



LOWTHER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Safeguarding and child protection policy

Governor Approval: July 2017

Reviewed: August 2026

Next Review: as required (and no later than July 2027)

Lowther Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Through the procedures outlined in this policy, the school is committed to creating an environment where staff and volunteers feel able to raise any concerns, and where they feel supported in their safeguarding role.

This policy is posted on the school website <http://lowther.richmond.sch.uk>. A hard copy may be viewed at or requested from the school office.

Related Policies

- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- Attendance policy
- Equalities policy
- Medical needs policy
- E-safety policy
- Safer recruitment policy
- SEND information
- Staff code of conduct

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1 CONTACT DETAILS

The Governors have appointed Alastair Ripley as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL. A DSL will always be available during and out of school hours. The Governor nominated with responsibility for safeguarding arrangements is Aisha Bicknell.

Contact details:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: (DSL)

name: Alastair Ripley

email: a.ripley@lowther.richmond.sch.uk

mobile: 07873 301641

Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead: (DDSL)

name: Liberty Sandeman

email: l.sandeman@lowther.richmond.sch.uk

mobile: 07901 546464

For any allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer:

Headteacher: Mark Tuffney

email: m.tuffney@lowther.richmond.sch.uk

mobile: 07709487822

For any allegations of abuse against the Headteacher:

Chair of the Governors: Sharon Mc Nab

email: sharon.ward-mcnab@bbc.co.uk

mobile: 07779 320836

Governor with responsibility for safeguarding:

name: Aisha Bicknell

email: hiaisha@mac.com

mobile: 07747 611839

All referrals for safeguarding issues, including those related to radicalisation, should be made to the SPA in the first instance:

Richmond/Kingston SPA:

Guildhall 2, High Street Kingston upon Thames KT1 1EU

Phone: 020 8547 5008 out of hours: 020 8770 5000

For full local procedures:

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/local_safeguarding_children_partnership

Designated Officer (LADO):

Phone 020 8891 7370

Mobile: 07774 332675

AfC LADO service: Julie Fisher

email: lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Kingston & Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership: Richmond upon Thames

1st Floor, Civic Centre, 44 York St, Twickenham TW1 3BZ

Website: [Single Point of Access \(SPA\)](#)

Telephone: 020 8547 5008

Out of hours (emergency): 020 8770 5000

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS): PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA

Tel: 01325 953 795

For Prevent matters all referrals should be made first to SPA. Other contact details:

Non-emergency police number: 101

Local Police Number: 0208 392 1212

DfE helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice: 0207 340 7264

counterextremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Female Genital Mutilation:

Local Police Number (for reporting an act of FGM): 0208 392 1212

Children Looked After:

Advice and support from Richmond Children's Services CLA team:

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/children_looked_after

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Guiding Principles

2.1.1 Lowther Primary School recognises abuse in all its forms (including physical, emotional, sexual and verbal) and the negative consequences of neglect.

This policy has regard to guidance in:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales
- Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people

and is in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency principles. It is also guided by the Children Act 1989, s1, which replaces parental rights with parental responsibility and requires that a child's welfare be paramount in all procedures concerning child abuse.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (defined as everyone under the age of 18) includes:

- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- 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

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

2.1.2 The School recognises key issues, including:

- acknowledging that child protection issues can arise anywhere, both inside and outside school

- recognising the school's part in safeguarding and working with other agencies to consider at all times what is in the best interests of the child
- the importance of early help and intervention

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. The DSL is likely to have the greatest oversight and should be the first point of contact for advice.

2.2 Staff

2.2.1 All staff will be familiar with the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and are required to confirm that they have read and understood the Policy on starting employment at the school, and each time it is updated.

2.2.2 Staff will meet with the DSL on induction (or as soon as practicable thereafter) to ensure that they are fully briefed on their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and child protection. Staff are regularly trained (see Part 6 of this policy) in order to keep up to date and reinforce their role.

2.3 Educating and Supporting Pupils

2.3.1 The school is committed to ensuring that pupils are taught about safeguarding through the curriculum and the PSHE programme (eg bullying, e-safety, personal safety, and RSHE) and via a range of methods, which may include assemblies and special events.

2.3.2 IT presents risks to pupils. Filters and monitoring systems are regularly reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose (not so restrictive so as to constrain teaching, but taking into account safeguarding guidance for online usage). IT and PSHE lessons address ways in which pupils can protect themselves from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

2.3.3 Pupils are encouraged to speak to teachers, teaching assistants, trusted adults or the direct helplines whose numbers are published within the school if they have concerns. A child's concerns will be taken seriously and their wishes will always be taken into account when determining a course of action. It is important to understand the children with SEND may face additional barriers and will need appropriate support at every stage.

2.4 Parents

If parents become concerned either about their own child or children, or another pupil or pupils at the school, they should contact the DSL. Should the concern relate to the DSL, the Headteacher should be contacted. The school offers further support for parents, e.g. sharing useful resources regarding internet and social media use.

2.5 Volunteers and Contractors

2.5.1 **Volunteers:** Volunteers are encouraged to participate in school events. They will normally be persons known to the school e.g. a parent or friend/relative of a member of

staff. Where such arrangements are of a one-off nature, no formal child protection checks will be carried out, and each situation will be judged individually with a risk assessment made as required. Volunteers will be briefed on each occasion and will not have any unsupervised access to pupils.

Where the arrangement is more regular or frequent, the school will follow safer recruitment practices, as outlined in the School's Safer Recruitment Policy. All such volunteers will be issued with the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and volunteer guidance at induction and are required to confirm that they have read and understood the policy.

2.5.2 Contractors and external providers: Contractors and providers are on site from time to time. The school undertakes a risk assessment on each contractor (taking into account whether they will be supervised and how regularly they will be on site) to determine the level of obligation regarding reading the Policy and training. External providers (e.g. for after-school activities) are required to demonstrate their safer recruitment procedure and to read and confirm that they have read and understood the Policy.

2.6 Safer Recruitment

2.6.1 To ensure the protection of children in its care, the school complies with the provisions in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2026). The school operates safer recruitment procedures as set out in the Safer Recruitment Policy, which includes procedures to comply with statutory guidance.

2.6.2 The School seeks written assurance that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with its pupils on another site.

2.7 Children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities may face additional safeguarding challenges. They may struggle to communicate problems, they may be disproportionately affected by issues and it may be more difficult to spot the indicators of possible abuse. Staff are supported by the senior leadership team and SENDCo in supporting children accordingly.

2.8 Whistleblowing

2.8.1 The School is committed to safeguarding, but if staff or volunteers have any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or apparent failures in the school's safeguarding regime, they should raise them with the Headteacher.

2.8.2 If the member of staff or volunteer feels unable to do so, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should follow the Richmond-upon-Thames whistleblowing policy https://www.richmond.gov.uk/whistleblowing_policy

2.8.3 If a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue through either of these channels, other whistleblowing channels are:

SPA and/or LADO (contact details as set out in Part 1 of this Policy)

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285

NSPCC email: help@nspcc.org.uk

2.8.4 Anybody can make a referral at any time. Contact details are set out in Part 1 of this Policy. This may be particularly appropriate in the event of a genuine concern that action has not been taken (See Paragraph 4.6.3 below).

2.8.5 The person who received the concern will keep the complainant updated, confirming conclusions and any actions required.

3 TYPES AND SIGNS OF ABUSE AND OTHER SAFEGUARDING RISKS

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 Child abuse and other safeguarding issues of all kinds (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation) have become increasingly concerning in recent years. Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Access to the internet, other electronic media and social networking sites means children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Incidents are rarely standalone events, and in most cases multiple issues will overlap. The effects may be serious and long term.

3.1.2 Many child abusers are known to the victim as relatives or as friends of the family, or in an institutional or community setting. Some children meet abusers in other contexts eg via the internet. A minority may gain access to children in schools as teachers, support workers or volunteers, or through their employment relating to school activities. Note: we use the term 'victim' but not all those abused may consider themselves as victims. A sensitive approach is always necessary.

3.1.3 Staff must take special care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who may be living in particularly stressful circumstances, and who may need early help or intervention (see 4.4.3).

3.1.4 Types and signs of abuse are detailed at Appendix 2 of this policy.

3.2 Pupils missing or absent from education

3.2.1 Since April 2013 police forces have been using the following definition of 'missing' and 'absent' in relation to children and adults reported as missing to the police. These are:

- Missing: anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where circumstances may be out of character, or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime or at risk to themselves or another.
- Absent: a person not at a place where they are expected or required to be.

3.2.2 The school monitors school attendance rigorously. Any unexplained absence is followed up and will, where deemed necessary, be reported to Social Services and/or the Police. A child going missing from education or with unexplained or persistent absences is also a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

3.3 Mental Health

The school understands that mental health issues present a risk to its pupils and staff, and seeks to protect from such risks and provide support should any issues arise.

3.3.1 All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

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

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

3.3.4 If staff have a mental health concern about a child which is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the Safeguarding Policy and speaking to the DSL or deputy.

3.4 Risk of radicalisation

3.4.1 Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The school takes seriously its duty to ensure that its pupils are safeguarded from being drawn into extremism or terrorism. This policy has regard to the Home Office's Prevent Duty Guidance. The DSL and Governors have responsibility for overseeing and implementing Prevent requirements, which they undertake to do as follows:

3.4.2 Risk assessment

The school, under the guidance of the DSL, assesses the general level of risk of pupils being radicalised or drawn into terrorist/extremist activity (see Appendix 3 for some indicators) at least annually.

3.4.3 Procedures

If a member of staff, pupil or parent has any concerns about the potential radicalisation of a pupil, they should follow the school's usual safeguarding procedure as laid out in this Policy. The school will work closely with parents to support them when a risk of radicalisation is identified.

3.4.4 Training

All staff are required to read this Policy (as updated from time to time) which includes the signs of radicalisation.

The DSL has attended a Prevent training event.

All staff and Governors undertake the online Prevent awareness training.

3.4.5 Building Resilience to Radicalisation

Fundamental British values are embedded in the school's PSHE programme and other aspects of the school's SMSC education, including assemblies.

3.4.6 IT Policies and Training

All work undertaken by the school in relation to educating pupils on e-safety and applying internet filters etc will take into account radicalisation and the part IT has to play in this risk.

Training for staff will also include understanding of how the internet – in particular social media – can be used to draw young people into extremism.

3.4.7 Working in Partnership

The DSL liaises regularly with the Kingston & Richmond LSCB for advice on the general level of risk to pupils and for developing best practice.

3.5 Children Looked After

In the case of looked-after children, the school will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep them safe. This will include ensuring that staff have the information they need about the child's status, contact arrangements with parents, care arrangements and delegated authority to carers. More details of the school's arrangements for looked-after children are at Appendix 6.

3.6 Child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. In this policy sexual harassment refers to child on child (peer on peer) 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. It can happen inside and outside school, and should not be disregarded or dismissed as 'banter'. Any concerns, however small, should be brought to the DSL's attention, and all children should know that they will be taken seriously if they report harassment or abuse. Children should understand that the law is there to protect rather than to criminalise them.

Abuse includes bullying (and cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), whether or not there appears to be a sexual element. It also includes 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).

3.6.1 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 (it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim to determine whether this has crossed the border into sexual violence. Consent will be especially important if a child is reporting they have been raped) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature

3.6.2 Online sexual harassment

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:

- 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

3.6.3 Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)

Youth produced sexual imagery is a distinct element of what is often termed 'sexting'. The wider term might include the writing and sharing of explicit messages with people they know. The more specific term refers to an act which involves a child or young person under the age of 18 sharing images that they, or another child, have created themselves. This can include both photos and videos. Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence to possess, distribute, show and make indecent images of children. Pupils involved in youth produced sexual imagery may be committing an illegal act. The most recent guidance recommends that in incidents where a child creates and shares sexual imagery with a peer (also under 18), a child shares sexual imagery created by another child with a peer (also under the age of 18) or an adult, or a child is in possession of sexual imagery created by another child, this should be treated as a safeguarding issue, rather than criminalising the child or children involved. Disclosure of such an incident, or concern that such an incident has taken place, should be referred to the DSL using the procedures detailed in Section 4 below.

The DSL will follow the advice given in the UKCCIS guidance for interviewing the child involved, communicating with parents and making a referral to the police or children's social care (via SPA) if there is concern about the risk of harm to the child involved. It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that school staff have relevant training in how to recognise and handle disclosures of incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery. As far as possible staff should not view the images themselves, as they may commit a further criminal offence in doing so. Immediate referral to the DSL is the best course of action.

3.6.4 Upskirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence.

3.7 Other safeguarding issues

3.7.1 Other safeguarding issues may arise, including: bullying, domestic violence and abuse, drugs, truanting, fabricated or induced illness, child marriage, gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence and abuse, hate and relationship abuse.

3.7.2 Children can be victims of domestic abuse, as they may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home. Domestic abuse can be, but is not limited to: psychological, sexual, financial or emotional, and can have a detrimental and long-term effect on children's well-being, development and ability to learn.

3.7.3 The School has policies specifically to address bullying, including cyber bullying.

3.7.4 Annex B of KCSiE sets out additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

3.8 Low level concerns

3.8.1 The school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly.

Sharing all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harm threshold) with the right person, recording and dealing with them appropriately, is critical. It enables concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour to be identified early, minimises the risk of abuse and ensures that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within them, and in accordance with the values of the school.

3.8.2 What is a low-level concern?

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on a mobile phone
- engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Such behaviour can range from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may appear inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is intended to enable abuse.

Any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold, must be shared responsibly and recorded and dealt with appropriately. This should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Any low-level concern should initially be raised in confidence with the DSL or DDSL. Where there is any doubt about whether a behaviour meets the threshold for harm, the LADO should be consulted.

4 PROCEDURES

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The school acknowledges the importance of children receiving the right support at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating, and in particular early help and intervention.

4.1.2 Safeguarding concerns may take a number of different forms, including:

- A disclosure from a pupil
- Concern that a child may have suffered serious harm
- Concern that a child may be at risk of serious harm
- Concern that early help may be required to support the pupil or the family

4.1.3 In cases where a disclosure is made by a pupil to a member of staff:

- No leading questions should be asked (TED questions should be used: Tell, Explain, Describe)
- Information should be recorded in written form either contemporaneously or as quickly as possible after the disclosure was made
- Pupils must not be offered confidentiality, and should be told to whom the information they have disclosed will be passed on. Confidentiality should be maintained between those professionals (DSL/social care) who need to be informed, and a pupil can be reassured that this will be the case
- The information should be passed to the DSL without delay

4.2 Reporting concerns (including where the abuse is by pupils or their peers)

4.2.1 In the first instance (except when there is an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff/Governor/volunteer in which case Paragraph 4.5 below applies) any safeguarding **concerns** about a pupil should be referred to the DSL. Whilst an initial report can be made verbally, any report should be followed up by using the Safeguarding report form or CPOMS.

4.2.2 If a child is **in immediate danger or is at risk of harm** a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. *Anyone can make a referral.* Where a referral is not made by a DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made.

4.2.3. When there is an immediate need to protect a child, the police should be called on 999.

4.2.4 For the avoidance of doubt, in the case of suspicions or allegations of abuse by **one or more pupils** (or peer at another school) against another pupil (or peer at another school) including online abuse or incidents related to youth produced sexual imagery

(sexting) the member of staff to whom the allegation is made, or who has suspicions, should report the matter immediately to the DSL in person using the Safeguarding Report Form.

4.2.5 A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In such cases, both perpetrator and victim will be treated as being 'at risk'. The school will make a referral via SPA, in the same way and within the same timescale as other referrals. (See also Anti-Bullying policies).

4.3 Making a referral and sharing information

4.3.1 The school acknowledges the importance of pupils receiving the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. When deciding whether to make a referral, the DSL will not make a decision in what appears to be a borderline case, but will first discuss the issues with the LADO or SPA. The school will not jeopardise a police investigation by asking the child leading questions or attempting to investigate allegations of abuse.

4.3.2 The school acknowledges the importance of acting on and referring early signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and of sharing information quickly.

4.3.3 The school will communicate readily with the local safeguarding agency via the Single Point of Access Team (SPA) whenever an allegation or disclosure of abuse has been made or with the LADO in case of allegations involving members of staff. Such calls will be made within 24 hours of the allegation or disclosure. The advice from SPA will be followed by the school, including any actions or referrals requested.

4.3.4 Where a referral is not made, the school will act on the guidance of the relevant safeguarding body and will reassess the situation, should it not improve.

4.3.5 It is the school's policy that referrals to Social Services (of a disclosure of abuse, because there is concern that a child may be at risk, or where there is concern that additional intervention may be required to support the pupil or the family) are ordinarily made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the DDSL.

4.3.6 However, all staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social services and it should be stressed that *anybody can make a referral at any time*. The contact details are in Section 1 of this policy. Staff should inform the DSL immediately when a direct referral has been made.

4.3.7 Where concerns persist, the school will continue to share these with the relevant agency, reassessing as necessary. The school is committed to challenging inaction.

4.3.8 Whenever appropriate, and under the direction of Social Services, the views of the child will be sought and considered.

4.3.9 If a pupil is identified as being at risk of radicalisation, there may be a referral to the local police Channel contact.

4.4 Early help and intervention

4.4.1 When it is considered that additional support is required (to support the pupil or the family), the school will use agreed local inter-agency processes and Early Help Assessment (EHA) to facilitate coordinated support. This may result in 'Team Around the Child' (TAC) meetings. The school will still communicate with the local safeguarding agency, should there be concern at any time that the pupil is considered at risk of suffering serious harm, or has suffered serious harm.

4.4.2 Where parental consent for an Early Help Assessment is not given, or offered support is refused, and this leads to a child being at risk of significant harm, then the matter will be dealt with as in section 4.3.

4.4.3 Any child may benefit from early help, but staff should be alert in particular to the potential need for help for a child who

- is disabled (or has certain health conditions) and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (with or without a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of being permanently excluded from school
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, 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 alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child

4.5 Concerns raised about and allegations made against staff (including supply, contractors or volunteers) or Governors

4.5.1 A concern raised about or an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or a volunteer, or a Governor, is to be reported immediately to the Headteacher, or in his absence passed to the named Governor for safeguarding, or to the Chair of Governors.

4.5.2 If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation should, without informing the Headteacher first, immediately inform the named Governor for safeguarding or the Chair of Governors.

4.5.3 This part of the Policy is about managing allegations which indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continued to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position or capacity, and it should be used in all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher, or other member of staff or Governor or volunteer

- has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she would pose a risk of harm to children.

4.5.4 The procedures to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer or Governor are set out in Appendix 1.

4.5.5 It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer or Governor is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way which provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. Quick resolution of the allegation should be the clear priority, and there should be no unnecessary delays.

4.5.6 This policy relates to members of staff, Governors and volunteers who are currently working in the school, regardless of whether the school is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher, Governor or volunteer who is no longer teaching or otherwise at the school (and historical allegations) will be referred to the police.

4.6 Records

4.6.1 All concerns, discussion and decisions made, and reasons for those decisions, are recorded electronically via CPOMS or in writing on the Safeguarding Report Form, available in the Headship Room, Staff Room, School Office or from Phase Leaders or the SENDCo. The DSL will provide guidance on requirements as required.

4.6.2 A summary of safeguarding cases is recorded in a central file securely on the school's network. Written details of cases are kept securely by the DSL. Access to these records is restricted to the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), and to the Nominated Safeguarding Governor(s) authorised to carry out the Annual Review on behalf of the Governors.

4.6.3 The DSL reviews cases regularly in order to establish if there are any concerning patterns of behaviour.

4.6.4 When a child leaves Lowther, the DSL will ensure their safeguarding file is transferred to the new school or college separately from their main file and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within 5 days of the start of a new term. A confirmation of receipt will be

kept. Where appropriate, the DSL will share additional information in advance of a child leaving, particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others as well as the individual pupil and help the setting put in place the right support.

4.6.5 When a child starts Lowther, we will review any safeguarding information provided making sure key staff are aware of the risk and need as soon as possible. If Lowther is the last school that the child attends, we will securely store their safeguarding file until their 26th birthday is reached, when it will be securely disposed of.

4.7 Monitoring and reassessing concerns

4.7.1 Where the advice is that situations should be monitored, cases will be reassessed by the school and, where necessary, additional guidance will be sought or a further referral made.

4.7.2 The school will raise concerns and escalate those concerns with other agencies, using the LSCB Escalation Policy, where this is believed to be in the best interest of the child.

4.8 Arrangements for reviewing policies and procedures

4.8.1 The school's safeguarding and child protection policies will be reviewed annually (and as required when statute or statutory guidance is revised) by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Governor(s) with responsibility for safeguarding. Any changes should be approved by the Governing Board. Nominated Safeguarding Governors should ensure that the DSL provides an annual report to the Governing Board on safeguarding and child protection issues. The report should contain the detail required by the terms of reference of the Annual Safeguarding report (as set out in Appendix 7). Minutes of discussion should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate the depth of the review by the Board and note any amendments to child protection policies recommended and approved.

4.8.2 Should any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements occur, they will be remedied without delay as and when they become apparent.

4.9 Police

In the event that the school considers at any time that a crime has or may have been committed, it will report the matter to the Police using the guidance contained within this document.

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

The KCSiE flowchart sets out actions where there are concerns about a child: see p 25 of https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a9088e19a177a1decf97b01/Keeping_child_safe_in_education_2026_Part_one.pdf

5 Training

5.1 All members of staff, full or part-time, and any voluntary helpers who are regularly involved with pupils will undertake training every three years (Level 2, on the advice of LSCB).

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy will undertake training in accordance with the job descriptions for these roles as found in Appendix 5 of this policy.

5.3 All new members of staff, including temporary staff, will receive induction training on child protection and safeguarding, including:

- the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy (which incorporates the Code of Conduct for Working with Children and whistleblowing procedures)
- the identity of the DSL and deputies, and of the named Governor for safeguarding
- a copy of Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022)
- the risks of radicalisation and how to identify children and young people at risk

5.4 Staff are required to sign to confirm that they have received this training, and that they understand both this Policy and Part 1 of KCSiE (and on each occasion that these are updated).

5.5 All staff receive an annual update at the start of each academic year on safeguarding and child protection (including Prevent). Further updates are provided during the course of the year as required (e.g. by changes to statutory guidance) in order to provide them with the skills and knowledge to implement this policy effectively and safeguard pupils.

5.6 Staff are invited to provide feedback on each occasion they are required to confirm they have read and understood KCSiE.

5.7 Regular volunteers are required to sign annually to confirm that they have read and understand both this Policy and Part 1 of KCSiE.

5.8 Governors receive training on safeguarding at induction and refresh their knowledge at least annually. Governors read and review this Policy as part of the annual review (and any intervening updates). The Governor(s) with responsibility for safeguarding will undertake regular training provided by the local authority.

6 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

6.1 The Governing Board recognises its statutory duty under current legislation and statutory guidance to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

6.2 The Governing Board will ensure that:

- the school has policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken to safeguard and promote children's welfare

- the school's child protection policies are in accordance with locally agreed interagency procedures (dealing with, amongst other things, online safety and sexting)
- the school has a staff code of conduct
- the school operates safer recruitment procedures
- the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring is regularly reviewed
- the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff, volunteers, Governors and the Headteacher
- the school has appropriate responses to children absent or missing from education
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy have lead responsibility for child protection issues and receive training in accordance with Section 5 of this policy/all other staff and those working with children, including the Headteacher, undertake training as set out in Section 5 of this policy/any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- the child protection policies and procedures, and the efficiency with which the related duties are discharged, are reviewed annually (as set out in Section 4 above)
- any information the school holds is passed to the Disclosure and Barring Service when requested
- Staff have skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to safeguard children who are looked after by a local authority. This includes ensuring that staff have the information they need about the child's status, contact arrangements with parents, care arrangements and delegated authority to carers
- Pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online)

7. Reviewing our safeguarding processes

At Lowther, we regularly review the success of what we are doing to keep children safe. This includes reflecting on what we can learn from safeguarding concerns and incidents taking any action needed to improve our practice. The impact of safeguarding policies, systems and processes is kept under continual review. We are open to challenge and actively seek opportunities to learn how we can improve. For example, we

- regularly seek and listen to the views and experiences of pupils, staff and parents
- utilise safeguarding monitoring visits from governors/trustees
- report the impact of our safeguarding arrangements to the board
- undergo external safeguarding reviews
- submit an annual self-audit to the KRSCP
- seek external expert advice to help us make decisions
- review the effectiveness of staff training

Appendix 1: Procedures in the event of allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers

1 Initial Response

On receiving the allegation the following action will be taken:

1.1 The Headteacher, (or the Chair of Governors if the allegation is against the Headteacher) will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay, and within one working day, to discuss the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. Some allegations may require the intervention of children's social care services and/or the police.

1.2 The person who liaises with the LADO on any case is referred to throughout this Appendix as the Case Manager.

1.3 Relevant information, as required and agreed by the LADO, will be gathered by the Case Manager, and shared with the LADO. An appropriate course of action will be determined with the LADO. In some cases, further enquiries will be needed before a decision on how to proceed can be taken. In such circumstances the Case Manager and the LADO will decide how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken.

1.4 If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the police 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 (see positive handling policy).

1.5 If it is decided that no further action is to be taken, this decision and a justification for it will be recorded by both the school and the LADO and agreement reached as to what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The Case Manager and the LADO will also consider what action should follow in respect of the individual against whom the allegation was made and the person(s) who made the allegation.

1.6 If it is decided that an investigation by the local authority children's social care services or the police is unnecessary, the Case Manager and the LADO will discuss the options open to the school, which will range from taking no further action to summary dismissal, or a decision not to use the person's services in future.

1.7 Where the person against whom an allegation has been made is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence, the Police will be informed immediately. Where there is no such evidence, the Case Manager will discuss the allegations with the LADO in order to help to determine whether police involvement is necessary. Likewise, if the allegation is not demonstrably false and there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion will be convened in accordance with the principles of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' at which representatives from the following organisations might be in attendance – local authority children's social care services, the Police, health and other bodies as appropriate, and in particular any referring agency.

1.8 The Case Manager should inform the member of staff concerned about the allegation as soon as possible after the LADO has been consulted. As much information as possible will be shared with the member of staff. However, where a strategy discussion is needed,

or police or children's social care services need to be involved, this will happen only once those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the person accused. Suspension will not be the default option when an allegation is reported. (See below: **Suspension**)

1.9 The following terms will be used when determining the outcome of any investigation:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term implies neither guilt nor innocence

2 Support for those involved: employees and volunteers

2.1 The school, and the local authority as the employer, have a duty of care to employees and the Board of Governors and the senior leadership team will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in any such allegations and disciplinary process.

2.2 Individuals will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action (unless there is an objection by social care services or the police: see **Initial Response** above). The individual should contact his/her trade union (if a member) or a colleague for support.

2.3 The Case Manager will appoint a named representative to keep the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case, including during any period of suspension, and will consider what additional support may be required. Social contact with colleagues or friends will not be prevented, unless there is evidence that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

3 Support for those involved: Parents or carers of the child/children involved

3.1 Parents or carers of a child or children involved will be told by the Case Manager about the allegation as soon as possible, when social care services and/or the Police have agreed what information can be disclosed.

3.2 Parents and carers will be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution. This includes informing them, in confidence, of the outcome of any disciplinary process. They will also be informed of any confidentiality/reporting restrictions, and advised to seek legal advice if required.

3.3 Parents and carers will also be made aware of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers in section 141F of the Education Act 2002 (see **Confidentiality** below). If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they should be told to seek legal advice.

3.4 Where a child has suffered significant harm, or where there is, or may be, a criminal

prosecution, support for the child or children involved will be considered by the Police or social services.

4 Confidentiality

4.1 Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity.

4.2 The Education Act 2002 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil from the same school. Reporting restrictions apply until the accused is charged with an offence; or if the Secretary of State publishes information about an investigation or disciplinary case arising from the allegation; or if the individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives his/her right to anonymity by going public, or by giving written consent for another to do so; or if a judge or magistrate lifts the restrictions in response to a request to do so.

4.3 Publication of material includes publishing details of the allegation on a social networking site.

4.4 The Case Manager will take advice from the LADO, Police and children's social care services to agree the following:

- who needs to know and what information can be shared
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- how to manage any media interest

5 Timescales

The time taken to investigate and resolve cases will depend on a variety of factors including the nature, seriousness and complexity of the allegation. It is therefore not possible to put a timescale on an investigation. However, it is in everyone's interest to resolve cases as quickly and fairly as possible, and all investigations will be treated as a priority, to avoid any delay.

6 Suspension

6.1 The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person will be evaluated and managed in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations. In some rare cases that will require the Case Manager to consider suspending the accused person until the case is resolved.

6.2 Suspension will not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported; all options to avoid suspension will be considered prior to taking that step.

6.3 Suspension will be considered only in a case 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. The Case Manager will consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school until the

allegation is resolved, and will always seek advice from the LADO. In cases where the school is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual at the school, it will be necessary immediately to suspend that person from teaching pending the findings of the investigation.

6.4 The Case Manager will also consider whether the result that would be achieved by immediate suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements. In many cases an investigation can be resolved quickly and without the need for suspension. If the LADO, Police and children's social care services have no objections to the member of staff continuing to work during the investigation, the Case Manager will be as inventive as possible to avoid suspension. For example, based on assessment of risk, 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 or
- 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 after parents have been consulted

6.5 The Case Manager will consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees which can result from suspension, where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated or malicious.

6.6 If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the rationale and justification for such a course of action will be agreed and recorded by both the Case Manager and the LADO. This will include what alternatives to suspension have been considered, and why they were rejected.

6.7 Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be dispatched within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. The person will be informed at the point of their suspension who the named contact is within the school, and provided with contact details.

6.8 The school and local authority will always give due weight to the views of the LADO, Police and social care services when making a decision about suspension.

7 Information sharing

7.1 In a strategy discussion or initial evaluation of the case, the agencies involved should share all relevant information they have about the person who is the subject of the allegation, and about the alleged victim.

7.2 Wherever possible the school will ask the Police and/or Social Services to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share statements and evidence for use in

the disciplinary process.

8 Oversight and monitoring

8.1 The LADO retains overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations; for resolving any inter-agency issues; and for liaison with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) on the subject. The LADO will provide advice and guidance to the Case Manager, in addition to liaising with the police and other agencies, and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly, fairly and thoroughly as possible. It is expected that reviews will be conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case.

8.2 Police forces have responsibility for identifying officers who will be responsible for:

- liaising with the LADO
- taking part in the strategy discussion or initial evaluation
- reviewing the progress of those cases in which there is a police investigation
- sharing information on completion of the investigation or any prosecution

8.3 If the strategy discussion or initial assessment decides that a police investigation is required, the Police are responsible for setting a target date for reviewing the progress of the investigation and consulting the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) about whether to charge the individual, continue to investigate, or close the investigation. Wherever possible, it is expected that a review will take place no later than four weeks after the initial evaluation. Dates for subsequent reviews, ideally at fortnightly intervals, will be set at the meeting if the investigation continues.

9 Record Keeping

9.1 Details of allegations found to have been malicious will be removed from any personnel records.

9.2 For all other allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how it was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken and decisions reached is to be kept on a person's confidential personnel file and a copy given to the person concerned.

9.3 The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the Police about an allegation which did not result in a criminal conviction, and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as may happen, an allegation resurfaces after a period of time.

9.4 The record will be retained at least until the person has reached retirement or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer.

10 Resignations and Compromise Agreements

10.1 If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide his/her services, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this policy.

10.2 If the accused person resigns or his/her services cease to be used and the criteria are met for a referral to the DBS, a settlement/compromise agreement will not be used and a referral to the DBS will be made.

10.3 The school acknowledges the importance of ensuring that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations affecting the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process. Wherever possible the person against whom the allegation was made will be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations.

10.4 The process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence, and reaching a judgement about whether it can be substantiated on the basis of all the information available will continue, even if the person against whom the allegation was made does not cooperate. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion (or impose disciplinary sanctions) in those circumstances, but the school will endeavour to reach a conclusion wherever possible.

10.5 Settlement/compromise agreements, by which a person agrees to resign if the school agrees not to pursue disciplinary action and where both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, should not be used in cases of refusal to cooperate or resignation before the person's notice period expires.

11 References

Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in any reference.

12 Action following a criminal investigation or a prosecution

12.1 The Police will inform the local authority and the school immediately when a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete, or if it is decided to close an investigation without charge, or not to continue to prosecute the case after the person has been charged.

12.2 In those circumstances the LADO should discuss whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. The information provided by the Police and/or children's social care services will inform that decision. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case and the consideration will take into account the result of the police investigation or the trial, as well as the different standard of proof required in disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

13 Action on conclusion of a case, including referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

13.1 If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed, or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her

services, the Case Manager will work with the LADO to determine whether a referral to the DBS for consideration of inclusion on the barred lists is required; and in the case of a member of teaching staff, whether to refer the matter to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching, if the threshold for a referral to the DBS has not been met.

13.2 The school acknowledges its legal duty to refer to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student/trainee) whose services are no longer used because he or she is no longer considered suitable to work with children; anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

13.3 The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual. The school will supply any information held to the DBS on request.

13.4 Where a teacher has been dismissed, resigned or their services cease to be used and the criteria for referral do not meet the threshold of a referral to the DBS, but a prohibition order may be appropriate, a referral to the TRA will be considered. The reasons such an order would be considered are: 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence'. Further guidance is published on the TRA website. Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary for a referral also to be made to TRA, as information is shared between the two bodies.

13.5 Where it is decided on the conclusion of a case that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the Case Manager will consider how best to facilitate a return, and how the person's contact with the child who made the allegation can best be managed, if that child is still a pupil at the school.

14 Action in cases of unfounded or malicious allegations

14.1 If an allegation is determined to be unfounded or malicious, the matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care to determine whether the child concerned is in need of its services, or may have been abused by someone else.

14.2 In the event that an allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil who made it, or the Police will be asked to consider whether any action might be appropriate against the person responsible, even if he or she is not a pupil.

15 Learning Lessons

At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the Case Manager on behalf of the school will work with the LADO to determine whether any improvements can be made to the school's procedures and/or practice to help to prevent similar events in

future. This will include issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified. Lessons should also be learned from the use of suspension where the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and Case Manager will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Appendix 2: Types and Signs of Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. All staff and volunteers do, however, have both a responsibility and duty to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child. Adults should always be aware that a child may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they have been abused. Trusting relationships with adults are the best context in which to give children confidence.

One definition of 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (eg via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child abuse may be suspected if any one or more of the following factors set out in this Appendix are evident. It should, however, be noted that there may be other factors that are not included in this list, and anyone who has any cause for concern should consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

The following information at paragraphs 1 – 4 below should help you to be more alert to the types and signs of possible abuse. It is taken from the NSPCC ('The definitions and signs of child abuse').

1 Physical abuse

1.1 Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely to be inflicted than accidental.

1.2 Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns, as these are often delayed in presentation owing to blistering taking place some time later.

1.3 The physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- multiple bruises in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- cigarette burns
- human bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds, with upward splash marks
- multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

1.4 Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

2 Emotional abuse

2.1 Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

2.2 Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- sudden speech disorders
- self-harm
- fear of parent/carers being approached regarding their behaviour
- developmental delay in terms of emotional progress
- bullying and/or aggressive behaviour

3 Sexual abuse

3.1 Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. In cases of sexual abuse it is usually the child's behaviour that may cause concern, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

3.2 It is also important to remember that it is not just adult men who sexually abuse children. There are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against

women, and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people (see also s8 below and s3 of the policy).

3.3 The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

3.4 Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

4 Neglect

4.1 Neglect, the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet has some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

4.2 The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate clothing for the conditions

4.3 Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

In addition to the above, staff and volunteers should consider the following types of abuse:

5 Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

HBA encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community including Female Genital Mutilation (see below) and child marriage. All forms of HBA are abuse and should be handled as a safeguarding issue in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

Note that marriage under the age of 18 is illegal in the UK with or without consent.

6 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (see also Attendance Policy)

6.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), also called Female Circumcision or Female Genital Cutting or sunna, is any procedure designed to alter or injure a girl's (or woman's) genital organs for non-medical reasons. It affects girls particularly from North African countries, including Somali, Sudanese, Sierra Leone, Gambian, Liberian, Egyptian, Nigerian, Ethiopian and Eritrean communities. Non-African communities which practise FGM include Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdish, Indonesian, Malaysian and Pakistani Bohra Muslim communities. FGM is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad to undergo FGM or to help someone who is trying to arrange to have FGM performed. The current maximum sentence for carrying out FGM or for helping it to be performed is 14 years in prison.

This procedure often takes place in the summer, as the recovery period after FGM can be 6 to 9 weeks. Schools should be alert to the possibility of FGM as a reason why a girl in a high risk group is absent from school or where the family request an 'authorised absence' for just before or just after the summer school holidays.

6.2 Warning signs include:

- a girl talks about plans to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- a girl's parents state that they or a relative intend to take her out of the country for a prolonged period.
- a girl talks about a long holiday to her country of origin or to another country where the practice is prevalent

There are also signs which may indicate that a girl has already undergone FGM:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spending longer than normal in the toilet
- changed behaviour after a lengthy absence
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help, but unable to be explicit about the problem owing to embarrassment or fear

6.3 Although it is difficult to identify girls before FGM takes place, where girls from these high risk groups return from a long period of absence with symptoms of FGM, advice should be sought from the Police or social services. Where a teacher, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, there is a statutory duty to report it to the Police and the teacher must personally report it to the Police. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should

also discuss any such case with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. In the case of any non-teachers, any discovery or concerns should be reported to the DSL in accordance with the safeguarding procedures.

6.4 The duty to report to the police does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases. In these cases, teachers should follow the safeguarding procedures set out in this Policy.

6.5 FGM is a safeguarding and child protection issue. Lowther will :

- Maintain a robust attendance policy which does not authorise holidays, extended or in term time
- Provide FGM training for Designated Safeguarding Lead and appropriate training for all staff dealing directly with pupils
- Initiate FGM discussions by the DSL and/or the school nurse with parents of children at risk from practising communities
- Deliver age-appropriate PSHE and RHE to children. In order to protect children it is important that key information is known by all of the school community
- Record the countries of origin of all children joining the school roll
- Follow the local safeguarding board procedures in any case of suspected abuse

7 Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation

7.1 Another form of abuse of which to be aware is child sexual exploitation. The following information is taken from the NSPCC (July 2013).

7.2 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity in exchange for things such as money, gifts, accommodation, affection or status. The manipulation or 'grooming' process involves befriending children, gaining their trust, and often feeding them drugs and alcohol, sometimes over a long period of time, before the abuse begins. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power which limits the victim's options. It is a form of abuse which is often misunderstood by victims and outsiders as consensual. Although it is true that the victim can be tricked into believing they are in a loving relationship, no child under the age of 18 can ever consent to being abused or exploited.

7.3 Child sexual exploitation can manifest itself in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighbourhoods, but not always. Exploitation can also involve opportunistic or organised networks of perpetrators who may profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple people.

7.4 This abuse often involves violent and degrading sexual assaults and rape. The Children's Commissioner's report on sexual exploitation by gangs and groups found that oral and anal rape were the most frequently reported types of abuse. Experts agree that these types of abuse are particularly humiliating and controlling, and, as such, may be

preferred by those who exploit vulnerable young people. Exploitation can also occur without physical contact when children are persuaded or forced to post indecent images of themselves online, participate in non-contact sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone, or engage in sexual conversations on a mobile phone. It may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

7.5 Technology is widely used by perpetrators as a method of grooming and coercing victims, often through social networking sites and mobile devices. This form of abuse usually occurs in private, or in semi-public places such as parks, cinemas, cafes and hotels. It is increasingly occurring at 'parties' organised by perpetrators for the purposes of giving victims drugs and alcohol before sexually abusing them.

7.6 Grooming and sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' behaviour and/or development. However, parents, carers, school teachers and practitioners are advised to be alert to the following signs and symptoms:

- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- repeat sexually transmitted infections; in girls repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- going missing from home or care
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault

7.7 **Child criminal exploitation**

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation

- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

8 Child sexual violence and sexual harassment

8.1 From 2018 emphasis has been placed on awareness of and developing a whole-school response to child sexual violence and harassment. In this context, the focus is on children; allegations of abuse where an adult is involved are addressed elsewhere in this policy. For the published guidance in full see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

The following draws on the NSPCC's summaries.

8.1.1 What are child sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence refers to criminal acts: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault, as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which can violate a child's dignity, and/or make him/her feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It can occur offline or online.

8.1.2 Children who experience sexual violence and sexual harassment will find it stressful and distressing. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable. Children who are LGBT or perceived to be by their peers may also be more susceptible.

8.1.3 Harmful sexual behaviours are problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate, and which may cause developmental damage. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is prepubescent and the other is not. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.

Link added: [Centre of Expertise on child sexual abuse: Resources for education settings](#)

8.2 What are schools' legal responsibilities?

8.2.1 All schools must have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working together to Safeguard Children (2023) Schools should be aware of their obligations under: Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). These are outlined in detail in KCSiE (2026) at para 4-10.

8.2.2 Schools should consider the composition of the student body, including the gender and age range of the pupils, and whether additional support for children with protected characteristics (who are potentially at greater risk) is appropriate.

8.2.3 Schools should seek to foster healthy and respectful relationships between boys and girls including through relationship and sex education (RSE) and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

8.2.4 Schools should ensure that their response to boy on boy and girl on girl sexual violence and sexual harassment is as robust as it is for sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the opposite sex.

8.3 Creating a whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection

8.3.1 The safeguarding and child protection policy and associated procedures are integral to the whole school community and provide a framework for action.

8.3.2 Education inside and outside the classroom seeks to foster healthy and respectful relationships, to instil the knowledge that sexual violence and sexual harassment are always wrong, and develop an understanding of:

- what respectful behaviour is
- gender roles, stereotyping, equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- prejudiced behaviour

8.4 Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

8.4.1 Managing a disclosure: **the safeguarding procedures in s4** should be followed, bearing in mind the following important considerations:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed, unless this would put the victim at greater risk. If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, then a referral should always be made to children's social care
- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed
- Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions over how any investigation will be carried out, and any support that they will be offered
- 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 if the alleged perpetrator is significantly older
- If the alleged incident is an isolated incident or a sustained pattern of abuse

8.4.2 Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. The starting point is that reports should be passed to the police. The age of criminal responsibility is 10, but police will act with sensitivity if a reported perpetrator is under 10. No child under 13 is capable in law of consent to sexual activity. Ultimately, the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will have to balance the child or young person's wishes against their duty to protect them and other children.

8.4.3 Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school should remain aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process, to be able to offer support and act appropriately. Information is available from the CPS: Safeguarding children as victims and witnesses.

8.4.4 Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The risk and needs assessment should consider the victim, alleged perpetrator, other children and, if appropriate, staff at the school.

Risk assessments should be recorded, either written or electronically, and should be kept under review. The DSL should be engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

8.4.5 Children sharing a classroom

Following a report of rape and assault by penetration, while 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 should be removed from any classes shared with the victim. The school should also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and where relevant on transport to and from the school.

8.4.6 For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school premises and any school transport should be considered immediately.

8.4.7 Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim and potentially other pupils.

8.4.8 Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school should, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions within the behaviour policy, including permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes, and to continue to consider managing potential contact on school premises and transport.

In all cases, the school should record and be able to justify its decision making. All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process, supported by parents and carers as required. Any arrangements should be kept under review.

8.5 Further response and reaction

8.5.1 Victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information piecemeal. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, the school should ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult, for example their form teacher or designated safeguarding lead, to talk to about their needs.

8.5.2 A victim of sexual violence is likely to be traumatised and, in some cases, may struggle in a normal classroom environment. There may be times when the victim finds it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities.

8.5.3 If the trauma results in the victim being unable to remain in school, alternative provision or a move to another school should be considered, to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim and following discussion with their parents or carers.

8.5.4 The school will have to balance safeguarding the victim, and the wider student body, with providing the alleged perpetrator with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implementing any disciplinary sanctions.

Consideration should be given to:

- The age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator and nature of the allegations Any child will probably experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to allegations against them
- The proportionality of the response. Support and sanctions should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

8.5.5 Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly.

8.5.6 The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence. This might not be necessary or proportional in the case of sexual harassment, and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

8.5.7 It is good practice to meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place in order to safeguard the victim, and to understand their wishes in terms of support they may need, and how the report will be progressed. It is also good practice for the school to meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss arrangements that are being put into place which affect the alleged perpetrator.

8.5.8 Consideration should be given to supporting children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required.

The school should seek to ensure that both the victim and alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed, including online or in social media.

8.5.9 A whole school approach to safeguarding, a culture that makes clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always unacceptable, and a strong preventative education programme will help to create an environment in which all children at the school are supportive and respectful of their peers if reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made.

Appendix 3: Signs of Radicalisation

1 The school recognises that those who are at risk of being drawn into extremism or terrorism are likely to have a range of vulnerabilities. These will include a number of 'push' and 'pull' factors, often related to negative perceptions of their belonging, purpose or self-worth.

2 Staff, pupils or parents may see some of the general signs which may indicate an issue such as a change in attitude/character, appearance or dress, or academic performance. In addition, the Prevent Strategy groups factors under the headings of 'engagement', 'intention', and 'capability'.

3 Factors which might suggest **engagement**:

- spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups)
- attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ ideology
- communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology

4 Example indicators that an individual has an **intention** to cause harm, use violence or other illegal means include:

- clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills
- using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group
- speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now

- expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology
- condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others
- plotting or conspiring with others

5 Example indicators that an individual is **capable** of causing harm or contributing directly or indirectly to an act of terrorism include:

- having a history of violence
- being criminally versatile and using criminal networks to support extremist goals
- having occupational skills that can enable acts of terrorism (such as civil engineering, pharmacology or construction) or
- having technical expertise that can be deployed (e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training or survival skills).

6 The examples above are not exhaustive, and vulnerability may manifest itself in other ways. There is no single route to terrorism, nor is there a simple profile of those who become involved. Outward expression of faith, in the absence of any other indicator of vulnerability, is not a reason to make a referral to Channel.

Appendix 4: Code of Conduct for working with children

Staff code of conduct

The 'Code of Conduct' and the 'Grievance Procedure' are accessible to all staff via the school's server. They exist in conjunction with the Staff Handbook and are central to the induction process for all staff.

Appendix 5: Job Description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy)

The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, are outlined below:

- The DSL will have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow for personal information to be shared (or withheld) as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR
- The need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children will always be paramount.
- The DSL with the SLT will take responsibility for understanding the monitoring and filtering systems in place (see E-safety Policy)

Managing referrals

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care and the local authority designated officer (LADO), in cases which concern a staff member, to the Disclosure and Barring Service, in cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child, and/or the Police, in cases where a crime may have been committed
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern.

- Liaise with the senior mental health lead/Mental Health Support team where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Keep the Headteacher informed of all safeguarding matters especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations (and understand obligations under PACE Code C 2019 with reference to appropriate adults)
- Liaise with the Case Manager and LADO in cases which concern a member of staff
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safeguarding, child protection and radicalisation, and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Ensure that referrals are made in line with relevant local procedures
- Report at least termly to the designated Governor, and inform the designated Governor for Safeguarding of all referrals

Training

Training of Staff: ensure that all staff training is updated every three years, in accordance with the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy. Keep a record of staff safeguarding and Prevent training.

Training of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies: receive appropriate training every two years, in order to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role.

Undertake Prevent Awareness training.

In addition, obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least annually to keep up with developments relevant to the role as DSL in order to:

- 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
- Understand that children may find it difficult to approach staff, and work to create a climate of trusted relationships
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Know 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.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Understand and support the school with regard to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation

Training of the Governing Board:

Ensure that Governors receive annual safeguarding and e-safety training/updates.

Children in need of additional support

Co-ordinate the school's role in supporting pupils where it is considered that additional intervention is required.

Children Looked After [or in kinship care]

Act as the Designated Member of Staff for Looked-After Children and ensure implementation of that policy.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure that the school's safeguarding policies are known and used appropriately:

- Ensure that the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Governing Board, in particular, the designated Governor for Safeguarding (including Children Looked After) regarding this
- Ensure the Safeguarding (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 in this process
- Link with the LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
- Help to promote high aspirations and education outcomes for children, including those with a social worker, by sharing appropriate information on welfare and safeguarding with staff

Sharing Information

Where children leave the school, ensure that their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file and securely, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Links with agencies

Develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.

Availability

Be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns, and ensure the deputy is otherwise available.

Appendix 6: Arrangements for education of children looked after (CLA)

1 Definitions

1.1 The term Children Looked After has a specific legal meaning based on the Children Act. A child is looked after by a local authority if he or she has been provided with accommodation for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, in the circumstances set

out in sections 20 and 21 of the Children Act 1989, or is placed in the care of a local authority by virtue of an order made under part IV of the Act.

1.2 The majority of children who are looked after by the local authority are placed with foster carers, as it is believed to be best for children to live within a family environment. For some children, however, residential care may be more appropriate.

2 Background

Nationally, Children Looked After significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Children Looked After are supported to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

3 Statutory Framework

3.1 The school recognises the importance of helping Children Looked After succeed, and providing a better future for them. This policy therefore takes account of statutory guidance currently in force.

4 Principles

The approach for supporting the educational achievement of Children Looked After is based on the following principles:

- prioritising education
- promoting attendance
- targeting support
- having high expectations
- promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- achieving stability and continuity
- early intervention and priority action
- listening to children
- promoting health and wellbeing
- reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

5 Aims

5.1 As for all its pupils, the School is committed to helping CLA to achieve the highest standards, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievement and attendance.

5.2 The School will champion the needs of CLA, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board will carry out those responsibilities outlined in statutory guidance: 'Promoting the education of looked-after children', including, but not

limited to the following:

- Identify a nominated Governor for CLA (who will be the same Governor as identified as responsible for safeguarding)
- Ensure that all Governors are aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of CLA
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of CLA
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of CLA
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures (in particular those listed at the start of this Policy) support their needs
- Monitor the academic progress of CLA.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure CLA achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them, and by using exclusion only as a last resort
- Support the Headteacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of CLA are recognised and met
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for CLA, in line with statutory guidance on PEPs
- Receive regular reports from the DSL setting out:

The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).

The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).

The destinations of pupils who leave the school.

Information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

6.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible and will carry out those responsibilities outlined in statutory guidance promoting the education of looked-after children, including but not limited to ensuring implementation of the following:

- A Designated Teacher is identified for CLA, whose role is set out below and another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take leave. The Designated Teacher will ordinarily be the DSL, and their respective Deputies will usually act as the Designated Teacher should they leave the School or take leave
- Procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of CLA and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations
- Maintain accurate records and report on the progress, attendance and conduct of each CLA, so that Governors or inspectors may select a CLA, and be able to track attainment and support received
- Ensure staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance, and that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority. This includes ensuring that staff have up to date assessment information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan and contact

arrangements with parents, and delegated authority to carers, and information available to the designated person

6.3 The Designated Teacher(s)

The School's Designated Teacher(s) will take on those responsibilities outlined in the statutory guidance to promote the education of looked-after children, including but not limited to the following:

- Undertake appropriate training as and where necessary to be able to support any CLA on roll
- Contribute as required to inter-agency working or development planning in respect of any CLA on roll
- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, in consultation with the child's social worker
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, in good time before any Care Plan reviews
- Ensure that each CLA has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes
- Track attainment and progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the CLA that is necessary within school
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of CLA
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and, if the pupil changes school, to a new school
- Be proactive in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life
- Be aware that 60% of CLA say they are bullied, so actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy
- Ensure that the audit on attendance and numbers and any other relevant information is returned to social workers, parents and/or Virtual School Head as necessary and every term as a minimum (where the number of CLA on the School roll is greater than zero in that term)

6.4 Responsibilities of all staff

All staff of the School will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CLA, as for all pupils
- Maintain CLA confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively

- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff to whom they can talk when they feel it is necessary
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable CLA to achieve stability and success within school
- Promote the self-esteem of all CLA
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of CLA
- Be aware that 60% of CLA say they are bullied and work to prevent bullying in line with the school's policy
- Develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority
- Read, record and act upon, as necessary, all relevant information shared with them in relation to CLA, including up-to-date assessment information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents and delegated authority to carers, and information available to the Designated Teacher

Appendix 7: Terms of Reference for Annual Safeguarding Review

1 Purpose

1.1 The Annual Safeguarding Review is commissioned by the Governing Board and undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead with input from the Nominated Safeguarding Governor once a year, generally in the Summer Term.

1.2 The Terms of Reference of the Annual Safeguarding Review set out the required content of the annual report. The report must provide the Governing Board with assurance:

- about the adequacy of the school's safeguarding policies and practice
- that practice reflects the policies and statements
- the pupils are safe, and provide supporting evidence-based feedback

2 Review of Terms of Reference

2.1 These will be presented annually to the Board at a Governors' Meeting in the Spring term for approval.

2.2 In considering whether the terms of reference remain fit for purpose, the Board shall take the following into account:

- whether the report incorporates sufficient detail for the Governing Board to gain assurance about the adequacy of the school's safeguarding policies and practice
- whether there have been any changes in legislation/statutory guidance or any events have occurred that require additional checks to be undertaken or evidence provided by the DSL

3 Minimum Required Content of the Annual Safeguarding Review

3.1 Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

Confirmation that it is up to date or changes required and that it has been implemented throughout the year.

3.2 Staff and Governor Training

Details of training undertaken and confirmation it is up to date.

3.3 Safeguarding Information for Pupils

An update on how pupils are taught about safeguarding, taking into account the particular issues facing the pupil population from time to time.

3.4 Safeguarding Initiatives

Details of any initiatives undertaken during the year.

3.5 Contact with Social Services

(SPA/LADO)/Police/DBS/NCTL Details of contact with social services and numbers of referrals; contact with the Police on any matters; referrals to DBS and/or TRA.

3.6 Patterns

A review of all safeguarding issues and confirmation of whether or not any patterns exist or could be forming.

3.7 Allegations against Staff or Volunteers Details of any matters to report.

3.8 Safer Recruitment

Details of any changes in procedures, and confirmation that proper checks are in place and implemented.

3.8 Nominated Safeguarding Governor

3.8.1 Details of checks (and conclusions) undertaken by the Nominated Safeguarding Governor during the course of the year, which must include:

- an inspection of a sample of records of serious cases and incidents (whether or not they were referred to the LSCB) in particular in order to provide adequate evidence on the extent of compliance with the school's safeguarding policies
- at least one review of the SCR
- speaking to staff outside SMT to ascertain their knowledge of safeguarding procedures
- and the culture within the school

3.8.2 Confirmation that the job description of a Nominated Safeguarding Governor remains appropriate, or changes proposed.

Appendix 8: Job Description: Nominated Safeguarding Governor

1 The main role and duties of the Nominated Safeguarding Governor on behalf of the Governing Board (which retains overall responsibility) are to:

1.1 Support and promote well-being, safeguarding and child protection issues at the

highest level within the school

1.2 encourage other members of the Governing Board to develop their understanding of the Governing Board's responsibilities with regard to well-being, safeguarding and child protection and monitoring and filtering, and support them in the performance of these duties

1.3 ensure that the Governing Board puts in place a suitable safeguarding and child protection policy (Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy) and associated policies and procedures which have proper regard to prevailing regulations, guidance, standards and advice

1.4 be familiar with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection and associated issues, contributing to inter-agency working

1.5 contribute to ensuring any deficiencies in the school's safeguarding practices brought to Governors' attention from any source are investigated and addressed

1.6 meet regularly (at least termly) with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead in order to monitor the effectiveness of the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and procedures and the implementation across the school

1.7 ensure that the Governing Board receives a report on the implementation of the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and procedures to support the full Governing Board's review of safeguarding in the school at least annually (or earlier if needed in response to changes to the law, policy or statutory guidance or as appropriate in response to specific incidents) in accordance with statutory guidance

1.8 alert the Governing Board to any incident which the Nominated Safeguarding Governor regards as a substantiated safeguarding incident

1.9 ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is part of the school's senior leadership team, and has sufficient time and resources to carry out their duties effectively

1.10 ensure that a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is identified

1.11 ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) receive appropriate training at least every two years

1.12 ensure that arrangements are in place for the inclusion of child protection training on the school's procedures in an induction programme for all people working in the school, no matter for how long, nor the status of that individual

1.13 ensure safer recruitment procedures are in place and implemented with appropriate checks undertaken on all new staff and volunteers

1.14 review the school's Single Central Register on at least an annual basis, after undertaking sufficient training to be able to interrogate the register and identify potential deficiencies

1.15 undertake an annual check of staff awareness and understanding of safeguarding procedures

1.16 be aware of how safeguarding and child protection issues, including guidance on adjusting behaviours to reduce risks, the safer use of electronic devices, social media and the internet and advice on who to turn to for help, are addressed through the curriculum

1.17 ensure that the Governing Board monitors and assesses specific safeguarding issues, such as (without limitation) historical concerns, mental health, children absent from education, radicalisation, pupils performing a caring role at home, children with special educational needs or learning difficulties, those for whom English is an additional language, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and cyberbullying

1.18 both provide to, and seek from, the local authority and other relevant agencies information about how the Governing Board's duties in respect of safeguarding and child protection have been discharged, where appropriate or requested

2 The identity of and contact details for the Nominated Safeguarding Governor, together with an outline of his/her duties, will be publicised widely within the school community to ensure that pupils, parents, staff and Governors understand the purpose and importance of the role.

3 Should the role and duties of the Nominated Safeguarding Governor conflict with those assumed by others within the school, including the Chair of Governors, the Governing Board will take all necessary action to resolve those conflicts so as to achieve clarity about respective roles and duties. This may include amendments to the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and/or other governance arrangements applicable to the school.

4 The Nominated Safeguarding Governor will undertake appropriate training in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's recommendations.

Appendix 9: Online safety and the use of smart devices

This section is a summary of the core aspects of Lowther's separate online safety policy that sets out our whole school approach, including the use of smart technology (e.g. mobile phones and smart glasses). Lowther understands the significant and essential role that we have in making sure children are protected from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We consider online safety and the four main categories (4Cs) of online risk when making decisions for our school:

Content: exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example pornography, discrimination, self-harm, suicide, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this, for example peer to peer pressure, and adults posing as children with the intention to groom or exploit children 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, including those generated using AI and online bullying.

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

We have online safety processes in place that aim to protect children and set clear expectations for the acceptable use of technologies and how we will respond to online safety incidents.

We fulfil our aims by:

- making sure our whole school approach is reflected in all relevant policies
- regularly training staff on online safeguarding risks and how to protect children
- making sure children, staff and parents sign an accessible acceptable use agreement that covers our expectations for how they should use the school's IT systems and the consequences for not following the agreement
- educating children to learn how to keep themselves safe when online, what to do if they are harmed or spot a risk and what the consequences are if they break the school rules about online safety
- engaging parents with keeping children safe online and making parents, children and staff aware that staff can search an electronic device they have confiscated
- ensuring appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on the school's network and devices

Technology and risks and harms associated with it evolve and change rapidly. We will carry out an annual review of the school's approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our pupils may face. The school's staff code of conduct and online safety policy details acceptable use of technologies.

Mobile phones and smart technology (including smart devices)

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment meaning children will not have access to their mobile phone (or other smart technology with similar functions) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons and breaktimes. There are special circumstances where there are exceptions to this rule, such as if a child requires their mobile phone to monitor a medical need. Staff and visitors are expected to not use personal devices around children.

We will only take images, videos or recordings of children if we have the child's and parent's consent. We will make sure the child is appropriately dressed. All children are encouraged to tell us if they are worried about any media that has been taken of them.

We make careful decisions about how and where we publish images, videos and recordings of children online, recognising the increasing risk that individuals can use artificial intelligence to manipulate the image to cause harm.

Filtering and monitoring systems

Our school has strong and effective filtering and monitoring systems in place to help limit children's exposure to online risks from our school's IT systems. In line with the DfE's Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges guidance, we will make sure that, among other things:

- we assign a member of the senior leadership team and a governor to oversee filtering and monitoring arrangements and ensure that appropriate systems are in place to meet these standards
- the effectiveness of our filtering and monitoring systems is reviewed at least annually, and more frequently where there is a significant change or issue, led by the designated SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and our IT support/provider
- we check that filtering works across all internet-connected devices and a record is kept of these checks
- the systems are effective for the number of and age range of our children and consider children who are potentially at greater risk of harm
- specific staff have assigned roles and responsibilities to manage these systems
- staff and pupils know about the systems in place and how to raise concerns
- when we block online content it does not impact teaching and learning
- we have monitoring strategies in place that meet our school's safeguarding needs

Generative artificial intelligence

Generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) refers to artificial intelligence that creates new content (e.g. text, code and images). Our school is aware that using Gen AI can be hugely beneficial, but also harmful if used inappropriately. We will use the Department for Education's advice and guidance on using Gen AI in education to ensure we integrate Gen AI tools safely and with children's best interests at the centre. Safeguarding concerns that arise through an individual's use of artificial intelligence will be responded to in line with our safeguarding policies. Our school's approach to using Gen AI is detailed in our online safety policy that can be found on the school's website.

Remote education

We will stay in regular contact with the parent of a pupil being taught remotely, making sure they are aware of:

- the importance of children being safe online and offering advice on how to do so
- what systems our school uses to filter and monitor online use
- what their child is being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school their child will be interacting with online

Information security and access management

We understand that cyber security is a safeguarding issue, particularly because we hold sensitive data about pupils and staff. We will take measures to help keep personal

information safe, ensuring we have appropriate cyber security systems in place to help protect against cybercrime (i.e. when criminals seek to exploit human or security vulnerabilities online to steal passwords, data or money directly). We will follow the government's Cyber security standards guidance. Our systems are reviewed regularly to keep up with the constant changes to cybercrime technologies.