual behaviour

- 21.5.1 The Trust recognises that children’s sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent.
- 21.5.2 Developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour that is problematic, abusive, or violent is defined as harmful sexual behaviour (HSB).
- 21.5.3 HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.
- 21.5.4 DSLs and their deputies have received training in managing HSB. They recognise that children displaying HSB may have experienced their own abuse and trauma and will ensure that they are appropriately supported.
- 21.5.5 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.6 Nude and/or semi-nude image sharing by children

- 21.6.1 The term ‘sharing nudes and semi-nudes’ is used to mean the creating, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams of/by young people under the age of 18. Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal which makes responding to incidents complex.
- 21.6.2 The United Kingdom Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance “Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people” outlines how the Trust should respond to all incidents of consensual and non-consensual image sharing and must be read and understood by DSLs working with all age groups, not just older students.
- 21.6.3 The Trust recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “sexting”) must be treated as a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
- 21.6.4 When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children, staff are advised to:
- Report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
 - NEVER view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this is illegal. If staff have already viewed the imagery by accident, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
 - Not delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
 - Not say or do anything to blame or shame any children involved.
 - Explain to child(ren) involved that they will report the issue to the DSL and reassure them that they will receive appropriate support and help.
 - Not ask the child or children involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery and not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child(ren) involved or their, or other, parents and/or carers. This is the responsibility of the DSL.

21.6.5 DSLs will:

- Respond to concerns as set out in the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' and the local West Midlands guidance when made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
- Hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
- Parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
- All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
- A referral will be made to MASH and/or the police immediately if:
 - The incident involves an adult (over 18).
 - There is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
 - The image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of 13, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
 - A child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

21.6.6 The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.

21.6.7 If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from MASH.

21.6.8 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.7 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

21.7.1 The Trust recognises that 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.

21.7.2 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.

21.7.3 If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy

21.8 Serious violence

21.8.1 All staff are made aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime.

21.8.2 These may include:

- unexplained gifts or new possessions,
- 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,
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

21.8.3 Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns.

- The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

21.8.4 [Return to navigation aid](#)



21.9 Domestic abuse.

21.9.1 The Trust recognises domestic abuse as ‘any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour or abuse between those aged 16 or over who or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality’.

21.9.2 All staff are aware that 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.

21.9.3 We work in partnership with West midlands Police and Solihull Children’s Services to identify and provide appropriate support to children who have experienced domestic abuse in their household, this scheme is called Operation Encompass. On receipt of information the DSL will decide on the support the child will need. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the operation encompass joint agency protocol for domestic abuse. We will record and store the information in accordance with the record keeping procedures around safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people.

21.9.4 The abuse can be inflicted upon, witnessed by, or threatened against children of the school, regardless of age, or by staff of the school.

21.9.5 The Trust is committed to actively support the safety of victims who are or have experienced domestic abuse.

21.9.6 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.10 So-called “honour-based” abuse (HBA).

21.10.1 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.

21.10.2 All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and concerns should be responded to in line with other safeguarding concerns.

21.10.3 Staff must report any concerns about HBA to a DSL.

21.10.4 Whilst all staff must speak to a DSL with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers:

- **If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police**

21.10.5 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.11 Preventing radicalisation: Prevent Duty

21.11.1 The Trust is aware of its duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, and the specific obligations placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

21.11.2 The Trust recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff will be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

21.11.3 Staff will report any concerns to a DSL who is aware of the local procedures to follow.

21.11.4 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.12 Cybercrime

- 21.12.1 The Trust recognises that children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into ‘cyber-enabled’ cybercrime (crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online) or ‘cyber dependent’ cybercrime (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer/internet enabled device).
- 21.12.2 If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of becoming involved in cyber-dependent cybercrime, the DSL must be informed, and consideration will be given to using the Cyber Choices lesson plans (<https://www.wmcyber.org/educators/>), which aims to intervene when young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences.
- 21.12.3 Where there are concerns about ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online, child sexual abuse and exploitation, or other areas of concern such as online bullying or general online safety, they will be responded to in line with this and other appropriate policies.
- 21.12.4 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.13 Safeguarding children with Special Education Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

- 21.13.1 The Trust acknowledges that student with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
- 21.13.2 The Trust recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be appropriately supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
- 21.13.3 All staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child’s disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND or certain medical conditions may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- 21.13.4 Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
- 21.13.5 To address these additional challenges, the Trust will always consider implementing extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENDCo to plan support as required.
- 21.13.6 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.14 Children requiring mental health support

- 21.14.1 All staff will be made 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.
- 21.14.2 Staff are aware that children’s experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
- 21.14.3 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.
- 21.14.4 If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to a DSL or the SMHL.
- 21.14.5 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.15 Children missing from education (CME)

21.15.1 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.

21.15.2 Where the Trust has concerns that a child is missing from education, it will respond in line with our statutory duties and local policies. Local support is available via the Children missing education service.

21.15.3 Elective home education is where a parent/carer expresses their intention to remove a child from school with a view to education at home.

- The Trust will respond in line with national elective home education guidance and local Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) guidance and will work together with parents/carers and other key professionals and organisations to ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

21.15.4 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.16 Children who need a social worker

21.16.1 The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the Trust so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

21.16.2 Where children have a social worker, this will inform Trust decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

21.16.3 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.17 Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers (LAC)

21.17.1 The Trust recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.

21.17.2 The school has appointed a 'designated teacher' who works with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered students who are looked after or who have been previously looked after.

21.17.3 The DTLAC will work with the DSL to ensure appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.

21.17.4 Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

21.17.5 Where the Trust believes a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18, if the child is disabled, is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) there is a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the local authority via MASH.

21.17.6 Where a child is leaving care, the DSL will hold details of the local authority personal advisor appointed to guide and support them and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

21.17.7 [Return to navigation aid](#)

21.18 Online Safety

- 21.18.1 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. The Trust's approach to online safety is designed to empower, protect, and educate our students and staff in their use of technology, and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate
- 21.18.2 The Trust will ensure online safety is referenced in all relevant policies. Online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.
- 21.18.3 The Trust identifies that 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, Child-on-child pressure, commercial advertising, and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes,
 - **Conduct** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending, and receiving explicit images (e.g., consensual, and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying,
 - **Commerce** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.
- 21.18.4 The Trust recognises that technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve, and change rapidly. The Trust will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety which considers and reflects the risks our children face.
- 21.18.5 The Principal will be informed of online safety concerns by the DSL, as appropriate. The named Trustee for safeguarding will report on online safety practice and incidents, including outcomes, on a regular basis to the wider Trust Board.
- 21.18.6 The Trust has an online safety policy COMDA-06-E-Safety which must be consulted for the full detail.
- 21.18.7 [Return to navigation aid](#)

22 ALTERNATIVE PROVISIONS

- 22.1 If the Trust places a student with an alternative provision provider (APP), the Trust will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child.
- The Trust will undertake appropriate checks to ensure the APP meets the needs of the student, including written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.
- 22.2 If the Trust organises work experience placements, it will follow the advice and guidance as identified in part Three of KCSIE 2022.
- 22.3 If the Trust organises homestays as part of exchange visits, it will follow the advice and guidance as identified in part Three and Annex E of KCSIE 2022.

23 OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING

- 23.1 The Trust will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This will include covering relevant issues SRE and Health Education. Additionally, students will:
- Receive guidance on and be directed towards appropriate search tools, apps and online resources,
 - Receive guidance on making an informed decision as to the risk of using parts of the internet and the world wide web,
 - Be supervised by staff in a manner that fits both age and ability.
- 23.2 The curriculum will provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness, and decision making so that students have a range of age-appropriate contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others. This supports the essential role of helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour, what is 'safe', to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe, and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.
- 23.3 The Trust 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.
- 23.4 The Trust's systems support children to talk to a range of staff. Children will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

24 PHYSICAL SAFETY

- 24.1 Use of reasonable force: There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force in order to safeguard children from harm. Further information regarding our approach and expectations can be found in the Use of Physical Intervention Policy.

25 SAFER WORKING

- 25.1 All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in the staff code of conduct.
- 25.2 The DSL will ensure that all staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) have read the child protection policy and are aware of the expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- 25.3 Staff will be made aware of the Behaviour and Use of Physical Intervention policies. Staff will manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and will have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. Physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force will be in line with our agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.
- 25.4 All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will adhere to the relevant policies including staff code of conduct, Acceptable Use Policies, and Social Media & Communications.

26 SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

- 26.1 There are clear and effective arrangements for staff development and training in respect of the protection and care of children and students. Staff and other adults receive regular supervision and support if they are working directly and regularly with children and students whose safety and welfare are at risk in line with SAFEG-06-Supervision & Safeguarding Support policy.

27 THE USE OF PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- 27.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another organisation using the Trust's facilities and/or premises, the Lettings Officer will seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding safeguarding children and child protection, and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused. Further detail can be found in the Lettings policy.
- 27.2 Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e., lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. Failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

28 SITE SECURITY

- 28.1 All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.
- 28.2 Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the Trust as outlined within national guidance. Visitors will be expected to, sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on site.
- Staff and visitors will be expected to adhere to any safety arrangements implemented because of Covid-19 restrictions.
- 28.3 Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance. All staff and 6th form must have their ID badges visible at all times.
- 28.4 The Trust will not accept the behaviour of any person who threatens the Trust's security or leads others to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the site.

29 COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

- 29.1 All members of the Trust's community should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children's safety or potential failures in the Trust's safeguarding regime.
- 29.2 The Trust has a Complaints policy available for anyone who wishes to report concerns or complaints. This can be found in the school website.
- 29.3 It may not always be possible to report concerns and complaints directly to us. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse at school can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on 0800 136 663 or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk .
- 29.4 Staff can also access the Trust's Whistleblowing policy and/or NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk .
- 29.5 The SLT at The Trust will take all concerns reported seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate policies and procedures:
- Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with the relevant policy/policies, with local Solihull arrangements and with Part Four of KCSIE 2022.
 - Any concerns or allegations about staff, including those which do not meet the allegation/harm threshold will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with national and local guidance. Ensuring concerns are dealt with effectively will protect those working in or on behalf of the Trust from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.
 - Where Principals are unsure how to respond (for example if unsure whether a presenting need meets the harm 'thresholds') advice will be sought via MASH.
- 29.6 Concerns that meet the harm threshold:
- 29.6.1 The Trust recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, Trustees, contractors, agency and third-party staff (including supply teachers) and visitors to behave in a way that indicates a person will pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in the Trust. This includes when someone has:
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or,
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children,
 - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- 29.6.2 Allegations against staff which meet this threshold will be referred immediately to the Principal who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the chair of Trust Board who will contact the LADO.

29.7 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold:

- 29.7.1 The Trust may also need to act in response to ‘low-level’ concerns about staff, which typically would be behaviours which are inconsistent with its staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and concerns that do not meet the allegations threshold.
- 29.7.2 Where low-level concerns are reported to the Trust, the Principal will share or liaise with the LADO enquiries officer via the LADO Enquiry Line.
- 29.7.3 Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern is identified, the Trust will implement appropriate action, for example consulting with the LADO enquiry line and following our disciplinary procedures.
- 29.7.4 Additional information regarding low-level concerns is contained with our staff code of conduct – this includes what a low-level concern is and the importance of sharing them.

30 SAFE CULTURE.

- 30.1 As part of our approach to safeguarding, the Trust has created and embedded a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- 30.2 All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Trust’s safeguarding regime. SLT at the Trust will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- 30.3 All members of staff are made aware of the Trust’s whistleblowing policy. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
- 30.4 Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- 30.5 The Trust has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
 - If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at the Trust, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO.

31 POLICY COMPLIANCE, MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 31.1 The Trust will review this policy at least annually (as a minimum) and will update it as needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt. The policy will also be revised following any national or local updates, significant local or national safeguarding events and/or learning, and/or any changes to our own procedures.
- 31.2 All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and Part One and/or Annex A of KCSIE 2022.
The policy is stored here: U:\Staff Information\Policies\SAFEGuarding Policies and on the school website.
The KCSIE is stored here: U:\Staff Information\Policies\Essential Reading 2022

32 AUTHOR

- 32.1 This policy is produced using the template provided by SMBC.
- 32.2 The document it is based upon was a version developed by The Education People, which has been adapted for use by schools and settings in Solihull. The original copyright for these materials is held by The Education People. It is planned to directly use the template policy provided by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Policy, as from the next review.
- 32.3 The author of this policy is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They should be contacted for any points of clarification or suggested future amendments.

33 VERSION CONTROL

Policy Number	SAFEG-03
Policy Name	Child Protection
Version Number	02
Publication Method	External A copy must also be kept in U:\Staff Information\Policies\SAFEGuarding Policies
Approved by	Full Trust Board
Date of Approval	March 2023
Key changes since previous version	1. Expansion of point 13.3 – Smoothwall monitoring 2. Change of review date to be October 2023 in line with SAFEG-01-Safeguarding Policy
Next Review Date	October 2023