TALBOT HEATH SCHOOL *"Honour Before Honours"*

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2026-2027: Whole School, including EYFS

Date adopted: *1st September 2026*
Date of next adoption: *1st September 2027*
Reviewed by*: FGB Committee*

As a school, we will make reasonable adjustments to this policy, in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010), for students with SEND.

Contents

1. Contacts
2. Aims
3. Definitions
4. Legislation
5. Duties of staff
6. Training requirements
7. Procedures
8. Low Level Concerns
9. Confidentiality
10. Monitoring
11. Record keeping
12. Online Safety
13. Complaints
14. Equality statement

Appendices

A Recognising Abuse
B Specific Forms of Abuse
C Allegations Against Staff
D Safer Recruiting
E Duties of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Approved by ……

(for the Governing Body)

Date approved ……

Date of next review ……

1. KEY CONTACTS

	Name	Contact email	Contact telephone

School	Talbot Heath	office@talbotheath.org jsoffice@talbotheath.org	01202 761881 01202763360 (JS)
Head	Ross Cameron	rcameron@talbotheath.org	01202 761881
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) & Deputy Head	Anna Talbot	atalbot@talbotheath.org	01202 761881
DDSL, Deputy Head & Head of Junior School	Joanna Brown	jbrown@talbotheath.org	01202 761881 01202 763360 (JS)
DDSL Sixth Form	Tammy Webb	twebb@talbotheath.org	01202 761881 ext. 252
DDSL EYFS & Deputy Head	Sarah Breeze (EYFS)	sbreeze@talbotheath.org	01202 761881 01202 763360 (JS)
Chair of Governors	Rebecca Newton	rnewton@talbotheath.org	01202 761881 01202 763360 (JS)
Governor with Safeguarding responsibility	Elaine Brook	ebrook@talbotheath.org	01202 761881 01202763360 (JS)
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)		lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk	01202 817600
Bournemouth Police Station			01202 222222
DfE Prevent helpline		counter.extremism@education.gov.uk	020 7340 7264
Channel helpline	For Dorset this is through the Safeguarding Referral Unit at Dorset Police	email: MASH@dorset.pnn.police.uk	
Independent Schools Inspectorate		info@isi.net	02076000100

SAFEGUARDING USEFUL CONTACTS FOR DORSET, BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH & POOLE

Children Safeguarding
Social Care Local Offices
For referrals or discussing a possible referral, about children and families

	REFERRALS TO SOCIAL SERVICES	**EARLY HELP** When the case does not meet social services threshold, but support is still needed	**SAFEGUARDING ADVICE/ESCALATION**

BCP Children First Response hub (front door) for referral to social services but also early help	01202 123 334 Email for referrals childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Website: https://www.bcpcouncil.gov.uk/Home.aspx Are you worried about a child or young person?	01202 123 334 Email for referrals childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Out of hours 01202 738256 Website: https://www.bcpcouncil.gov.uk/Home.aspx	Dorset Healthcare – ADVICE ONLY: 01305 361469 CCG Team – ESCALATION ONLY: 01305 213644 Safeguarding.notifications@Dorsetccg.nhs.uk
BCP LADO. To be contacted in case of safeguarding allegations against staff	**Both of the BCP Designated Officers work part-time, so the preferred contact details to reach the Duty LADO is:** LADO Service number: 01202 817600 – LADO@BCPcouncil.gov.uk **Direct Lines for the Designated Officers for the BCP LADO Service are:** 01202 127642 (John McLaughlin) - Usual working hours: 9am-5pm Mon & Tue, 9am-1pm Wed 01202 128058 (Laura Baldwin)- Usual working hours: 9am-5pm Wed-Fri		
Dorset Use CHAD for referral to social care and individual LA numbers for early help support	**Dorset Children's Social Care. Children's advice and duty service (CHAD)** Weekdays: 8 am – 10 pm Sat and Sun: 9 am – 10 pm Telephone: 01305228558 Out of Hours: 01202 228866 No interagency referral is required but conversation needs to be added in electronic records for audit trail purposes Website: Worried about a child - Dorset Council	West Dorset: 01305 224026 North Dorset: 01305 224310 Weymouth/Portland: 01305 225750 Purbeck: 01305 225729 East Dorset: 01202 225710	Dorset Healthcare – ADVICE ONLY: 01305 361469 Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Team – ESCALATION ONLY: 01305 213644 Safeguarding.notifications@Dorsetccg.nhs.uk

Dorset To be contacted in case of safeguarding allegations against staff	**LADO:** 01305 221122
Dorset Police	**Safeguarding Referral Unit (Police)** Email: mash@dorset.pnn.police.uk Telephone: 01202 222229 999 (if emergency) 01202/01305 222222 (non-emergency)

Adult Social Care Local Offices

For referrals, discussing follow up on cases, source of information

Bournemouth & Christchurch: 01202 454979 Email: caredirect@bcpcouncil.gov.uk OOH telephone: 01202 657279 OOH email: EmergencyDutyService@poole.gov.uk
Poole: 01202 633902 Email: sshelpdesk@bcpcouncil.gov.uk OOH telephone: 01305 858250 OOH Email: EmergencyDutyService@poole.gov.uk
Dorset: 01929 557712 Email: dorsetadultsafeguarding@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk OOH telephone: 01305 858250 OOH Email: dash@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Domestic Abuse Referrals

In an emergency – Dorset police		**Phone 999 – or 101 for all other enquiries** Domestic Abuse | Dorset Police
BCP	**BCHA Domestic abuse referrals and support line** **BCP outreach (24 hours)** **Website:** Domestic abuse support - help is available (bcpcouncil.gov.uk) **STARS (sexual trauma and recovery services)**	**01202 710777** **01202 710777** **01202 308855** **Online chat also available** www.starsdorset.org

Dorset	**You first (helpline) Outreach** **STARS (sexual trauma and recovery services)**	**0800 032 5204** **0800 032 5204** https://theyoutrust.org.uk **01202 308855** **Online chat also available** www.starsdorset.org
National	**National centre for DA**	**0800 970 2070**

2. AIMS

The school aims to ensure that:

- Pupils are in a safe environment where they can learn and develop
- appropriate and timely action is taken to ensure safeguarding of pupils
- it supports pupils who have been abused
- it has a safe and secure recruitment process
- staff, volunteers and speakers are aware of their statutory responsibilities for safeguarding pupils, and that they must report a concern
- staff are trained to recognise and act on safeguarding concerns

We recognise that, because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outwards signs of abuse.

The school therefore:

- Seeks to maintain an environment where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to, and know who to approach if they are worried
- Ensures pupils know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- Includes opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for all pupils to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, including online. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education is mandatory. (Education will be tailored to meet the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children).
- Ensures that it plays its crucial role in preventative education to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, bi-phobic and sexual violence/ harassment.
- Ensures that it has a clear set of values and standards which are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life (these are underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as our PSHE programme). This programme tackles at an age-appropriate stage of development issues such as:
  - Healthy and respectful relationships
  - Boundaries and consent
  - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - Body confidence and self esteem
  - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
  - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour or faith-based abuse such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
  - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

Our policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers and external club providers working in the school and is based on the model policy developed by the DfE. It is produced in accordance with local inter-agency procedures (Poole, Bournemouth, Dorset and Hampshire). Where there is a safeguarding concern, the governing body and the school leaders will ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Talbot Heath School differentiates between safeguarding children who have suffered or

are likely to suffer harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. Children include everyone under the age of 18.

Procedures ensure correct reporting and agency involvement ensuring that:

- Children who have suffered or are likely to suffer harm are reported directly to Children's Social Care immediately
- Children who require additional support from one or more agencies lead to inter-agency assessment and the provision of Family Help. Under Family Help there are two strands: community-based early help (the collective support offered by schools, colleges, health visitors, early years settings and community groups) and targeted early help (the more focused approach partnership-based support developed in local areas).

3. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the 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: Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity, which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm.

Safeguarding team: The DSL, DDSLs, pastoral staff and school nursing service. Also termed the Child Protection Team.

MyConcern: an on-line reporting and monitoring service used by all staff to report safeguarding and other concerns. All entries are accessible to the DSL and Safeguarding Team.

Prevent Duty guidance (England and Wales): the school is committed to its duty to have due regard to the need to prevent children being drawn into extremism, whether violent or non-violent. The school aims to be a place where extremist thinking can be discussed, and children may learn how to challenge extremist ideas.

Channel: the multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. It aims to: identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism; assess the nature and extent of that risk; develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned. Should concerns require support from other agencies, the following are ways in which terrorism and extremism can be reported: See Annex A KCSIE.

- Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321
- Crime stoppers: 0800 555 111
- The local police force 999
- Relevant police force: 101
- www.gov.uk/report-suspicious-activity-to-mi5
- The DfE dedicated telephone helpline for non-emergency advice for staff and governors: 020 7340 7264

To report any online terrorist-related material: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism

4. LEGISLATION AND OTHER REFERENCES

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) (KCSIE)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) (WT)

Prevent Duty Guidance; for England and Wales (2023)

The Prevent Duty of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015; Departmental advice for schools and childminders and the use of social media for online

The Children Act 1989, and 2004 amendment.

Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018, and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children under age 8.

Serious Crime Act 2015, explaining duty to report FGM.

Human Rights Act 1998

Equality Act 2010

Public Sector Equality Duty

UKCIS guidance (Council for Child Internet safety document covering sexting/ online abuse)

DfE guidance on 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health.'

Promoting and supporting mental health and well-being in schools and colleges (June 2021, updated 2026)

Every Mind Matters campaign resources (Public Health England)

Home Office documents 'preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and 'criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines'

Alternative Provision – DfE statutory guidance
DfE 'Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school'

Related School Documents:

1. Safer Recruitment Policy
2. Code of Conduct
3. Low level concerns policy
4. Anti-bullying Policy
5. Behaviour Policy
6. Whistle Blowing Policy
7. Missing Pupil Procedure
8. Prevent Policy
9. IT and E-Safety policy
10. SEND policy
11. Educational visits policy
12. Positive Handling Policy
13. Procedure for managing safeguarding allegations against staff
14. Staff Briefing Minutes
15. Mobile Phone Policy

Staff may access all policies via Shared Documents in One-Drive (Staff-Information-Policies) Parents are able to access all relevant policies through the website.

5. DUTIES OF STAFF, GOVERNING BODY, LOCAL AUTHORITY, POLICE

Include roles and responsibilities

All staff, volunteers, governors and external club providers have a responsibility to safeguard children from abuse whether that is within or outside the home, including online. Children include everyone under the age of 18. They must be aware of

the contents of this policy, follow its guidance, and know how to report a concern. All staff have a duty to attend regular safeguarding training.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider at all times what is in the best interest of the child.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as the problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments, including supporting social workers and other agencies.

The Headteacher should ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation), are understood and followed by all staff.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding. The duties are set out in detail in Appendix E. The DSL reports annually to the governing body and termly updates are provided.
The DSL meets regularly with DDSLs and the Safeguarding Governor and receives daily updates on matters of concern. The DSL has full access to information on My Concern.

Designated Safeguarding Deputies (DDSLs)

The DDSLs deputise for the DSL in her absence, and support the DSL in her duties, leading investigations and plans when required. They are expected to be trained to the same level as the DSL. A member of the DDSL team attends BCP Schools Safeguarding briefings and forums and feeds back to the DSL and deputies.

Governing Body

Elaine Brook is the Safeguarding Governor nominated to liaise with the local authority on issues of child protection or in case of allegations against the Head or a member of the Governing Body.
The governors responsible for child protection undertake an annual review of policy and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, so that any deficiencies or weaknesses can be remedied without delay. The Chair of the Governing Body signs off the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually, or more frequently if there are changes in legislation and regulations, once it has been reviewed by the Governing Body.

The school Governing body ensures there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns, or allegations against staff (including supply staff and volunteers) that might indicate they pose a risk or harm to children. Concerns, including allegations that may meet the harm test, are addressed as set out in Part four of KCSIE.

All governors, as trustees of the school, undertake regular safeguarding training. Records of training are held by the Clerk to the Governors.

Governing bodies should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi agency safeguarding hub.

The governing body should seek assurance that bodies concerned with non-school activities on site have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed) and they should ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

6. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All staff are required to read the Safeguarding Policy, KCSIE Part 1, and all other policies relevant to their role, before taking up their post.

Safeguarding concerns are recorded on MyConcern. All staff receive a log-in and password for this, and instruction in what should be recorded there.

All staff attend (in person or virtually) the annual Safeguarding update given by the DSL or external provider in September, at the start of the new school year, and ensure that they have read and noted any changes to the KCSIE document, which is updated before then.

All staff attend the termly whole school staff meeting which will include a safeguarding update.

All staff attend a comprehensive Safeguarding course every three years.

All staff receive regular safeguarding scenario training as part of the staff meeting schedule.

Records of training attended by staff are kept by the HR manager.

The DSL and DDSLs, and the School Nurses, attend training every two years on Child Protection and Inter-agency working.

Records of attendance are held in the main safeguarding file.

Agency staff, and visiting staff (including coaches) receive a copy of the Safeguarding policy and are required to confirm that they have read it before starting work in the school.

Governors are also required to read the Safeguarding policy before taking up office, and to attend appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction, as well as reading the annual DSL update. Additional training e.g. the New Governors' course given by AGBIS, is considered very useful and strongly encouraged. Additional training for governors with additional responsibility for safeguarding is provided ad hoc, and records held by the Clerk to the governors. This training is intended to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust, whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

7. PROCEDURES - HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

Family Help (formerly known as Early Help)

Any child may benefit from Family Help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Family Help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/absent from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

Risk of Immediate Harm
When staff have any concern about welfare they should act upon it immediately, rather than waiting to be told. The school's initial response to a report by a child is incredibly important. It can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. All staff are trained in the use of MyConcern to report any matters of concern. However, any potentially serious problem should be reported in person or by telephone directly to the DSL and/or Child Protection team.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see Appendix A). Staff should understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online, as well as outside of their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms, including sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

Staff should exercise professional curiosity and know the signs to look for to identify children in need of help and protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation early.

If a member of staff or volunteer suspects that a pupil is suffering abuse:
1. Ensure the child is removed from risk of physical harm. If harmed, then call for immediate medical or nursing help. Do not carry out a physical examination yourself, and do not take photographs.
2. If a child raises a concern with a staff member, consider direct referral of the matter to the DSL or DDSL.
3. If a child has a concern, the matter should be dealt with urgently. If the matter cannot be discussed immediately, then promise the pupil a specific time that day to talk. Reassure the pupil that she is doing the right thing by telling a member of staff and assure the child that she will be helped and protected. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse, neglect or exploitation, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Try to meet as early in the day as possible; if matters need to be passed on to the local safeguarding agency it is much better if this is not done towards the end of a working day.
4. Ensure a written record of any disclosure is made. Try to record any disclosure verbatim. Retain all records, however rough and ready. If you are unable to take notes at the time, then write notes as soon as possible afterwards.
5. Explain to the child that they are doing the right thing by disclosing their concern; explain that you will have to share their concern with the Safeguarding Team but that any disclosure will be on a 'need to know' basis; that you will need to take notes
6 If the child then wishes to withdraw an allegation, you still have to share it with the DSL.
7. Disclosure is likely to be harrowing; allow them to talk without leading, for example 'What happened?' and 'Is there more that you want to tell me?' but not 'Did X do Y to you?'
8. Because these cases could lead to court proceedings, you must refer directly to the DSL as soon as it is clear that a disclosure is serious.
9. A disclosure on a school trip should be discussed with the leader of that trip and referred as soon as possible to the DSL.
10. Be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable, either to abuse within or outside the school, and you should be alert to cues that they may wish to make a disclosure.
It is important to note that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and act on. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and/ or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, and/ or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL. If they have concerns about a child, it is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. Victims

may not disclose the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. The victim may have the support of a trusted adult, to talk about their needs.

11. When dealing with abuse by one pupil or more against another pupil when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, it is necessary to apply child protection procedures to both the victim and perpetrator. Boarding staff should be particularly vigilant given the nature of their role.

12. As a girls' school with boarders, and as noted in KCSIE, we are fully aware that pupils can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and, as such, all staff are always alert to pupil relationships and the potential for child-on-child abuse. Any staff or pupils with any concerns relating to peer relationships and possible child-on-child abuse are fully supported through our policy and procedures. Pupils are all aware of how to seek help if they have any concerns and whom to seek such help from. Boarding staff should be alert to the extra vulnerabilities of SEND children, inappropriate pupil relationships and the potential for child-on-child abuse.

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

14. The DSL or a DDSL should normally be the referrer to Children's Social Care or the police. However, in the event of a serious disclosure, as a last resort you should be prepared to make such a referral yourself, if you are unable to access the Child Protection Team. The needs of the victim must come first.

15. It is important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified the school will decide on a course of action. Consideration should be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

16. If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to Children's Social Care may be appropriate.

17. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it.

18. When staff have a concern regarding Female Genital Mutilation, they must activate safeguarding procedures. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

19. Please refer to the advice given in Appendix C, on Avoiding the Risks of Allegations Against Staff.

Options to manage the report

The DSL will consider the following four scenarios when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

1. Manage internally – the school manages incidents.
2. Family Help – multi-agency early help
3. Referrals to children's Social Care
4. Reporting to the police – in parallel with Children's Social Care

Ongoing response for the victim

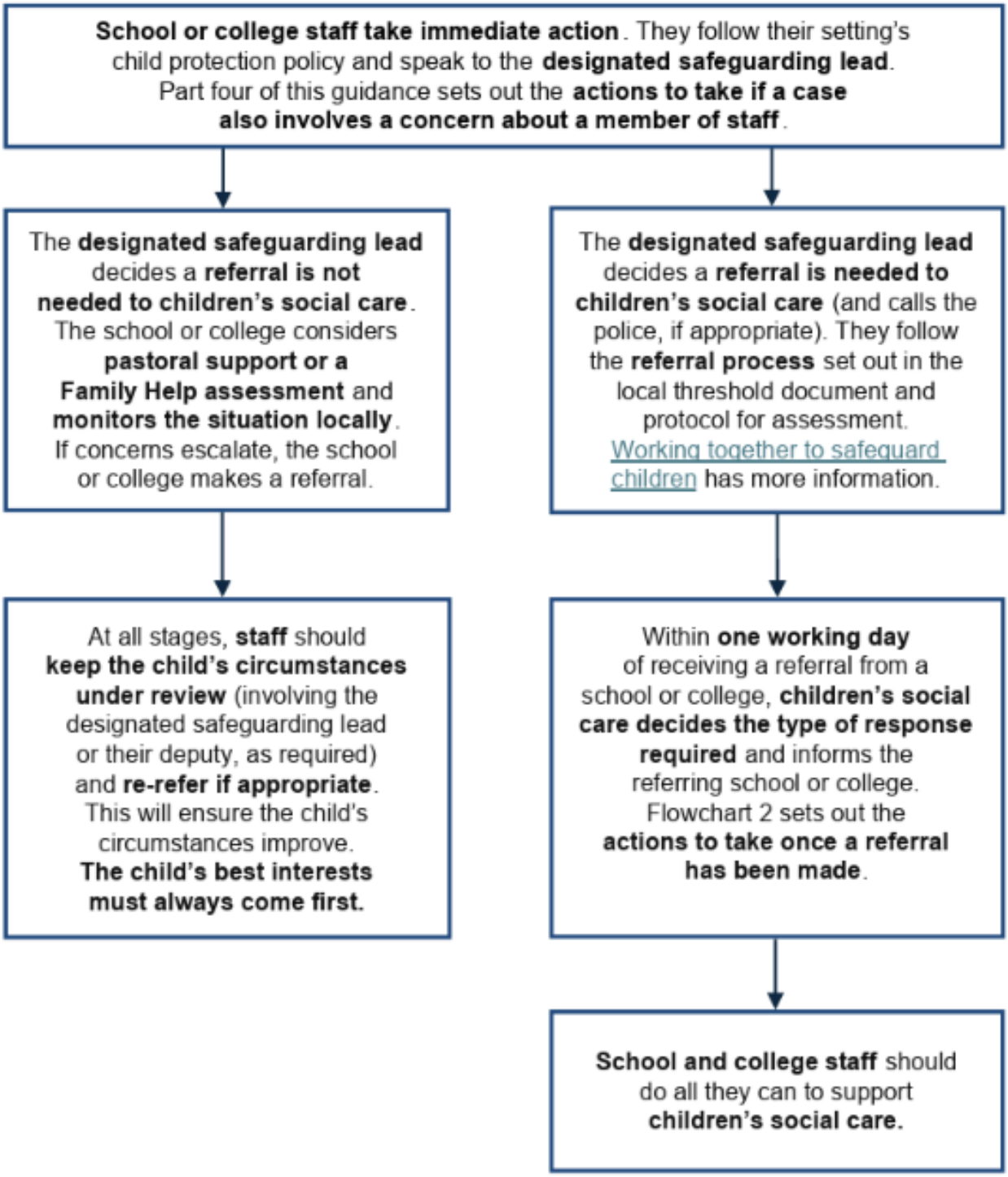
Appropriate support will be available on an ongoing basis to the victim. The school will consider safeguarding issues around the victim and alleged perpetrator sharing classes and sharing space at school or college. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment, wherever it happens, 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 Talbot Heath school. 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. The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount, along with protecting the child in any response. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine, so that the school is a safe space for them. Support should be tailored

on a case-by-case basis. Staff should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. The school will provide a range of support based on pages 146-152 of KCSIE 2026.

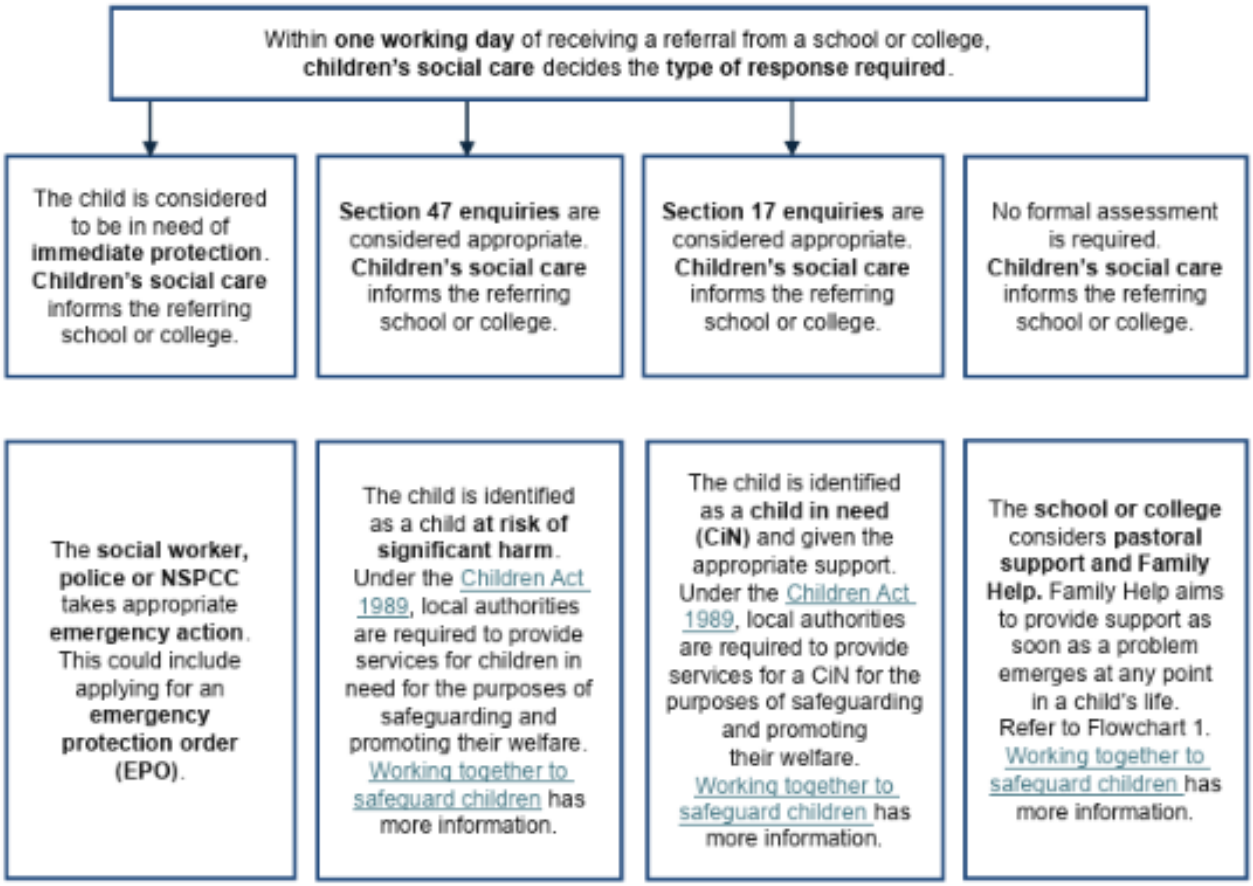
Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator

The school will manage the balance between supporting the victim and ensuring the alleged perpetrator has an education and safeguarding support themselves and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can and should occur at the same time if necessary. The age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and the frequency of the allegations will be considered. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions from their peers to the allegations against them. Support and sanctions should be considered on a case-by-case basis, as detailed on pages 152-155 of KSCIE 2026.

Flowchart 1: actions taken by a school or college when there are concerns about a child



Flowchart 2: actions taken once a referral has been made to children's social care



8 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Talbot Heath school has its own procedures and policies for dealing with safeguarding concerns or allegations against those working in or on behalf of the school, in a paid or unpaid capacity (this includes members of staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors). These procedures include both serious allegations and low-level concerns and should be referred to, in instances where such allegations and low-level concerns arise.

The school's procedures should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) has acted in a way that has harmed or may harm a child.

Serious safeguarding concerns or allegations

Serious safeguarding concerns or allegations include:

- 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 towards children and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (this includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school)

Low level concerns

A low-level concern is one which does not meet the threshold for abuse, but leads to a sense of unease or doubt. Examples might include:

- behaviour outside the school which is inconsistent with their responsibilities in school, e.g. public drunkenness
- having 'favourite' pupils
- engaging in one-to-one unobserved time with a pupil
- using witnessed crude or inappropriate language

By definition, the activity would not lead to a referral to the DSL, but it is important that they are recorded and/or discussed, as a pattern of misbehaviour may become clear over time.

The procedure is to report the activity to the Headteacher. In this way, should a pattern of adverse behaviour accumulate, then action can be taken at the right time.

If the incident is not a cause for doubt or unease (for example, use of an expletive when stubbing a toe), then it is reasonable to speak to the offender informally, and to explain in what way their behaviour was wrong.

In the event that a member of staff thinks that they have done something that (however innocent) could be interpreted as a concern, they must self-report the activity to the Headteacher, with appropriate detail.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any safeguarding concern is potentially serious, and information gathered should be treated with great respect. This means that only those who need to know about a concern, should be privy to information and identities.
As a rule, the pupil reporting a concern, the person reported to, and the DSL and DDSLs will be the only holders of information. It will be necessary for other members of the Child Protection Team, as appropriate, to know about certain incidents - for example, in weekly team meetings on vulnerable pupils - and the DSL may need to interview other pupils or staff, in following up a concern.
The MyConcern site allows one to report an event, but the only people who have access to all information are the DSL and DDSLs. It is understood that this could cause difficulties if a staff member is unaware that a pupil might be vulnerable, but the DSL will inform specific staff if necessary for pupil safety.

10. MONITORING

The school uses a Pastoral Overview system to monitor pupils who are at risk for any reason, including of abuse. The Child Protection Team, led by the relevant DSL/DDSL from Junior or Senior school and the Head Nurse, meet regularly to discuss ongoing progress and concerns.
The DSL monitors all reports made through My Concern, and will, for example, review cases where a number of low-level concerns come in for an individual.
As explained above, in the case of a reported abuse, the issue will be followed by the DSL and Child Protection Team, through to a conclusion.
This policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Governors, and more frequently where legislation or events require it.

11. RECORD KEEPING

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

Information Sharing

The Governing body ensures that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Information sharing is vital in identifying all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation in promoting children's welfare. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. It is legitimate to share information without consent where it is not possible to gain consent or where seeking consent may increase the risk of harm to the child.

Written reports must be kept about any suspicion or allegation of abuse.

If possible, staff should make written notes at the time the pupil is talking. If this is not possible, a careful written record should be made as soon as possible afterwards. These notes, together with all forms of evidence, however scruffy, must be kept by the member of staff involved and handed to the DSL.

A report should also be made on My Concern, and include:

1. Your name and your position in the School/relationship to the child; e.g. tutor
2. The time and date
3. The nature of the concern
4. The party or parties involved
5. Any steps requested
6. Any steps taken, including, if appropriate, any steps taken to protect the victim
7. If physical abuse has occurred, a diagram to show where the marks are on the body and a description of the marks, if they are visible to you without removing clothing
8. Questions you have asked the pupil and their response, verbatim if possible
9. How the pupil appeared – did they appear anxious, tearful, calm, etc.
10. If the matter is dropped, the report should indicate the reasons for the original concern and the reasons why it was not pursued
11. A copy of the report and any notes should be kept for at least 3 years

All concerns**,** discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely (on MyConcern). This will help when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

12. SCHOOL TRANSFERS

Where children leave the school, the DSL should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, and within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of the start of the new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The DSL should ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. Receiving schools should ensure key staff, such as DSLs and SENDCOs are aware as required.

13. ONLINE SAFETY

Online safety is ever evolving. Technology provides a platform that may facilitate harm. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. All staff receive appropriate online safety training which amongst other things includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online, as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently, both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online. This can take the form of abusive, harassing, misogynistic, misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content. In all cases, when staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or DDSLs.

The DSL and DDSLs are responsible for overseeing online safety in schools, including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. The DSL and DDSLs should raise awareness in the staff group accordingly, including but not limited to, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation. The school will protect and educate the school community in their use of technology, including generative AI, and has mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident, where appropriate.

There has been an increase in cybercrime and it is likely that some young people will engage in this activity without understanding the legal or ethical implications.

The school will provide age and stage appropriate teaching around understanding online harms such as cybercrime, sharing images, the prevalence of deepfakes, pornography and misogynistic influencers and when and where to seek help.

Pupils are issued with an iPad with appropriate blocks and filters imposed on them to limit access to sites which might lead to harm. These filters are reviewed and tested regularly by the DSL and the Network Manager. The DSL and Network Manager will ensure the duty is met by following the Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards.

They will

- Assign the role of filtering and monitoring systems to the DSL and Network Manager.
- Review the provision of filtering and monitoring monthly.
- Block harmful content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Effectively monitor these filtering systems
- Keep a log that filtering works on all devices and in all relevant locations

The governors will review the effectiveness of Filtering and Monitoring arrangements at least once a year and discuss with the DSL/Network Manager what is being done to support the DFE Filtering and Monitoring Standards.

Department for Education Filtering and Monitoring Standards https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges

Additional Guidance from UK Safer Internet Centre
https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring

E Security Guidance
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cyber-security-standards-for-schools-and-colleges

There are four main areas of risk:

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material or content that includes extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories and simulated harmful online AI interactions.
Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users.
Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of (or causes) harm; for example, online bullying, and the making, sending or receiving of explicit images or self-generated intimate images using AI.
Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing, and/or financial scams
More information can be found in the school's ICT policy and on pages 46-47 of KCSIE 2026.

Mobile devices
In line with KCSIE 2026 statutory guidance, Talbot Heath School is a mobile phone-free environment. In Junior School, pupils are not allowed to use their phones during the school day, and must hand them in to the Reception Desk. Senior pupils may bring a mobile device (including a smart watch) onto site, but it has to be switched off, locked in a Yondr pouch and placed in their bag throughout the school day. More information can be found in the school's Mobile Devices policy.
Adults at Talbot Heath are not permitted to use their mobile phone or other devices in the designated areas of the EYFS setting during operating hours without permission of the Headteacher. All mobile phone devices must be stored away from the children in the EYFS setting and only used when children are not present.

14. COMPLAINTS

All complaints are taken seriously by the School. The Complaints Policy outlines the processes and referral mechanisms to use.

Whistleblowing
Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.
Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, then they should approach the Chair of Governors (particularly if their complaint is against the Headteacher/DSL).

Other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- General government guidance on whistleblowing: https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing
- They may approach their Trade Union
- NSPCC's 'What you can do to report abuse' dedicated helpline. Staff can call 0800 028 0285. The phone line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk .

15. EQUALITY STATEMENT

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. 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.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation

Signs of Abuse

Signs that may, **but do not necessarily**, indicate abuse include the following. Please note that these are not exclusive categories:

Neglect and failure to thrive:

- Underweight and small for chronological age;
- Cold, mottled skin;
- Swollen limbs with sores which are slow to heal;
- Dry, sparse hair;
- Diarrhoea caused by tension, poor diet, poor hygiene;
- Unresponsiveness or indiscrimination in relationships with adults;
- Maintaining a frozen position for an unnaturally long time.

Physical Abuse:

Be suspicious of:

- Bruising that cannot be accounted for by participation in games, play or as a result of a child's normal activity
- Burns and scalds with clear outlines, or of uniform depth over a large area, small round burns, or splash marks above a main scald
- Spiral, chip or rib fractures or multiple fractures
- Multiple injuries

Sexual Abuse:

- Sexually precocious behaviour or promiscuity
- Sexualised drawings and play
- Sexting
- Sharing of nude and semi-nude images
- Sudden poor performance at school, or regression
- Poor self-esteem
- Psychosomatic symptoms, e.g. headaches, abdominal pain
- Suicidal gestures or self-mutilation
- Confusion of affection with sexual behaviour
- Eating disorders or sleep disturbance
- Being withdrawn or depressed
- Running away

Emotional Abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders

- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to stressful situations
- 'Neurotic' behaviour such as rocking, hair twisting
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or alcohol or solvent abuse
- Compulsive stealing
- Fear of parents being contacted

Mental Health:

- The DSL is the school's Mental Health Lead. She works with staff to help prevent mental health problems by promoting wellbeing and resilience as part of an integrated, whole school/college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of their pupils and learners.
- All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, still have an important role to play. Specifically, they can support the fulfilment of four key roles:
  1. promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness
  2. observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one
  3. ensuring early targeted support is provided
  4. liaison with/referral to specialist services where needed

- Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- When staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the DSL or DDSL. If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.
- The DfE has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying and The Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges Guidance. In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol. See https://pshe-association.org.uk/resource/every-mind-matters-ks2-4 for links to all materials and lesson plans. Promotion of resilience is integrated into a whole school approach to social and emotional well-being, as overseen by PSHE leads. The school has also trained Diana Award Anti-bullying Ambassadors to help students educate their peers on bullying behaviour, lead on anti-bullying campaigns, promote a culture which celebrates and tolerates difference and help keep their peers safe both online and offline.

APPENDIX B: Specific forms of abuse

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. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. 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 also cause harm to other family members (often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse).

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.

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 - including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking), criminal exploitation (including financial exploitation), serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

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. Indicators include verbal abuse such as persistent criticism, belittling or name calling. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far 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. 'Banter' may constitute a form of emotional abuse. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including 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, causing or inciting 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, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching over clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, nude and semi-nude 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 as well as offline, 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. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

Domestic abuse emotional abuse often occurs when a child witnesses the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional 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, all of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

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 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.

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual - some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe that they are in a genuine romantic relationship. It should be noted that exploitation, as well as being physical, can be facilitated and/or take place online. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (trafficked) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery. Further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims

In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified. Children can become trapped in exploitative situations and should be treated as victims not offenders, as they are unable to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked and may not recognise what is happening to them. The child protection and national referral mechanism (NRM) should be both followed where there is potential for it to be modern slavery. Children referred through the NRM have access to an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG) to advocate on their behalf and support their recovery.

Children can become trapped by this CCE, as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence or can entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. We recognise that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different from that of boys, with different indicators. More information, including definitions and indicators, is included in Annex A of KCSIE.

Child on child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It can occur between two children of any age and sex. It includes harassment and violence (particularly serious physical assault and harm, and the threat of harm with a weapon). It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or a group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Child-on-child abuse is a risk to both victim and alleged perpetrator. It is preventable, with timely, evidenced-based support preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence. Problematic and harmful behaviour shown by students should be understood and addressed on a progressive continuum, including considerations around bullying, use of language and the school's safeguarding culture. Talbot Heath follows the guidance outlined in KCSIE 2026. It is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their DSL. Staff have a responsibility to report child-on-child abuse, whether these concerns are thought to have taken place on or off site. Staff should be particularly vigilant at times of highest risk, such as the end of the school day.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents. All staff should recognise that children may experience

prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and ensure that concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate. Talbot Heath promotes an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture where racism, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of its safeguarding responsibilities.

Preventative education plays an important role in developing a zero-tolerance culture around sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual/violence and harassment, racism, derogatory behaviour and other forms of physical violence and conflict. It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature. Misogyny is a potential part of a culture where there is insufficient healthy challenge. Staff must not downplay certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as 'just banter', 'having a laugh', or 'girls being girls', because these can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment for children and in worse case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it and providing an environment that may lead to sexual violence. Talbot Heath has a 'zero tolerance' approach to child-on-child abuse and must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here.' Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB). HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.

When considering HSB, both the ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful, if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

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

- bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- 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, physical behaviour such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery). The term "images" includes all visual content, such as photographs, videos and livestreams. See UKCIS guidance for further information.
- 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
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they are not comfortable with online
- 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)

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment, wherever it happens, may 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. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously (it is more likely that girls will be the victims of such behaviour than boys and children with disabilities are three times more likely to be abused than their peers). Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Even if there are no reports in a school, it does not mean that it is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to the DSL or DDSLs. In line with the DSL managing any allegations internally, it may be decided that the children involved do not need to be referred to the statutory services but would benefit from Family Help. Family Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Family Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

HSB is covered in the PSHE curriculum, in an age-appropriate way, and is included in the Safeguarding training at the start of every academic year. The Brook Traffic Light Tool is a very useful resource in establishing whether sexual behaviours are problematic or not, in relation to age. An HSB prevention toolkit can be found at www.stopitnow.org.uk. The anti-bullying alliance has developed guidance about Sexual and Sexist bullying.

Action following a report of child-on-child sexual violence and/or sexual harassment
The school will consider:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed
- the nature of the alleged incident
- the ages of the children involved
- the development stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children
- if the incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- whether there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, school or college staff
- contextual safeguarding issues

When there has been a report of sexual violence the DSL or a DDSL should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. This should consider:

- the victim (especially their protection and support)
- whether there may have been other victims
- the alleged perpetrator(s)
- all the other children and, if appropriate, adults and staff at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s) or from future harms
- the time and location of the incident and any action required to make the location safer.

Guidance on preventing abuse, responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, support for schools and colleges can be found in KCSIE 2026 paras 526-647.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult, professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Responses should be calm, considered and appropriate.

Serious violence
Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict. If a child is found in possession of a knife or bladed article, the school's

response will be swift, robust, evidence-based and thorough to ensure that the child receives timely and appropriate support, reducing the risk of reoffending.

All staff should be aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased unexplained and/ or persistent absence from education, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence such as, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery. Staff should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. It is important that schools and colleges try to understand where these places are, with a view to working with partners to promote safety for children. Listening to children and consulting with staff can help establish when and where they feel unsafe. Working with wider partners can also help build understanding of the local context beyond the school or college and help co-ordinate a collective safeguarding response around the school day. A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's serious violence strategy link on P179 of KSCIE 2026, as well as additional advice for schools. The Youth Endowment Fund provides practical guidance for school leaders on how to reduce children's involvement in violence: https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/reports/education-guidance/ .

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. It can result in a person being drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm. Staff should refer to the school's Prevent Policy for more information and guidance.

Honour or Faith-Based Abuse (HBA) (including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage (FM) and breast flattening)

HBA includes all incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the community and/or the family, and commonly involve practices such as FGM, forced marriage and/or breast flattening. Abuse often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and therefore it is important to be aware of this dynamic and consider risk factors when deciding on action. When staff have a concern that a child may be at risk of Honour or Faith-Based Abuse, they must alert the DSL immediately.

FGM

FGM is abuse that encompasses all procedures involved in the partial or total removal of female external genitalia and is illegal in the UK. Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or DDSL) with regards to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers under the FGM Act (2003) to report FGM. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, it is mandatory that the teacher **must** report this to the police using the telephone number 101.

Forced Marriage (FM)

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. FM is a marriage entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage.

Breast Flattening

Breast flattening, also known as breast ironing, is the pounding and massaging of a pubescent girl's breasts, using hard or heated objects, to try to make them stop developing or disappear. It is typically carried out by the girl's mother, who will say she is trying to protect the girl from sexual harassment and rape to prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name, or to allow the girl to pursue education, rather than be forced into early marriage.

Support for Children in Need or At Risk

- A child in need is defined under the Children Act of 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or

further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for the children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm than others

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

- Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.
- Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unexplained and/ or persistent absence from education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).
- Findings from the Children in Need review, 'Improving the educational outcomes of Children in Need of help and protection'.
  Review of children in need - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
  contains further information; the conclusion of the review, 'Help, protection, education' sets out action the government is taking to support this.
- 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. The school nursing service has systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. See: Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

Talbot Heath recognises that young people who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

Children with SEND and certain medical or physical health conditions

The school is mindful of the fact that children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline (being more prone to peer group isolation than other children) and Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable to abuse and staff should be mindful of this. Additional barriers may include cognitive understanding (being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/ behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so). Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the DSL or DDSLs and the SENDCO.

To address these additional challenges Talbot Heath will consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

Looked after children

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable. Staff at Talbot Heath should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group. Appropriate staff should have access to the information they need, in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent as parents or on an interim or full care order).

Children who have been or who will be educated at home may be less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable.

Designated teachers will have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

The designated teacher will work with the school Headteacher to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

Children absent from education

Attendance is monitored daily to ensure that patterns of being absent from education are identified early as this can be a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

The school will endeavour to support the student through:

- The content of the curriculum (particularly through a comprehensive PSHE curriculum that includes a programme of e-safety lessons to increase resilience in this area as well as sessions on sexual health, body image and mental health).
- The school ethos
- The school's Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- Close monitoring and support by the school's pastoral team, including the school nursing team, the school's Pastoral Support Assistant and Wellbeing Counsellor if deemed appropriate.

The use of reasonable force in schools

There are limited circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools to use 'reasonable force' to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time', the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

Pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs and are at additional risk of harm.
The following guidance should be referred to when considering the safeguarding needs of such pupils:

Alternative Provision – DfE statutory guidance

DfE 'Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school'
Elective home education can mean some children are not in receipt of a suitable education and are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported. Talbot Heath will inform the LA of all deletions from the admission register when a child is taken off roll. Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school to educate them at home, the school will, where possible, convene a meeting with parents/ carers before a final decision has been made to ensure that the parents/ carers have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable or has a social worker.

Talbot Heath will conduct all the appropriate safeguarding checks for Alternative provision, as outlined in KCSIE. This will include written confirmation that full safer recruitment steps have been taken on all staff and of arrangements "that might put a child at risk", such as new staff joining the alternative provision, so that checks can be made there too. Alternative provision placements will be reviewed at least termly, to ensure children are

attending, their needs are being met and the setting is safe. Talbot Heath will need to end the placement if any safeguarding concerns are not addressed.

Special Considerations for Child Involved in Criminal Activity

Considering bail conditions

It is unlikely that a child will be on police bail with conditions attached, so the school will ensure that, if there is a criminal investigation, there is joint work between the school, Children's Social Care and the police so that the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children involved are supported.

Managing any delays in the criminal process

There may be delays in any criminal case, but the school will **not wait** for the outcome before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children in the school or college.

The end of the criminal process

Regardless of whether a child is convicted of a crime or not, all the children involved should be protected.

It should not be assumed that pupils at a school such as Talbot Heath will not be subject to abuse. A watch for such signs should be kept. It is essential that staff are sympathetic and supportive.

LGBTQ+ children

Children who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ+. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBTQ+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the school's PSHE curriculum.

Children who are questioning their gender

- In recent years, we have seen a significant increase in the number of children who are questioning the way they feel about being a boy or a girl, including the physical attributes of their sex and the related ways in which they fit into society.
- Schools should take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and should be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences. Schools should remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying.
- Schools should consider adopting policies across school and life that maintain flexibility and avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes.
- Members of staff should not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the school and a child's parents or carers have been involved as set out in the guidance in KCSIE 2026 pages 64-70.
- In making decisions about supporting social transition, schools must work within the following principles and ensure that their decision-making process is documented and records are kept:

    1. Schools have statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.
    2. Parents and carers should be actively involved and their views treated with importance
    3. Accommodating social transition is an active intervention so schools should take a very careful approach.
    4. Schools should comply with obligations under the Equality Act and Human Rights Act when considering requests for support with social transition.

- The KCSIE 2026 guidance recognises that there will sometimes be constraints on what schools can offer and they should be patient and sensitive in their discussions with children. Schools are advised to use names rather than pronouns.
- The school's approach with any student should be kept under review.

- Schools must appropriately and robustly sanction any bullying. They must also be respectful of the rights to religion and beliefs.
- Staff should always be aware of children's biological sex and should note this accurately wherever it is recorded.
- Schools must not allow pupils into toilets, changing rooms, or boarding or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex, with no exceptions.
- **Children living in stealth:** Schools should be particularly conscious of the vulnerabilities of children who have fully socially transitioned from an early age and may be living in stealth (that is, school friends/staff may be unaware of their biological sex). The DSL should be involved in these cases due to the difficulties and complexities.

APPENDIX C: Allegations against staff, trainee teachers, governors, volunteers, external persons (including supply teachers and contractors)

Please refer to the school's Low-level Concerns policy and Managing Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff procedure for more detail.

Avoiding the risks of allegations of sexual abuse or harassment

All staff and volunteers, particularly those acting in any teaching, pastoral or extra-curricular capacity which places them in a one-to-one situation with pupils, should take great care not to put themselves at risk of any suspicion or allegation of physical or sexual abuse or harassment. All staff are required to adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct and to be fully aware of the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

All staff must adhere to the school's ICT and E-Safety Policy including the use of mobile devices and cameras, including EYFS (IT policy)

To give staff/volunteers protection from such allegations, the following guidelines are suggested:

- Staff should avoid being drawn into conversation with pupils which leads to disclosure of personal information about himself or herself or another staff member.
- Staff should avoid making unsolicited personal remarks to pupils even if these may be intended as positive, flattering or merely jocular.
- Staff should avoid making comments to pupils which could be construed as drawing unnecessary attention to a pupil's sexuality, a staff member's sexuality or which contain sexual innuendo or undertone.
- A member of staff should never speak to, or touch, a pupil in a manner that could be construed as having sexual overtones or that could be interpreted as physical assault. Remember, it is the action rather than the intention that may subsequently give rise to problems.
- Only members of the boarding staffing team should access the living accommodation of the boarding house while boarders are present. Should support staff need to access the boarding house for example for repairs then this should be with the knowledge of the Boarding staff and under their guidance and supervision.
- EYFS and Junior School staff should follow the School's procedure when dealing with soiling accidents and when accompanying pupils to the toilet.
- Giving physical comfort is often the natural thing to do with an upset child. If a pupil is distressed and shows a need for comfort, any demonstration of comfort should be given in a public place and/or in the presence of colleagues who, if possible, are aware of the circumstances.
- All staff should follow the school's Positive Handling Policy when considering the need to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child.
- Members of staff must be cautious of communications by electronic means with pupils. If they do communicate electronically, they should ensure that the communication is both necessary, appropriate and that it cannot be misconstrued. Use of personal electronic devices and email addresses when communicating with pupils is not permitted by staff. Members of staff must follow the school's requirements relating to social media, the internet and emails as stated in the school's ICT and e-safety policy (See ICT, Mobile Equipment and e-Safety Policy).
- If it is suspected that a pupil harbours a grudge, or has a particular attraction, towards a member of staff, a colleague must be present when dealing with individual disciplinary matters.
- Entertaining, coaching or teaching a pupil in a private place is unwise and should be avoided as should individual tuition for a pupil in a teacher's home. Any extra tuition should normally take place in school or in

the pupil's home after discussion with parents. In all cases, a senior member of staff should be aware of the arrangements so that the meeting cannot be misconstrued.

- Co-curricular activities often take place in situations remote from School and very occasionally in the absence of another colleague. Particular care should be taken to maintain professional standards and integrity.
- Conveying a pupil by car should be avoided wherever possible and, if absolutely necessary, should be done after agreement with the Headteacher, ensuring that all necessary car insurance/MOT testing is in place for the vehicle used. If circumstances do not allow agreement to be sought in advance, then the Headteacher should be informed as soon as is practicable after the event.
- One-to-one meetings in private between a member of staff and a pupil, such as pastoral staff dealing with sensitive, confidential matters, should be approached with the utmost caution. The integrity and discretion of the pastoral staff should always be beyond reproach. Take steps to protect yourself, for example by making sure that any meetings or interviews are conducted in a room into which others might come at any time – such as a classroom – or into which others can see easily.
- One to one music tuition should be conducted in rooms with a glass panel in the door and at times known to the Head of Music.
- One to one tuition should always be conducted in a room with a glass panel door. A member of the school Safeguarding Team must be informed of these sessions if they fall outside of the normal working day (8am - 5pm).

If a pupil appears infatuated with or makes overtly sexual advances towards a staff member, staff should:

a. Avoid one to one contact with the pupil
b. Discuss this with the DSL

When staff suspect that a colleague is forming inappropriate relationships with pupils, staff should:

a. Report it to the Headteacher
b. Listen carefully to any concerns about inappropriate contact or conduct by staff voiced by pupils and report these to the Headteacher

Allegations or suspicions of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer:

This part of the guidance relates to members of staff and volunteers who are currently working in the school regardless of whether the school is where the alleged abuse took place.

Cordial relations between staff and pupils are essential to a happy, thriving school environment. However, in the interests of all parties, professional boundaries must be observed. Over-familiarity, however well-intentioned, can lead to serious moral and legal complications. No member of staff should ever place himself or herself in a position with a pupil that could compromise his or her integrity. It is vital that any allegations are cleared up quickly and independently. The school will not undertake its own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO, or in the most serious cases, the police.

If there is an allegation or suspicion that a member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) has been involved in the abuse of a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, this must be reported immediately to the (unless she is the object of the allegation) Headteacher. If the Headteacher is absent, the allegation must be passed to the Chair of Governors or, in her absence, the Safeguarding Governor. Discretion must be used at all points and the matter must not be discussed with other members of staff. The legal duty to refer applies equally in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity, or they are suspended.

If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of Governors (or in her absence, the Safeguarding Governor) without notifying the Headteacher first.

In cases of serious harm, the police must be informed from the outset. A definition of the "harm test" can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs .

From then on, there is an obvious need to act with the utmost discretion. An allegation mistakenly made, whether for frivolous or malicious reasons, can jeopardise the career of a member of staff and the damage can become

irretrievable. Equally, a genuine complaint can be swept aside on the mistaken assumption that it is a frivolous or malicious allegation, and this can be damaging to the child – and to other children who may become victims. The safeguarding of the child must be paramount at all times. Allegations may be deemed to be substantiated, unsubstantiated or unfounded.

The matter must remain **strictly confidential** until the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors has made contact with the LADO, who will advise on what steps are to be taken.
Contact with the LADO will take place within 24 hours. The LADO will provide advice and guidance when considering allegations against adults working with children. 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, local authority Children's Social Care, the school or a combination of these. In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school's staff.

Arrangements for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff:
The school will follow its procedure for dealing with allegations against staff or volunteers (see separate Talbot Heath procedure).

If a member of the boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, the member of staff will be found alternative accommodation away from the Boarding House until the investigations are concluded.

Talbot Heath School must report to the DBS within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, supply staff, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. Where Talbot Heath dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, the school will consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State via the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. The report will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Talbot Heath recognises that 'Compromise Agreements' cannot apply in this connection and that they have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but that the school does not have to find it from other sources.

Further to the restrictions implemented in October 2012, the school is mindful of the fact that when dealing with allegations against teachers we must make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/Teaching Regulation Agency publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

Talbot Heath School must promptly report to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, supply staff, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child, or behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

We recognise that it is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible and that failure to make a report constitutes an offence. 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation. Talbot Heath has a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information we hold already, but we do not have to find it from other sources. Talbot Heath School has a duty to consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and to The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: "unacceptable professional

conduct", "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute" or a "conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence". Further guidance is published by the Teaching Regulation Agency:

Teaching Regulation Agency - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Advice about whether an allegation against a teacher is significantly serious to refer to the TRA can be found in Teacher Misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (February 2022):
Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (publishing.service.gov.uk)

APPENDIX D: Safer recruiting

Talbot Heath School is committed to safer recruitment practices.
Please refer to the Recruitment and Selection Policy

The Human Resources lead is Andrea Pittam. She is jointly responsible with the DSL for keeping the Single Central Record (SCR) of personnel up to date and secure.

The Safeguarding governor does regular random checks on the SCR. She checks for evidence of

- DBS check
- Right to Work in UK
- Identity
- Qualifications for the job
- References
- Occupational Health check

All employed staff, governors, supply/locum staff, visiting staff such as coaches or music teachers, are subject to necessary statutory child protection checks before they start work.

For all employed staff and visiting staff:

- procedures are followed as in Part 3 of KCSIE
- at least one interviewer on the recruitment panel has been trained in safer recruiting
- a file is kept on the SCR

For further information, refer to the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

For locum/agency staff, the Agency is responsible for ensuring that the above documentation and checks have been made.

No-one is allowed to work unsupervised, before an enhanced DBS check (including barred list information) has been performed, and confirmed by the school. This includes trainee teachers.
Where schools are also subject to the EYFS framework, individuals (including volunteers) must not be permitted to begin working within the settings covered by the EYFS framework until the school or maintained nursery school has received the applicant's enhanced DBS certificate including barred list information. This means that supervision plus a standalone barred-list check does not permit the person to begin working in the EYFS-covered setting while the enhanced certificate remains outstanding.

When an individual is self-employed, the school should either obtain their own enhanced DBS check or ask to see the individual's certificate if they have had their own check done and check it is at a level required by the school.

Regular or Overnight Volunteers
The Crime and Policing Act 2026 made changes to regulated activity by removing the supervision exemption, meaning that any person volunteering in a school or college in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children frequently or on more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight is now in regulated activity (see KCSIE 2026 paragraph 315 for more information on regulated activity). Where this applies, schools or colleges should obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. Where an individual meets the period condition (more than 3 days in a 30-day period) by volunteering at multiple settings, the school or college should work with the other settings to decide who should apply for the enhanced DBS check with barred list information, and that information should then be supplied by the individual to each setting.

Visitors, including invited speakers and volunteers are accompanied and supervised on school premises at all times, including in public spaces such as corridors. An escort will be made available through the Front Office of the school, if not previously arranged. However, if the visitor is going to be involved in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check (including barred list information) must be carried out before the visit takes place.

APPENDIX E: Duties of DSL

The DSL, supported by the Child Protection Team will:

- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated teachers responsible for child protection and their role and has read at least Part 1, including Annex A, of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE September 2026), demonstrating understanding of the document.
- **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- Ensure that all other staff who work with children receive training in child protection every three years, paying heed to all relevant guidance.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL.
- Ensure that all new staff and volunteers attend Safeguarding training as part of their induction.
- Ensure that all new staff, as part of the school's induction procedure (ref: school's Safer Recruitment policy), read the following documents: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (which gives the name and role of the DSL), KCSIE 2026 Part 1, the School's Staff Code of Conduct, Low Level Concerns and Prevent Policies. and the School's Whistleblowing Policy. Staff are required to sign to indicate they have read all of the documents noted in this bullet point, have attended the safeguarding training and completed the safeguarding declaration (which confirms that they are still safe to work with children).
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the School Handbooks and on the website
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate, as required, with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, including the rationale for those decisions about pupils. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent programme.
- Ensure that all records are kept securely online or, for hard copies, in a locked location, separate from the main pupil file
- Notify Social Services if there is an unexplained and/ or persistent absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register
- Report to the Disclosure and Barring Service within one month of leaving the school, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. The DBS Referral Form & DBS Referral Instructions (available from the DBS website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/DBS) identify the information and documents that should be provided at the time a referral is made, including those that are legally required.
- Ensure that safer recruitment practices are always followed. This regulation also covers broader safeguarding duties such as making reports to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and pre-appointment checks on volunteers, staff of contractors, and other individuals that are not school staff or supply staff.
- Ensure that senior pupils given positions of responsibility in the Boarding House are aware of the appropriate action they should take should they be made aware by other pupils of any allegations of abuse.
- Ensure that, when a pupil is on the Child Protection Register, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the pupil's social worker is informed.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the importance of Family Help and intervention and ensure that 'Early Help' arrangements are put in place to meet the specific needs of 'Children in Need', 'Children with Special Educational Needs' and young carers, in line with interagency procedures. The school should ensure that they arrange the appropriate strand of Family Help for the student. Under Family Help there are two strands: community-based early help (the collective support offered by schools, colleges, health visitors, early years

settings and community groups) and targeted early help (the more focused approach partnership-based support developed in local areas).

- **Any** child may benefit from Family Help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Family Help for a child who:
  - is disabled and has specific additional needs;
  - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
  - is a young carer;
  - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home; or is misusing drugs or alcohol;
  - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse; a family member in prison and/or
  - has returned home to their family for care;
  - is pregnant or a parent herself
  - exhibits early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviours.
- Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in a Family Help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to Children's Social Care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.
- Talbot Heath is part of Operation Encompass – the police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership, which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Abuse. All members of the school community are informed about Operation Encompass via training, our website and via school communications.
- Ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep 'looked after' children safe.
- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of the Staff Code of Conduct and E-Safety Policy regarding the ban of taking images using personal devices, including EYFS.
- Ensure that appropriate Safeguarding responses to children who are absent from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, are put in place in line with KCSIE. Ensure that Talbot Heath informs the LA of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admissions register in line with KCSIE.
- Ensure that all contractors or employees of the contractor working at the school have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check.
- Ensure that all visitors to the school are supervised during school the school day. Those using the school facilities outside of the school day will have no access to the Boarding facilities, with the exception of students who are booked on to breakfast club or after school club sessions.
- Ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised on all school trips.
- Follow up with the relevant agency if the situation of any pupil on the Safeguarding register fails to improve.
- Ensure that all staff understand the need to protect children from the risk of radicalisation in line with Prevent pages and the school's Prevent Policy.
- Ensure that the school has a robust system of ensuring that pupils (particularly boarders) are safe online, through filtering systems **Smoothwall Firewall/Web Filter** e-safety lessons and training throughout the curriculum, in-line with recommendations in KCSIE.
- Ensure all staff have an understanding of online safety including filtering and monitoring systems within school.
- Ensure that all historical allegations or cases are reported to the local police (Bournemouth and Poole Child Protection Unit) 01202 552099.
- Ensure that there are robust cover arrangements in place for the absence of the DSL (e.g. illness or leave). There should be a confidential shared mailbox for the DSL and arrangements to ensure that there is no breakdown in safeguarding activity at such times.