

St Martin's CE Primary School



Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures

**Reviewed, updated and adopted by the Governing Body: September 2023
Next review by September 2024**

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1. Aims

At St Martin's C of E Primary school we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues
- Pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online and through various teaching and learning opportunities, children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it
- The school assesses local risks and issues in the community and takes these in to consideration when promoting the well-being and safety of its pupils

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children board.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

[The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

Statutory [guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009](#) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Appendix 4 defines Child Sexual Exploitation in more detail.

Female Genital Mutation (FGM) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Appendix 4 defines Female Genital Mutilation in more detail including the mandatory duty on staff to report disclosures.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

4. Equality statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. Children with additional educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- There may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with additional educational needs and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like peer group isolation and bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Difficulties may arise in overcoming communications barriers including managing and reporting these challenges

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Identify as lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) - The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. At St Martins we endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by providing a safe space for them to speak to by having our pastoral lead and counsellor available for all members of our school community, in addition to other measures such as worry boxes in all classes.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

5.1 All staff

All staff will read and understand part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 (school leaders and staff that work directly with children will also read Annex A), the school's Child Protection Policy, Behaviour policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Honour Based Abuse Policy, and Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism Policy. Staff must ensure that they review this guidance at least annually.

How to report a concern

All concerns must be reported immediately, in person to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. You will then be asked to record that concern in writing using the management system, CPOMS. An expected time frame for staff to have completed a written referral will be given by the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the time of the verbal referral. This will always be within the same day as a minimum but will often be expected as soon as possible, within twenty minutes of the verbal referral.

All written referrals via CPOMS must be labelled with the "Safeguarding Referral" category and the "Safeguarding Notification" alert group. It is all staff's responsibility to ensure they regularly access CPOMS and maintain the ability to be able to use it immediately when required to do so

In the unlikely event that a Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead is not available in school the staff member with a concern must at the first available opportunity take advice from the MASH team via 0161 770 7777.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including the staff code of conduct and the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education 2020 and this Child Protection Policy
- The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), FGM and radicalisation

Section 12 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Our DSLs are Mr Neil Mack and Mrs Helen Woodward. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wide safeguarding.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Contact details are

neil.mack@st-martins.oldham.sch.uk or h.woodward@st-martins.oldham.sch.uk

Telephone 0161 770 8303

When the DSLs are absent, the deputy DSL will act as cover.

- Miss Beth Glennie (Deputy Head teacher)
- Mrs Lauren Mack (Assistant Head Teacher)

If no Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead are available the member of staff with the concern will need to take advice from Oldham Children's Social Care and MASH team by telephoning 0161 770 7777.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school
- Work with external agencies and professionals on matters of safety and safeguarding
- Undertake relevant training
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents
- Ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
- Be aware of pupils who have a social worker
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children and help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school leadership staff
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Work with others to ensure that the school's filtering and monitoring systems are functional and effective

The DSL will also liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The school recognises that the Virtual Headteacher has responsibility to promote the education of children who have a social worker. DSLs will maintain a strong relationship with the Virtual Schools Team, attend relevant network meetings and co-operate in every way possible to secure better outcomes for children with social workers.

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in their job description.

5.3 The governing board

The governing board will approve this policy at each review, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will appoint a link governor – Mrs Anne Ostmeier who will monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

The chair of governors, Ms Anne Ostmeier, will act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

Ms Anne Ostmeier can be contacted: anne.ostmeier@st-martins.oldham.sch.uk

5.4 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction

Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website

Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent

Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly

Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)

Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person

6. Confidentiality

Refer to the Confidentiality policy and note the following:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Information must be shared on a ‘need-to-know’ basis, but you do not need consent to share information if a child is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not be in the child’s best interests

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 11, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

7.1 If a child is in immediate danger

Make a referral to children’s social care and/or the police **immediately** if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

To report a safeguarding concern, call the MASH team on : 0161 770 7777 e mail: child.mash@oldham.gov.uk
<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Immediately refer the disclosure to DSL in person
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it, The DSL will ask you to log it on CPOMS as soon as possible
- Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so

7.3 If you discover that Female Genital Mutilation has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4.

Any teacher who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. A report should be made orally by calling 101.

'Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, professionals should report the case immediately to police, including dialling 999 if appropriate'.

In most cases 'reports under the duty should be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered, and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day'.

The duty above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger)

Figure 1 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare and the child is not in immediate danger.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly (see 'Referral' below).

You can also contact the charity NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 if you need advice on the appropriate action.

Early help

Staff must be aware of Early Help, the services they can offer families and how to refer them. If you feel a family would benefit from Early Help support you should speak to a DSL as soon as possible. You can also speak to families and make referrals to Early Help a DSL will help and advise you on the best way to do this.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer a case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not at immediate risk of harm, where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly if appropriate (see 'Referral' above).

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, that school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

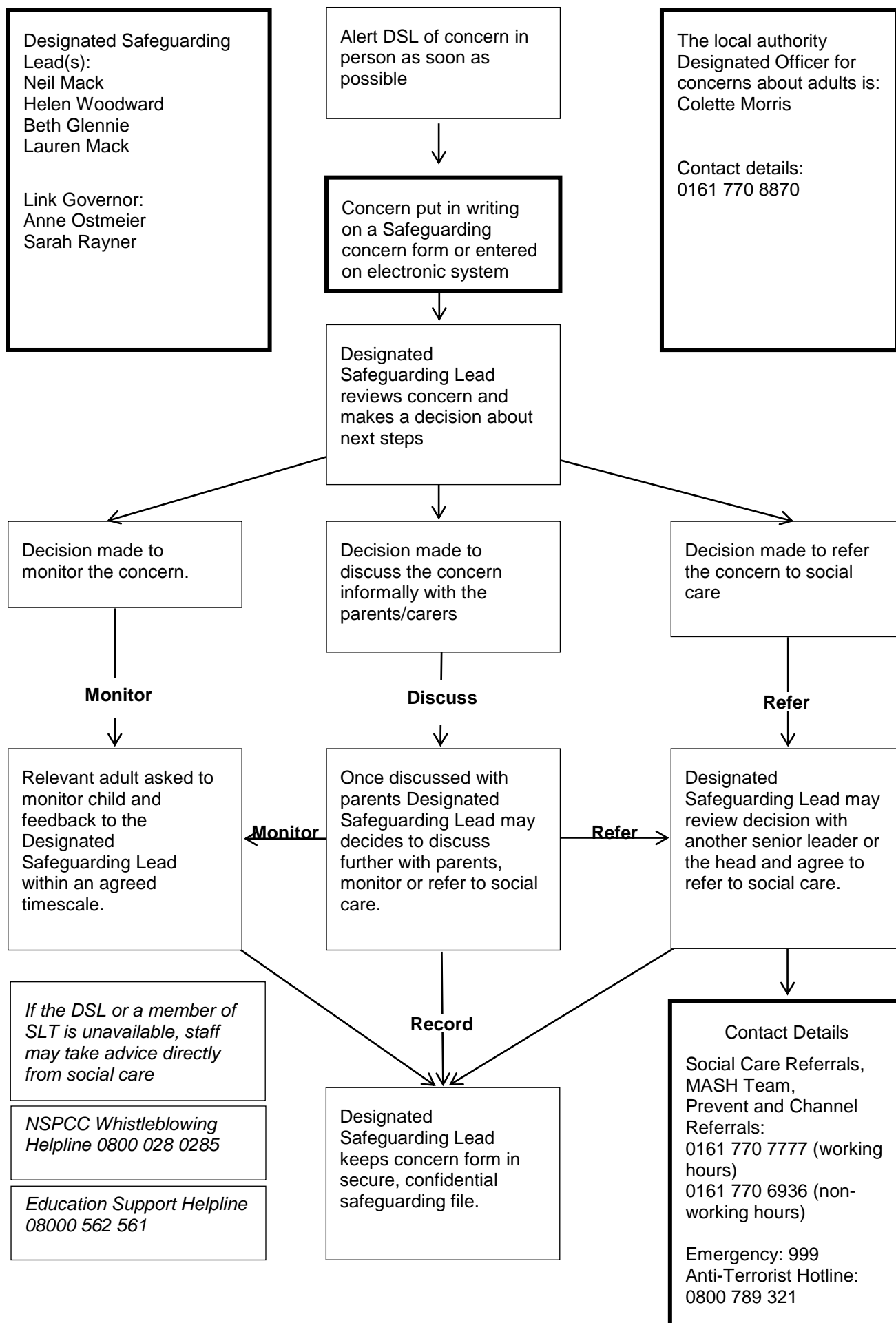
- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

7.6 Children may not be ready to talk about their experiences

Staff should share any concerns they have about a child with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. However, it should be remembered that sometimes children will not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (no immediate danger)

FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



7.6 Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

If you have concerns about a member of staff, governor, supply teacher, agency staff, volunteer, or any adult working in or for the school speak to the headteacher. If you have concerns about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors, Ms Anne Ostmeier who can be contacted: anne.ostmeier@st-martins.oldham.sch.uk

You can also discuss any concerns about any staff member or volunteer with the DSL.

The headteacher/chair of governors/DSL will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

The DSL (or chair of governors, in the case of a concern about the headteacher) will also inform the designated officer for the local authority (LADO).

The guidance in Keeping Children Safe In Education (Part Four) should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including supply staff and volunteers has:

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

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

7.7 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour and anti-bullying policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must tell the DSL and record the allegation, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by regularly telling them in assemblies, in class and during PSHE lessons and providing ‘worry boxes’ in every class and ensuring staff are always available before, during and after school.

- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

7.8 Children's Mental Health

All staff at St Martin's C of E Primary School are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue immediately by informing the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Helen Woodward is the Mental Health Lead in the school and can be contacted on 0161 770 8303 or helen.woodward@st-martins.oldham.sch.uk

7.9 Children with a Social Worker

At St Martin's C of E Primary School, we recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils.

This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health.

We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

8. Notifying parents

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

9. Mobile phones and cameras

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

We will follow the Data Protection Act 1998 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

10. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding practices

10.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

10.2 Other complaints

Please see the Whistleblowing Policy and the Early Years Policy

10.3 Whistleblowing

Safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistleblowing policy. A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed

- A legal obligation has been breached
- There has been a miscarriage of justice
- The health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- The environment has been damaged
- Information about any of the above has been concealed

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government, the number is 0808 800 5000

11. Record-keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

School uses CPOMS (an online software application) to record and maintain any safeguarding concerns. The software is password protected and keys are needed to access information.. Staff without a Merilock key can record information in the same way in which they fill out a paper based referral form – they cannot search the system for information. This information can be shared appropriately with relevant agencies.

In addition:

Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks

Appendix 4 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

12. Training

12.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, this will include information on:

Whistle blowing procedures
 The child protection policy
 The behaviour policy
 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
 The Code of Conduct
 Access to complete online safeguarding training
 The safeguarding response to children who go missing in education
 The role of the designated and deputy designated safeguarding leads
 Information on additional school procedures in place to keep children safe and the site secure

This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from our local safeguarding children board.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

12.2 The DSL and deputy DSLs

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

12.3 Governors

Members of the Governing Body of the school take part in mandatory safeguarding training to ensure that they can 'assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective.' This training is regularly updated. (see KCSIE (2023), paragraph 81.)

12.4 Recruitment – interview/appointment panels

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, and be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

12.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Head teacher, the DSLs and the SLT. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

14. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

• Anti-bullying (includes cyber bullying) • Attendance • Behaviour • Child Protection • Confidentiality • Critical Incident • Dealing with Radicalisation and Extremism • Equal Opportunities and Diversity • E-safety and ICT Acceptable Use • Fire and Emergency Evacuation • First Aid • Health and Safety • Lock Down • Medicines • Missing Child • Risk Assessment • Safe Recruitment and Selection • SEN and Disability • Child Not Collected • Visitors • Whistle blowing

All staff engaged in remote learning with pupils must ensure that they have read and understood the school's Remote Learning Protocol.

Appendix 1: types of abuse and neglect

Indicators of abuse and neglect

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

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

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

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

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when consider the well-being and safety of its pupils.

KCSIE (2023), paragraph 23 says:

'Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse

(including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.’

Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

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

Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff’s employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual’s personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

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

Existing staff

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

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

Where the ‘harm test’ is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)

Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence

If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#)

If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

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

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

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors

All governors have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Online Safety

Children at St Martin's are taught about how they can keep themselves and others safe, including online. To be effective, we present this information in an age-appropriate way. We are sensitive to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

St Martin's School take our duty to keep children and young people safe online very seriously. When children use the school's network to access the internet they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness. Many children of primary school age now have access, some unlimited and unrestricted access, to the internet via mobile phone networks or tablets/laptops. We recognise that children can harass their peers via their mobile or other smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually (sometimes through large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content. As a result children are not encouraged to bring a mobile phone to school but in the event they do, it must be handed in to the classroom teacher or school office where it will be safely secured during the school day.

DSLs will ensure that the filtering and monitoring systems used are effective and fit for purpose. This will likely be in consultation with the school's ICT support team and local authority. DSLs will also ensure that staff training is adequate and up-to-date to keep children safe and should include information on cyber security. This training will also ensure that staff understand the risks of poor filtering and monitoring, and how to share their concerns. DSLs in consultation with other relevant key staff will ensure that online risk management plans are in place and adhered to for vulnerable children.

Filtering refers to the technology preventing access to harmful or inappropriate content, whilst monitoring refers to the practical steps staff take to ensure harmful or inappropriate access is not made. Monitoring can include:

- Physical monitoring
- Live software monitoring
- Monitoring user logs
- Monitoring individual devices

We make sure that any school devices used away from the school site are also subject to filtering and monitoring procedures.

Each year (at least) our designated safeguarding lead, along with our IT team, and other senior staff will review our filtering and monitoring procedures to ensure that they effectively prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content. They also ensure that the systems we have in place to report any difficulties with the system are understood by all staff and reports are effectively managed. This review should be reported to the appropriately linked governor.

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism

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

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

Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scam

Staff must be aware of and adhere to the school's Online Safety Policy which further outlines how we keep children safe online. This also includes information about "online learning" whilst out of school.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that adults/staff working in school including governors, volunteers, supply teachers, contractors and agency staff have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police. We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

We recognise the possibility that adults working in school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers, contractors and agency staff. All concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher and concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors. In any situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO). Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken. The headteacher will decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term “low-level” concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Allegations

It is an allegation if the person* has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations will be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.

Before contacting the LADO, the school will conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school, or a combination of these.

Low-level Concerns

Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

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

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

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

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

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

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act. Schools will decide how long to retain such information, but it will be kept at least until the individual leaves their employment. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter will be referred to the LADO. If the records' review identifies that there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur, policies or processes will be revised and/or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- 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 the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for Oldham LEA.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

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 either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher (or chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the 'case manager' – will take the following steps:

Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is

evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)

Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies

Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details

If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate

Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate. Support is available through our school counsellor and also through the local trade union representative or SHREC (HR provider).

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)

Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the governing body will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week

If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the NCTL to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Domestic Abuse

We use the term domestic abuse rather than domestic violence because there are other kinds of domestic abuse, not only violence.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

(The definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

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

Operation Encompass is a partnership initiative which focuses upon dynamic information sharing between Greater Manchester Police, Oldham Council and Schools. The initiative has been developed following local and national learning about the effects and harm upon children who hear or see domestic abuse within their home. We all want to ensure children thrive within the school environment and are able to reach their full potential. This initiative will ensure that where there has been a domestic incident within the child's home, this information is shared on a confidential basis with the safeguarding lead and other nominated key personnel within the school in order that the child's welfare and overall well-being can be monitored and that there is an offer of support from the partnership for both the child, and other family members who witness or are involved in a domestic violence incident.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child in to 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.

Possible Indicators of Child Criminal Exploitation can be:

- 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; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs, primarily crack cocaine and heroin. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. More information can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

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

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

Concerns raised with respect to child criminal exploitation or County Lines should be referred to a designated safeguarding lead as any other safeguarding or child protection concern would be and procedures followed, contacting MASH and the Police.

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

More information on contextual safeguarding can be found: <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/what-is-contextual-safeguarding/>

Child-on-child abuse

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

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

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

- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff must understand, that even if there are no reports in school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) immediately. Systems and processes to allow children to report concerns must be promoted and accessible in their classroom such as "worry boxes" and all concerns raised treated seriously.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed above, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. We are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school, including intimate personal relationships. Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. But it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

There are categories on CPOMS specifically for Child-on-child abuse and Sexual Harassment. Reported cases or suspected cases and allegations of child-on-child abuse will be dealt with by the designated safeguarding lead and senior leadership team. Initially staff will report these to the DSL (or deputies) using the same procedures as they would with all cases of suspected abuse. DSLs and senior leaders will conduct reasonable enquiries recording their findings and actions taken on the young person's CPOMS electronic file. Findings and actions taken (when appropriate to do so) will be shared with parents/guardians and will always place the emotional and physical well-being and safety of children at the centre of decision making. In cases where abuse has taken place and it is relevant to do so, school will follow normal safeguarding procedures which may involve contacting other agencies for support, including children's social care and the police. Cases will be discussed by senior leaders during weekly pastoral meetings to ensure the correct support networks are in place for victims, perpetrators and any other children affected.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020). Any cases where staff suspect improper use of electronic devices should be brought to designated leads, staff should not investigate or look at devices containing inappropriate content under any circumstance. Any decision made to confiscate and potentially search a device will only be made by the St Martin's senior leadership team and will follow advice in the above UKCIS guidance and the Searching, screening and confiscation DfE advice to schools.

Children Who Are Absent From School

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents and carers should remember to update the school as soon as

possible if the numbers change, if staff encounter wrong or none-working contact details they should report it to the school office, inform the parents/carers and seek to update and correct the contact details.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
 - a. leave school to be home educated
 - b. move away from the school's location
 - c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
 - e. are permanently excluded

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

Children missing from education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of

the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

More information can be found in:

Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

Honour-based Abuse (HBA)

So-called “honour-based” abuse encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutliation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called Honour-based Abuse (regardless of motivation) and will be handled and escalated as such. We use the term Honour-based Abuse rather than Honour-based Violence because there are many kinds of “Honour-based” abuse, not only violence.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

Female Genital Mutilation

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs
- Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:
 - The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
 - FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
 - A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
 - A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
 - Being unexpectedly absent from school
 - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

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

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmufco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

Marriage and Civil Partnership Age of Consent

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 came into force in February 2023 which means that 16 and 17 year olds will no longer be allowed to marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent. Any concerns that students or underage siblings may be getting married should be referred to the DSL.

Preventing radicalisation

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, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding children board and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/educate-against-hate) and charity [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions

- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisations and act proportionately. If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Further information can be found at

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/lscb/downloads/file/132/prevent_safeguarding_policy which outlines Oldham's targeted safeguarding approach to children, young people and adults.

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intentions that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a "grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt" and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offense.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to use the Entry Sign system to sign in and wear a visitor's badge whilst on school premises. Green visitor badges are given to visitors that can be unsupervised and engage in regulated activity, red badges are given to visitors that must be supervised at all times.

We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Out-of-School Providers

St Martin's staff should follow our own safeguarding and child protection procedures where they have concerns about the out-of-school provider, referring through designated safeguarding leads. DSLs and other staff may contact the local authority designated officer in the case of concerns about adults. Where St Martin's host out-of-school providers on their premises, it should be made clear that whilst the provider is responsible for their own safeguarding and child

protection policies and procedures, the school may refer any concerns they have about the provider to the local authority. DSLs will ensure that external providers at a minimum share their safeguarding policy/procedures with the school before using the premises and that these procedures are adequate.

Non-collection of children

Please see the Uncollected Child Policy

Missing pupils

Please see the Missing Child Policy