

# Safeguarding Policy

## 2024 - 2025

# INTRODUCTION

Ash Lea School recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm. It will ensure that all appropriate policies are up to date and read and understood by all staff, governors, and volunteers. Everybody involved at Ash Lea school will ensure all pupils are safe from harm.

## **Policy statement and principles**

Our school's motto and values drive our vision for how we support the best outcomes for all

### ***'Working together to be our best'***

#### **Do the best that you can, all of the time**

Our best efforts, for the best reasons, to make a difference

#### **Listen carefully to what others have to say**

Everyone has a voice; we listen, accept difference, enable expression and respond

#### **Help each other whenever you can**

We face challenges together. We support each other to be bold and make a positive change

#### **Always be polite and friendly**

Everyone is accepted, everyone matters

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead Kate Davies on a regular basis to ensure it remains current and incorporates all revisions made to local or national safeguarding guidance. This policy will as a minimum be fully reviewed as a minimum once a year during the autumn term provided to the Governing Body for approval and sign off at the first autumn term meeting.

**This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct, Safer Recruitment Policy, Allegations Against Staff, Complaints, Positive Behaviour, Children Missing Education, Online Safety, Child on Child, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children policies and procedures.**

**Date of last review: 1.9.24**

**Date of next review: 1.9.25**

| Role                                | Name                                  | Contact Details  |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Headteacher                         | Kate Davies                           | <a href="mailto:kate.davies@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">kate.davies@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a>   |
| Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead | Kate Davies                           | <a href="mailto:kate.davies@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">kate.davies@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a>   |
| Deputy Safeguarding Lead            | Luke Skillington<br>Caroline Morrison | <a href="mailto:luke.skillington@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">luke.skillington@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:caroline.morrison@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">caroline.morrison@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a> |

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|---|---|--|
| <b>Names of additional Safeguarding Officers</b><br><br><b>Senior Leader(s) available for contact in the absence of the DSLs – all senior leaders are DSLs)</b> | <b>Louise Staples</b><br><br><b>Catherine Humphries</b>   | <a href="mailto:Louise.staples@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">Louise.staples@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a><br><br><a href="mailto:Catherine.humphries@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">Catherine.humphries@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Designated Governor for Child Protection / Safeguarding</b>  | <b>Jane Cooper</b><br><b>(From October, taking over from Chair of Governors, Chris Hankinson)</b> | <a href="mailto:Jane.cooper@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">Jane.cooper@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a><br><br><a href="mailto:Chris.hankinson@ashlea.notts.sch.uk">Chris.hankinson@ashlea.notts.sch.uk</a>               |
| <b>LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer</b>  | <b>Cheryl Stollery</b>  | <b>0115 8041047</b>  |
| <b>LA Child Protection Contact/LADO</b>   | <b>Eva Callaghan or covering LADO</b>   | <b>0115 8041272</b>  |
| <b>MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)</b><br><br><b>MASH Consultation Line</b><br><br><b>Emergency Duty Team (Children's Social care)</b>                     | <b>Office hours</b><br><br><b>Outside office hours</b>  | <b>0300 500 80 90</b><br><br><b>0115 9774247</b><br><br><b>0300 456 4546</b>   |
| <b>Police (to report a crime and immediate risk of harm or abuse to child)</b>  | <b>101</b>  | <b>In an emergency 999 (only)</b>  |
| <b>NSPCC help/whistleblowing line</b>   | <b>line is available 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday</b>  | <b>0800 028 0285-</b><br><b>email: <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a></b>  |

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school and takes into account statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and local guidance issued by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

We will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities regarding child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through the publication of this Child Protection policy, and the duties and responsibilities, as set out within the Education Act 2002 sec175 and 157, DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (published 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023, updated February 2024), which are incorporated into this policy.

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, supply staff, volunteers, and governors and are consistent with those of Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP).

## Maintaining a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding:

Everyone who works at Ash Lea School understand that they are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and accepts safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all our staff, including supply staff and volunteers will ensure their approach is child-centred and will be supported to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

We recognise 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.

**Safeguarding children is defined as:** The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

## Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- 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.

**NB Definition:** Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

### Whole school approach to safeguarding:

- We understand the importance every member of our staff has through their contact with children in and outside of our school environment and the particular importance of the roles and relationships they have which places them in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- We have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, we will regularly review our 'safeguarding arrangements', to ensure these remain effective and all children and staff are safe.
- We will make every effort to identify children who may benefit from early help and put in place support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.
- **Any staff member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in this child protection policy and raise concerns with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy without delay.
- All our staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral, especially if they were involved, in being alert to, or receiving a disclosure of risk, harm or abuse or harassment from a child.
- Our senior designated safeguarding lead will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care, police, health and NCC early help service, where required, as the designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It also relates to the broader aspects of care and education including:

- Pupils' health and safety and emotional well-being, and their mental and physical health or development.
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are provided as informed by the Equality Act for disabled children and young people with SEN.
- Where a child receives elective home education and has an EHCP, we will ensure the LA is provided with details of the plan and letter of decision from the child's parents and carers.
- The use of 'reasonable force' and inclusive behaviour management strategies.
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions.
- Providing first aid.
- Educational visits and off- site education.
- Intimate care and emotional wellbeing.
- Online safety and associated issues including filtering and monitoring in accordance with DfE monitoring standards.
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, considering the local context.

- Keeping children safe from risks, harm, exploitation and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children: KCSiE 2024 Annex A.

## **Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as:**

- Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.
- Contextualised also known as extra-familial abuse.
- Bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and prejudice-based bullying and being aware of the ease of access to mobile phone networks.
- The approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and networks, including home use.
- 'Deliberately missing education and children who have unexplained or persistent absence from education' or may be going 'missing from care or home' and the risks this poses on repeat occasions and for prolonged periods.
- Domestic Abuse including teenage relationship abuse.
- Racist, disability- based, homophobic, bi-phobic, or transphobic abuse.
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls.
- Risk of extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation and susceptible to being at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- Child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery, sexual or criminal exploitation.
- A young carer.
- Has a mental health need and has an effect on school attendance and progress.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Privately fostered.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending.
- Child-on-Child Abuse (to include children abusing other children, other varying form of bullying including online and sexually harmful behaviour, sexual violence, and sexual harassment (further defined in KCSiE 2024 Part Five).
- Harm outside the home extra familial harm.
- The impact of new technologies, including 'sexting' and accessing pornography.
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang activity or involvement and associations with organised crime groups or county lines.
- In possession of a knife and or involved in knife crime, youth violence, criminal child exploitation (CCE).
- Is in family circumstances which present challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse/harm.
- Is at risk of or from serious violence and violent crime.
- Persistent absence from education, including persistent absence for part of the school day.
- At risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- Issues affecting children including domestic abuse and violence, female genital mutilation, and honour-based abuse.
- Being subject to any conduct where the purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced

marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages (Law change on Forced Marriage, February 2023).

- 'Upskirting'- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as Up-skirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. Upskirting is a criminal offence and reportable by all teachers (KCSiE Annex A).

All our staff and volunteers are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and know what to look for is vital for the early identification so that support can be put in place. Our staff and volunteers are also aware of the specific safeguarding issues that indicate or inform of concerns or incidents linked to child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation and know to report concerns directly to the designated safeguarding or a member of the senior leadership team should the designated safeguarding lead not be available for children who may be in need of help or protection.

Our staff recognise 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. Children may also feel embarrassed, humiliated, or could be being threatened not to tell, so not feel able to share what is happening to them. Alternatively, we recognise children may not want to make a disclosure or talk about what is happening 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 and agree a way forward to support the child and determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate good opportunities for communication.

**All staff** should **always** speak to the designated safeguarding lead, or deputy at the earliest opportunity.

All our staff are aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore all staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and which can occur between children outside of our school environment.

All staff have received information and training regarding the risks that can take place outside their families. This is known as extra-familial harm and these can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

Our staff are aware that technology offers many opportunities but is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic 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.

All our staff have 'an understanding of the expectations, applicable to their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring' of ICT systems and regular monitoring of school's equipment and networks.

We have an online safety policy which informs of the filtering and monitoring arrangements on ICT devices and networks to keep children safe and is reflected in this Child Protection Policy including awareness of the vulnerabilities when accessing to mobile phone networks. (See KCSiE 2024 Paragraphs 12,102,123 and 133 to 146).



Our Snr DSL and the DSL team has the lead responsibility in this area, which is overseen and regularly reviewed by the 'Governing body/ trust, along with considering the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm, and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.'

Our governing body will ensure they maintain oversight of the Online Safety Policy ([Online-Safety-Policy.pdf](#)) , and the arrangements put in place to ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school network. The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems will in part be informed by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty as required by KCSiE 2024 paragraphs 145 to 146.

This will include:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet the school/ colleges safeguarding need.
- review and discuss the standards with the leadership team, IT staff and service providers to ensure the school/college meets the standard published by the [Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards](#).

The school uses appropriate filtering which is reviewed frequently and tested. From September 2023 the school began using Senso a tool to improve the monitoring of our more independent pupils as they work on school laptops, this software generates automatic alerts to DSLs and provides the context of the concerns for greater clarity. Online filtering is reported on frequently and any concerns are shared with a DSL. Where concerns are raised incidents will be managed following the flow chart found in the school Online Safety Policy, a record will be kept within Cpoms.

Our governing body will ensure a review is maintained to ensure the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers these standards and whether more needs to be done to support our school/college in meeting and maintaining this standard and communicating these to staff, pupils, parents, carers and visitors to the school, who provide teaching to children as part of the learning and educational opportunities we provide.

Our Senior DSL and the DSL team will always act in the 'best interest of the child' and remain mindful of the importance with parents and carers about safeguarding concerns held for children and in particular children's access to online sites when away from school. We will support understanding of harmful online challenges and hoaxes and share information with parents and carers and where they can get help and support.

We make clear in all our policies that all forms of abuse or harassment will be reported in accordance with national safeguarding guidance, and we will take a 'zero tolerance' approach to harassment and abuse as informed by DfE KCSiE (statutory guidance).

Should an incident or disclosure be made by a child, our staff will always reassure the child (victim) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe, but we recognise that not every victim will view themselves as such. We will also be mindful of the use of other terminology such as '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' or '**perpetrator(s)**' as in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

We will do our best to ensure children understand the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them rather than criminalise them. In doing this we will discuss with relevant statutory safeguarding agencies to ensure all concerns or incidents are addressed fully, and where required different types of assessment and services are put in place where required and in accordance with the Nottinghamshire County Council and the



Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Pathway to Provision (threshold guidance for referral and access to services).

All pupils in our school have some degree of learning difficulty. Because of this, when considering any negative behaviour, we need to take into consideration their developmental level and underlying additional needs that trigger challenging behaviour. In addition, any sexualised behaviour needs to be considered in line with the NSPCC's 'Brook traffic light system'.

## Identifying Concerns

All members of staff, volunteers and governors will know how to identify pupils who may be being harmed and then how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, or where others raise concerns about them. Our staff will be familiar with procedures to be followed.

Staff understand that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition, and that in most cases multiple issues will overlap with each other. Staff who regularly come into contact with children are aware of the DfE guidance [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

All our staff and volunteers have received safeguarding training to ensure they are able to recognise the indicators of child abuse, harm, or neglect, and will always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy should they become alert or be informed (directly or indirectly) of an incident or concern.

## Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

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

**The four categories of child abuse are as follows:**

1. **Physical Abuse**
2. **Emotional Abuse**
3. **Sexual Abuse**
4. **Neglect**

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

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectation being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

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

**Safeguarding issues:** All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. All staff are aware of this and if they have any concerns they will be addressed. All photographs children may take in school (which is already limited as children do not have unmonitored use of any mobile devices that may come into school) are checked by adults before children go home.

Online safety is available for parents and carers on the school website <https://www.ashlea.notts.sch.uk/e-safety/> and parents and carers are reminded of this information on a regular basis. Within the school children do not use the internet without adult supervision and do not use personal devices in school (there may be a few exceptions to this, but access is monitored and agreed with the headteacher). Pupils' laptops can be monitored remotely, and this has a high level of filtering in place and any issues of concern automatically alert all designated safeguarding leads. Less concerning searches are reported on to DSLs on a weekly basis. The

school's policy is to use Teams sessions to enable remote learning and specifies the need for parents to support these sessions with teaching staff, pupils will use their school teams account which is covered by the safeguarding monitoring from Senso. Whilst the vast majority of pupils would need support to access this, we know that some pupils are able to access internet based learning and communication, and we understand their additional vulnerabilities due to their special educational needs and disabilities together with this.

We understand that the functionality of digital communication and technology makes online access far easier for our pupils. Some pupils have their own personal devices and internet access and of an age when this access is entirely appropriate. Together with the additional vulnerabilities they face due to their learning difficulties however, we accept that they may be more vulnerable to online abuse and grooming. We also accept that our pupils may also engage in online bullying. Classes are small and highly staffed. An holistic understanding of our pupils can grow through small groupings and consistent staffing. This ensures that staff teams are well placed to pick up on issues that face the pupils in their classes. Regular communication with parents also creates an excellent conduit for sharing important information to keep pupils safe online.

## Sharing Information

The school is mindful about the importance of sharing information and the reasons for this. More information about our privacy policies can be found on our web site; <https://www.ashlea.notts.sch.uk/privacy-notice/>

We have put in place an open and positive culture for safeguarding which is embedded into the way everyone works together, is effective in sharing information in a timely manner and meets local thresholds with safeguarding partners, to ensure what is 'best to keep the child/children safe. It includes an environment where everyone feels safe, well cared for, and knows they will be listened to and provided with help and support.

Our ethos demonstrates that the effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of a system, where we listen to children and hear what they say. 'Working together to be our best' is our motto. Every individual within Ash Lea School will play their part, including working with professionals from other agencies, particularly social workers, to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and keep them safe. We will take opportunities to teach children about important safeguarding issues in a way that is age appropriate.

Many pupils at Ash Lea are unable to speak or express their thoughts and experiences in ways that are clear. The children at Ash Lea are always listened to however and all children are supported to develop a communication system which supports their abilities to express themselves. The adults who work with pupils act as their advocates and they are able to note changes; be it physical or emotional. This supports the staff team's abilities to identify any child protection issues.

At Ash Lea there is a lead for mental health; Luke Skillington, who is one of the school's assistant headteachers and a deputy DSL. The school also has two qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). They also have weekly designated time to work with pupils across school. The school has also developed an ELSA room where this vital work can happen with pupils. Mental health is also included in schemes of work across the school.

The school has also become a 'Trauma Informed School' and invested in training to develop its practice in supporting pupils who have attachment issues following trauma or neglect. The school also knows that the lived experience of pupils with SEND means that they may have experienced other kinds of childhood traumas (increased instances of hospitalisation or invasive treatment for example) and that pupils with SLD and PMLD are more likely to experience mental health issues.

Our school is led by senior members of staff and governors whose aims are to provide a safe environment and vigilant culture where children and young people can learn and be safeguarded. If there are safeguarding concerns, we will respond with appropriate action in a timely manner for those children who may need help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Where staff members have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they will decide what action to take in conjunction with the Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead. Although we advocate that any staff member can make a referral to children's social care or MASH, especially where a child is identified as being in immediate danger, they should however ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a member of the senior leadership team is informed as soon as possible.

We also ensure that all our staff are clear that whilst they should discuss and agree with the DSL any actions to be taken, they are able to escalate their concerns and contact MASH, MASH Consultation Line or social care to seek support for the child if despite the discussion with the DSL their concerns remain. Staff are also informed of the whistle blowing procedures and the contact details for the Local Authority LADO and NSPCC helpline.

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the provider can meet the needs of the pupil.

Children who attend alternative education often have complex needs, it is important governing bodies/trusts and designated safeguarding leads ensure children are fully supported at all times, and the alternative setting is aware of any additional risks of harm that pupils may be vulnerable to. Information sharing for pupils who receive education provision outside of a mainstream setting is vital to support the child and ensure the learning environment where they are placed has all necessary information for the child before they access the provision. The working together principles are key to keep the child safe and understanding the vulnerabilities needing to be supported. We will ensure up to date contact details for the professionals working with the child and family are provided to the designated safeguarding leads as required.

NOTE: Schools/Academies should also obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been conducted on individuals working at the establishment, i.e., those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and headteacher, Kate Davies, is familiar with national and local guidance, will share concerns, where appropriate, with the relevant agencies. All DSLs work closely with other agencies with regular meetings with the health team working in school, these meetings always include discussions on safeguarding concerns. This ensures a cohesive approach to addressing safeguarding concerns. School makes referrals to Early Help Unit, CAMHS and community Paediatrician, who now runs clinics based at the school. School attends LAC / Child Protection and Children in Need meetings. The school's link Educational Psychologist supports teachers to support pupils and where appropriate, their families to improve outcomes for pupils. All relevant meeting around a child is recoded on CPOMs. The school also now has access to part of social care's Mosaic system which can be used to ascertain which professionals work with each child. The school also works closely with the ICDS where issues around school placements occur. Termly meetings are held with the local authority to monitor any placements at risk.

By monitoring the contributions on CPOMs the DSLs are able to monitor the quality and accuracy of these and support staff with advice in response to this. DSLs together with the administration team adapt and improve the school's use of the system to reflect changes in government guidelines and ensure it meets the needs of its pupils (the school has only been using this for just over a year and therefore some adaptations may be needed).

All staff complete an induction with one of the designated leads. An induction safeguarding checklist is completed. They also complete an online safeguarding course accessed through the 'National College' on starting and every year and read all relevant policies. How to report safeguarding concerns is part of this

process. Volunteers also complete an induction and there is a volunteer's leaflet which gives all information about who the designated leads are and how to report any concerns. All visitors and supply staff wear a badge which also details designated lead and how to report concerns. All agency staff also have to read the child protection leaflet which gives further details of our policies. The policies / induction checklist makes it clear how to report any signs of abuse and any allegations against staff. All school staff can report concerns using the school's CPOMs system. This system can also be used to report causes for concern.

We are acutely aware of how, in order for our pupils to learn that they need to be ready to do so. Supporting pupils' wellbeing, health and regulation is integrated into all learning.

'Staff and safe recruitment' within this document outlines how the school meets its safer recruitment obligations

The Senior DSL and deputies (DSL team) maintains a key role in raising awareness amongst staff about the needs of children who have or who have had a social worker and the barriers that those children might experience in respect of attendance, engagement and achievement at schools or college.

The Senior DSL along with the Designated Teacher can inform the governing body and headteacher the number of children in their cohort who have or who have had a social worker and appropriate information is shared with teachers and staff on individual children's circumstances.

The Designated Teacher and Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead maintain data for children who have looked after status and for children who have been involved in the care system.

The Designated Teacher maintains working links with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of looked after children and those who have been previously looked after children. The virtual school head collaborates with us to identify and engage other key professionals, such as social workers, headteachers, governors, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, mental health leads, other local authority officers to help improve outcomes for children.

## Our Child Protection Policy

### **There are eight main elements to our policy:**

- Providing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse in and outside of school.
- Supporting pupils who have social care involvement in accordance with his/her child in need plan, child protection plan or are subject to Local Authority Care.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children, child protection processes and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe in and outside of our learning environment.
- Recognising early help is the best way to support children and by providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.
- Working in partnership with agencies and safeguarding partners in the 'best interest of the child.'

- Ensuring we have appropriate policies and procedures to deal with child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and maintain the required filtering and monitoring arrangements for online safety and harms.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact our staff have with children they and we are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and report concerns in a timely manner to seek help or interventions and support the child/ children.

### **The school will therefore:**

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to and heard.
- Ensure children know that there are trusted adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and colleagues from other agencies.
- Include opportunities in the RSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse by:
- Recognise and managing risks including online safety, radicalisation and extremism, sexual exploitation, child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, the sharing of nude and semi - nude images which has replaced what was termed as sexting.
- Support the development of healthy relationships and awareness of domestic violence and abuse, recognising that Domestic Abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may involve a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm and children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.
- Recognising how pressure from others and safeguarding vulnerabilities can affect their behaviour.
- Recognising the link between mental health, school attendance and children 'absent from education' and the impact on learning, progress, and educational attainment.
- We will act swiftly to address any concerns related to serious violence, gang and knife crime or child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment incidents.
- Ensure our positive behaviour policy includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, harmful online challenges, hoaxes, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and use of social media platforms and networks. [Positive-Behaviour-Policy.pdf](#)
- Maintain an online safety policy which address statutory filtering and monitoring standards, which take into account remote learning, and use of mobile and smart technology and is reviewed regularly to take into account any new threats are. [Online-Safety-Policy.pdf](#)
- Work in partnership with safeguarding agencies to address any 'harm outside the home' also known as 'extra familial harm' and create a culture where children and young people can share concerns and seek support in a safe place and where children and young people can form safe and trusted relationships. Where children and young people can feel assured, they will be listened to, heard, and offered support to enable them share sensitive information and strengthen their resilience.

- We acknowledge the importance of working together with parents, carers, and external services to form strong and trusted partnerships, which can advocate trauma informed and trauma aware responses,
- We will help create and maintain safe places and spaces within the community, so children and young people know how to access a place of safety outside of the school/college environment if needed.
- We will take all reasonable measures to ensure any risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised inside and outside of our school environment.
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with agencies.
- Ensure robust child protection arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school.
- Promote pupil health and safety.
- Promote safe practice, and challenge unsafe practice.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff including volunteers, supply staff and contractors. KCSiE Part Four has two sections, the second section addresses low-level concerns.
- Provide first aid and meet the health needs of children with medical conditions.
- Ensure school site security.
- Address drugs and substance misuse issues.
- Support and plan for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community.
- Work with all agencies regarding missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity and violence in the community/knife crime and children at risk of sexual exploitation.
- Everyone having a duty to safeguard children inside/outside the school environment including school trips, extended school activities, vocational placements, and alternative education packages.
- All off-site visits are risk-assessed; any risk assessments for those establishments are shared with relevant staff and are included as part of the 'Evolve'.
- As outlined the school has a pathway for support and referral within the school through the mental health lead and the ELSA team. The team understand where pupils would need mental health support from other professionals and teachers understand that steps for referrals that would need to be made (to the CAMHS team for example). Many staff have also undertaken 'emotion coaching' training. The school is also working towards achieving its 'Mentally Healthy Schools' gold award.
- Through training staff understand that changes in behaviour may be indicators of abuse and would share this with DSLs through the school's CPOMs system, through discussion with parents and through professional curiosity and dialogue. This is particularly important for those pupils who are pre-verbal or who don't have clear communication systems that are easily understood by others.
- Due to the structure of our classes (the largest of which has 14 pupils) and consistent high ratio of staff, pupils develop excellent relationships with the staff members in the class. Staff are able to pick up on any issues that pupils may be having through subtle signs around mood, behaviour or conversations with parents / carers. There are at least four members of staff in each class, ensuring that pupils would have someone who would be able to act as a trusted adults if they were LGBT.
- The school operates the NCC & NSCP School Safe Alert protocol.
- The school site is secured to ensure that pupils have independence within the school itself and classrooms (key fob entry to some areas of the school, top turn handles for some classrooms to ensure pupil safety, limited access to the school site and clear and well-understood processes for picking up pupils by parents and other adults, in particular if this involved an adult unfamiliar to the school. Many pupils would not be able to indicate that they were familiar with this person. The vast majority of pupils travel on transport arranged by Nottinghamshire County Council. No pupils currently walk to school independently, but the school and its pupils take part in the local authority Titan 'travel training' programme, which offers a clear tool for pupils to progress towards greater



independence, with an assessment tool to enable staff to understand when pupils are ready to progress towards the next stage. Walking to school independently would be done with the permission of the headteacher in consultation with parents or carers. Pupils are encouraged to be as independent as possible in getting to and coming from transport as class teams feel appropriate.

- As part of, and together with the travel training programme, pupils are supported to understand how to access the community safely. From accepting being somewhere different and being able to behave appropriately towards knowing what to do when travelling independently around the local community and understanding what dangers that can arise. There is a sharper focus on this work as pupils move through key stage 3 and our post 16 department as part of a three-levelled careers programme.

**Note:** KCSiE 24 Paragraphs 205 to 209 informs statutory guidance for 'Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning is under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and take account of guidance issued by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 to:

- Ensure we have a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a member of the school's leadership team, and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead for child protection/safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead role is written into their job description and clarifies the role and responsibilities including as defined in KCSiE 2024 Annex C.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection/safeguarding.
- Ensure that we have a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC).
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputies responsible for child protection, and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or to children's social care/police if a child is in immediate danger.
- Ensure that there is a whistleblowing policy and culture where staff can raise concerns about unsafe practice, and that these concerns will be taken seriously.
- Ensure that there is a complaints system in place for children and families.
- Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection and safeguarding by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus and on the school's website.
- Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence for a child who is subject to a child protection plan and where no contact can be established with the child, or a parent or appropriate adult linked to the child.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately; documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral, and actions to safeguard.

- Ensure all records are kept securely; the school has used the online and secure CPOMs system and has completed the transfer for any other paper based systems on to this system.
- Ensure that we follow robust processes to respond when children are missing from education or missing from home or care.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Apply confidentiality appropriately.
- Apply the NSCP escalation procedures if there are any concerns about the actions or inaction of social care staff or staff from other agencies.

## Supporting children

We recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a positive 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 the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. 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. We also recognise that there are children who are more vulnerable than others, which include children with special educational needs and or disabilities.

All staff including volunteers are advised to maintain the attitude of **‘it could happen here’** where safeguarding is a concern, and when concerned about the welfare of the child should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

### Our school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- Developing the content of the Ash Lea curriculum, which is bespoke and further personalised for each pupil. The curriculum works on children’s developmental age and has a focus on personal and social education, communication and enabling pupils to live a purposeful life.
- Maintaining a school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment, and which gives pupils a sense of them being valued, this is embedded into the school’s motto, code and values.
- The school’s positive behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy and child-on-child abuse policy which is kept up to date with national and local guidance and which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in our school.
- We will proactively ensure that all children know that some behaviours are unacceptable and will need to be addressed but as members of our school they are valued and will be supported through the time required to deal with any abuse or harm that has occurred, or outcomes from incidents. Staff are acutely aware also of each pupil’s developmental age and that this should be reflected in

in how incidents of challenging behaviours are responded to. Staff also understand that pupils' emotional development age (for example due to the impact of childhood trauma or due to neurodivergence).

- Staff at Ash Lea school have undertaken additional training around emotional / sensory regulation, attachment and childhood trauma and supporting those with challenges. Any incidents involving harmful sexual behaviour are judged on using Brook Traffic Light tool. Staff use this tool as pupils may display behaviours that would be judged differently depending on developmental and emotional age.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Social Care (in line with the Pathway to Provision Version), Behaviour and Attendance Service and Education Psychology Service, use of Complex Case Resolution Meetings and the Early Help Assessment Form (EHAF).
- Ensuring that, where a pupil leaves and is subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan or where there have been wider safeguarding concerns, their information is transferred to the new school immediately or within 5 working days and that the child's social worker is informed.
- Ensuring that the vulnerability of children with special educational needs and or disabilities is recognised and fully supported. All pupils at Ash Lea School have Education, Health and Care plans and therefore are supported by the school through the plan. The school has a named mental health lead (Luke Skillington), two Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) and are an 'Attachment Aware School'
- Where a child discloses a concern or informs of an incident that has involved them in an incident involving sexual violence and or sexual harassment the staff member will ensure the child (victim) is taken seriously, kept safe and never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment.
- As already outlined, the Brook Traffic Light tool should be used by staff members to inform others when reporting incidents of sexual violence or harassment.

## Safe Staff and Safe Recruitment

- The leadership team and governing body of the school will ensure that all safer working practices and recruitment procedures are followed in accordance with the guidance set out in KCSiE 2024 Part Three and advised by NCC HR policy and practice guidance.
- School leaders, staff and members of the governing body will be appropriately trained in safer working practices and access the safer recruitment training advised by NCC HR Service. (NCC direct schools to the NSPCC Safe Recruitment online course). The school also uses the 'National College' online training portal for additional training and for safeguarding training, particularly when staff members begin their employment within the academic year.
- Statutory pre-employment checks and references from previous employers are an essential part of the recruitment process. We will ensure we adopt the appropriate necessary procedures to conduct the checks required and where any concerns arise, we will seek advice and act in accordance with national guidance.
- Our school has in place recruitment, selection, and vetting procedures in accordance with KCSiE 2024 Part Three and maintains a Single Central Record (SCR), which is reviewed regularly and updated in accordance with KCSiE 2024 Part Three.
- Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and will be aware of the School Employee Code of Conduct, which includes contact between staff and pupils outside the work context. Concerns regarding low-level concerns will be included in our Code of Conduct from

1 September 2024 in line with KCSiE Part Four Section two. Staff can access a copy of this through the school's sharepoint and CPOMs.

- Newly appointed staff and volunteers will be informed of our arrangements for safer working practices by DSLs before beginning working and contact with pupils, training is also completed on the 'National College' online portal that the school subscribes to, which has high quality up to date training. Completion can be monitored by the school's administrative team.
- In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the headteacher (or the Designated Safeguarding Lead) if the headteacher is not present, will be notified immediately. If it relates to the headteacher, the chair of governors will be informed without delay. We will respond to all allegations robustly and appropriately in collaboration with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), LADO Allegation Officers and HR Business Partner or HR Service.
- Advice and support will be made available by the Safeguarding Children in Education Officer (SCiEO), LADO and NCC HR where appropriate to the leadership team.
- All new employees will be appropriately inducted to their role and a link to the Induction Checklist for Safer Recruitment can be accessed from HR's guidance section of the School Portal.
- All new staff undertake induction training involving key training from the 'National College' online training portal, with the senior DSL at the beginning of the academic year, by reading key policies and documents (recorded on CPOMs). Volunteers, supply staff and contractors read the school's safeguarding leaflet and the school obtains details of their DBS checks. Where DBS information cannot be shared or isn't present, they will be monitored by a member of school staff at all times whilst pupils are on site.

Please Note: KCSiE 2024 Part Two paragraph 171: Alternative Provision – Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil.

Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been conducted on individuals working at the establishment, i.e., those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff. As a special school it is rare that pupils access AP. Where this does happen, not only are these checks made but close relationships and regular information sharing around outcomes for pupils occur through regular ongoing contact (the school picks up and drops off pupils).

## Links to other Local Authority policies

This policy, together with the following, should be read alongside and in conjunction with other policies and statutory guidance regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together will make up the suite of policies we have in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Accessibility Plan.
- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance Policy
- Equality.
- Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks.
- Complaints' Procedure Statement.
- Cyber-bullying and Harmful online challenges.
- Online Safety Policy.

- Cyber Security Policy and arrangements.
- Freedom of Information.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Guidance
- Radicalisation – Prevent Duty- (School's should have a Prevent Action Plan and Risk Assessments).
- Health and Safety Disability Equality Action Plan.
- Home-school Agreement Document.
- Child on Child Abuse revised 2024-2025  
Physical intervention/positive handling.
- Register of Pupil Attendance.
- School Access Policy.
- School Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Knife Crime Guidance (cross authority and in the process of being revised).
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education.
- Mental and Physical Health (KCSiE 2024 Part One, Part Two and Annex A and Annex B)
- Special Educational Needs.
- Staff Behaviour (Code of Conduct policy).
- Staff Discipline Conduct and Grievance (procedures for addressing).
- School information published on a website.
- Visitors and VIP Guidance 2024-2025.
- Whistle Blowing Policy.
- Guidance for NSPCC helpline and usage (KCSiE 2024 paragraph 47 and 74; when to call the police guidance from the NSPCC)
- New - NSPCC advice to protecting children with SEN and deaf/disabled children and young people links and help line (KCSiE 24 paragraph 204). [Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)
- NCC & NSCP Neglect Toolkit (available from the NSCP website).

Nottinghamshire safeguarding Children Partnership Policy, Procedures and Practice Guidance link:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp/policy-procedures-and-guidance>

PLEASE ENSURE: you reflect on the policies listed above and check against the policies or procedures you have in place. Check they are in line with DfE KCSiE 2024 which comes into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2024 and HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 23 (updated February 24).

## Roles and Responsibilities

### All staff and volunteers

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families have a role to play in safeguarding children. Our staff will always consider what is in the best interests of children.

All staff have received appropriate safeguarding training to enable them to identify concerns early and provide help to children to prevent concerns from escalating. We recognise early help is the best way to support children and by providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

We may decide that the children do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help.

**Early Help:** is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. We recognise providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

**All school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:**

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).
- has a mental health need.
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from 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'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage.
- is a privately fostered child.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and KCSiE paragraph 497)

All our staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in this.

This includes being able to identify emerging problems to recognise children who may benefit from early help. Staff know in the first instance to discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and understand they may be required to support other agencies and professionals in assessments for early help.

Within Ash Lea school we have many different roles, and they all have a major part to play in safeguarding children:

- Teachers (including SLT) – Leading with classes and continuous liaison with parents and carers
- Teaching assistants – Working within classes and building relationships with pupils. May be involved in personal care.
- Personal care assistants – working within classrooms and supporting pupil with personal care, eating and drinking
- Health care assistants – administration of medication and other medical procedures. Liaison with parents, carers and medical professionals. Updating care plans and intimate care plans with class teams.

- Office, IT and admin – Contact with pupils around school. For many school practices, the first point of contact for parents and carers, particularly during transition. Arrange and take minutes for some meetings, particularly EHCP reviews, transition and leavers' meetings.
- Site manager and cleaners – Some contact with pupils during the school day.

All staff within our school are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help to children to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff contribute to providing a safe environment in which children can learn by:

- Reading and understanding related policies
- Receiving and completing relevant training
- Keeping up with any changes in policies and procedures
- Reading (or in some situations) writing risk assessments
- Ensuring any EVOLVE forms are completed before undergoing off site trips. Named staff who monitor off site trips, Educational Visits co-ordinator; Neil Phipp.
- Staff trained and updated in Health and Safety (H&S) procedures
- H&S team of staff who monitor any issues and staff who report to this team using behaviour watch
- Evacuation procedures and regular practices throughout the year with follow up actions. All staff knowing how to record any issues around H&S
- Appropriate number of first aid trained staff and other medical delegated responsibilities.
- Individual risk assessment for pupils who have particular risks that sit outside of a behaviour support plans, safe systems of work and care plans.
- Recording the reading of all documents and signing off using CPOMs

## Safeguarding Training

All our staff are aware of systems and resources available within Ash Lea School and these are explained to them as part of staff induction, which include our child protection policy; the employee code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

We have an induction checklist when staff start employment or volunteering opportunities to ensure they receive the information and training required to support them and keep our children safe. All our staff receive safeguarding and child protection training which is updated every three years. In addition, to this training all staff members receive child protection and safeguarding updates when required, but at least annually.

All our staff receive safeguarding and child protection training which is updated every three years (Nottinghamshire LA). In addition to this training all staff members receive child protection and safeguarding updates (morning briefing / memos via email) when required, but at least annually (inset time in September). Staff also undertake training for relevant safeguarding matters through the National College online training portal with additional relevant training, such as FGM for those staff members who support pupils with personal and intimate care and more detailed training for designated safeguarding leads. The school sets a 'watchlist' for staff that can be worked through in their own time.

Safeguarding training outlines that staff can access the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and a link to this can be found here <https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/training/> and on the school's sharepoint staff handbook.

All our staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and understand the role they may have in these assessments and working in partnership with safeguarding agencies. All our staff know what to do if a child is raising concerns or makes a disclosure of abuse and/or neglect. Staff will maintain a



level of confidentiality whilst consulting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and children's social care. Our staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a disclosure or allegation, recognising this may not be in the best interest of the child.

## Staff responsibilities

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns, recognising children's vulnerability to harm and risk of abuse and provide support and early help for children.

### To achieve this, they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Lead and ensure robust arrangements and procedures are in place to effectively manage and regularly monitor the online safety arrangements and ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks.
- Attend training to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" with regards to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL, as soon as practical that day. If the DSL is not contactable immediately a Deputy DSL should be informed.
- Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or their Deputy is not available.
- Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan, child in need plan, LAC Care Plan.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to "keep a secret."
- Notify the DSL or their Deputy of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
- Be prepared to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, support, and interventions.
- Ensure they know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and know how to contact them.
- Have an awareness of the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Support Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education and the role of the DSL.
- The school has re-established its relationship with the local community Police officer supporting local schools. The school works closely with therapy staff; speech and language, physio and occupational therapists with termly meetings. These staff are based at the school for some of the week. Paediatrician clinics are held at the school. The school is regularly in touch with the TETC team when the need arises.

## Senior Leadership Team responsibilities:

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (updated February 2024) guidance.
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Ensure all staff, supply staff and volunteers are alert to the definitions of abuse and indicators, and through access to regular training opportunities and updates.
- Working with Children's Social Care, support their assessment and planning processes including the attendance at conference and core group meetings and providing reports as required.
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school.
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff including low-level concerns are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DfE KCSiE 2024 Part Four 'Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation teachers including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors in Sections One and Two.
- The school works closely with Social Care to ensure that outcomes for pupils are the best that they can be, attending meetings wherever possible. Teachers and senior leaders are swift to support families to make referrals and report concerns. Teachers are in frequent contact with social workers where this is needed and contribute in a timely fashion to requests for information to improve the provision for pupils.

## Teachers (including NQTs) and Headteachers – Professional Duty

The Teachers Standards 2012 (updated 13 December 2021) remind us that teachers, newly qualified teachers and headteachers should safeguard children and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of our professional duties.

The Children and Social Work Act of 2017, places responsibilities for Designated Teacher to 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.

## Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kate Davies, who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children and child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of the school leadership team, and their responsibilities are explicit in their job description.

We also have a Deputy Safeguarding Lead, who will provide cover for the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead when they are not available. Our Deputy Safeguarding Lead has received the same training as our Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. They will assist the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead in managing referrals, attending

child protection conferences, reviews, core group meetings and other meetings of a safeguarding and protection nature to support the child/children.

We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure there is a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed by all the members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.

## **The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:**

### **Manage Referrals**

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Support staff who make referrals to children's social care and other referral pathways.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and the DBS as required.
- Ensure arrangements are in place year-round for all staff and volunteers to seek advice, support and inform of safeguarding concerns, or incidents and disclosures that inform children are at risk of harm, or abuse, harm or bullying or sexual harm or harassment has occurred.
- Ensure appropriate systems are in place to manage and address online safety, access to mobile phone networks, especially for those children who are potentially at greater risk of harm, abuse, and exploitation and refer concerns where required linked to the PREVENT duty.
- All DSLs are copied into any contributions into CPOMs. This is also an effective tool to ensure that follow up actions are shared and that all DSLs are continuously aware and can input into any concerns.
- Senior Leaders meet weekly and discuss safeguarding concerns during these meetings.

*See KCSiE 2024 Annex C for clarity on the role and responsibilities of the DSL and team.*

### **Work with others**

- Consult with the headteacher/principal (where the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead role is not conducted by the headteacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations.
- As required, consult with the 'case manager' (as per Part Four of KCSiE 2024) and the LADO where there are child protection concerns/allegations that relate to a member of staff.
- Consult with the case manager and the LADO/LADO Allegation Officer where there are concerns about a staff member.
- Consult with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and deciding when to make a referral by consulting with other agencies and acts as a source of support, advice, and expertise for other staff.
- Take part in strategy discussions or attend inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so and to contribute to the assessment of children including providing and writing reports for conferences and reviews.
- Consult with the local authority and other agencies in line with HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (Updated February 2024) and the local Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and practice guidance.

- The headteacher, designated safeguarding leads and governing body are aware of the local arrangements put in place by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and know how to access the NSCP website and training.
- One of the DSL attends NCC focus groups and What's new in safeguarding; any new information is shared via staff briefing and newsletters frequently.
- Safeguarding is a regular briefing and agenda item on teachers' meetings.
- The school has re-established its relationship with the local community Police officer supporting local schools. The school works closely with therapy staff; speech and language, physio and occupational therapists with termly meetings. These staff are based at the school for some of the week. Paediatrician clinics are held at the school.

## **Undertake training**

- Formal Designated Safeguarding Lead training will be undertaken every two years. Informal training and updating of knowledge and skills will be at regular intervals, undertaken at least annually.
- The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for their own training and should obtain access to resources or any relevant refresher training.
- The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is also responsible for ensuring all other staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities access up to date and timely safeguarding training and maintains a register or data base to evidence the training.

## **The training undertaken should enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:**

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention through the NCC & NSCP's Pathway to Provision, the Early Help Service, and Family Hubs.
- Have a working knowledge of how the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership operates, the conduct of a child protection conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure that each member of staff has access to the child protection policy and procedures and any revisions/updates.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities and young carers.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Understand the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting and preventing children from the risk of radicalisation and being grooming into extremist behaviours and attitudes (KCSiE 2024 Annex A and B).
- Understand the reporting requirements for FGM and PREVENT.
- Encourage a culture of protecting children, listening to children and their wishes and feelings.

## **Raise awareness**

- Ensure that the child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately.
- Ensure that the child protection policy is reviewed annually in consultation with staff members, and procedures are updated and reviewed regularly and implemented, and that the governing body is kept up to date and actively involved.

- Work strategically to ensure policies and procedures are up to date and drive and support development work within the school.
- Ensure that the child protection policy is available to parents and carers and uploaded to the school website and make parents/carers aware that referrals may be made about suspected abuse or neglect.
- Ensure all staff receive induction training covering child protection before working with children and can recognise and report any concerns immediately as they arise.

## **Child Protection file**

- The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that when a child leaves the school or college their 'child protection,' 'child in need' file or 'confidential' file is transferred to the new school or college at the same time the child goes on roll of its new school or education provision.
- A record of the number of children open and subject to CP, CiN and LAC concerns is maintained and shared with the governing body annually.
- A record or data on the cohort of children having or have had a social worker and social care involvement will be maintained.
- We will ensure our management arrangements for maintaining, keeping, and storing information and records for children where a safeguarding or child protection concern has been identified for a child is managed in accordance with statutory guidance in KCSiE 2024.
- Since April 2020 Ash Lea has been using CPOMs to record all incidents. All DSLs are copied into the incidents and the Snr. DSL ensures they are followed up and actions completed.
- A record or data on the cohort of children having or have had a social worker and social care involvement will be maintained. CPOMs will have a new category to ensure that this status is captured
- All historic files have now been digitised and added to pupil files on CPOMs to ensure that there is a consistency of approach.
- Any children from Ash Lea moving onto any further education or new school all records are sent to the school with special delivery, or delivered by a member of school staff. A record form is completed to acknowledge receipt. Pupils change their UPN on entering further education or other Post 18 placements and therefore digital files cannot be transferred as with schools who use CPOMs
- If any children move on to a school with CPOMs the confidential records will be transferred electronically.
- All new children should arrive with school and confidential records. All records will be signed for as a record of acknowledge receipt. Any children coming from a school with CPOMs; their confidential records will be electronically collected.

## **Availability**

- During term time the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy will always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Leads a member of the senior leadership team will be nominated to provide cover. Appropriate arrangements will also need to be in place all year round for any out of school hours' activities in line with the guidance contained in DfE KCSiE 2024 Part Two and Annex C.

## Headteacher

### The headteacher of the school will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the governing body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood, and followed by **all** staff.
- Our Senior Leaders have oversight of our Single Central Record (SCR) which is reviewed regularly and is compliant with statutory guidance.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.
- The headteacher will ensure all staff including supply teachers and volunteers have access to and read and understand the requirements placed on them through: - our Child Protection Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.
- The headteacher will ensure there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to fully understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE 2024.
- Where there is an allegation made against a member of staff (either paid or unpaid) that meets the criteria for a referral to the LADO, then the headteacher or principal will discuss the allegation immediately with the LADO (within 24 hours) and ensure that cases are managed as per Part Four: Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors.
- If the allegation is against the headteacher, the Chair of Governors will be required to manage the allegation and consult with statutory safeguarding leads, such as the Local Authority LADO – see below.

## Governing Body and Multi- Academy Trust

We recognise our governing body has a strategic leadership responsibility for the ‘safeguarding arrangements’ we put in place and must ensure they comply with their duties from the statutory guidance informed by KCSiE 2024 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024, ensuring all policies, procedures and training are effective and always comply with the law.

The governing body will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school’s ethos and reflected in the school’s day to day safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring there is an individual member of the governing body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and champion child protection issues in the school.
- Ensuring that the school has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance as well as with local NSCP guidance and monitors the school’s compliance with them.
- Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to promote a child’s welfare.

- Recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies through the statutory guidance provided within KCSiE 2024 regarding Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR and the additional clarification regarding processing personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure (KCSiE paragraph 92).
- Ensuring cooperation with the local authority and other safeguarding partners.
- Appointing a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead from the leadership team to take lead responsibility for child protection/safeguarding and that a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is appointed and appropriately trained.
- Ensuring all staff, including supply teachers and governors read and fully understand at least KCSiE 2024 Part One and or Annex A as a minimum, and ensure that there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as required within the guidance.
- Ensuring that the governing body understands it is collectively responsible for the school's 'safeguarding arrangements,' even though a governor will be nominated as the 'Safeguarding Governor' and person who will champion all safeguarding requirements.'
- All members of the governing body will undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of robust 'safeguarding arrangements and act as the 'critical friend'. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.
- The Chair of Governors and named Safeguarding Governor will access role specific training to enable them to comply and discharge their child protection/ safeguarding responsibilities including should any allegations be made against the headteacher.
- Ensuring that staff undergo safeguarding child protection training at induction and that there are arrangements in place for staff to be regularly updated to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority.
- Ensuring that temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- Ensuring there are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff and exercise disciplinary functions in respect of dealing with a complaint KCSiE 2024 Part Four Section One.
- Ensuring that arrangements/procedures are in place to manage and provide clarity on the process for sharing 'low level' concerns, which should be referred to within the school/college Staff Code of Conduct, (Allegations and concerns about a staff member that after initial consideration by the 'case manager' do not meet the criteria for a referral to LADO).
- Ensuring the Chair of Governors is able to respond if there is an allegation against the headteacher by consulting with the LADO or other appropriate officers within the local authority.
- Ensuring appropriate responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, or have unexplained or persistent absence from education.
- Ensure an overview is in place to help identify the risk of abuse, including child sexual exploitation and being at risk of exploitation.
- Be aware of the issues involving the complexity of serious violence and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children and ensure the DSL team and SLT has appropriate policy, procedures in place and staff are trained, to recognise and respond to incidents and resources to manage actions and support for those involved.
- Ensure the DSL team and staff are alert and able to respond to harmful online challenges and hoaxes, including providing information and advice to parents and carer and informing where to get help and support.
- The SLT and DSL team works closely with the police and safeguarding partners to raise awareness of the impact of knife crime and adopt proactive practice to address concerns locally and within the community.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children online and children are taught about keeping safe online through the curriculum.



- Give all staff the opportunity to contribute to and shape the 'safeguarding arrangements,' and child protection policy.
- When the school premises are used for non-school/college activities the Governing body/trust will seek assurances that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, and inspect them as needed, including liaising with the headteacher. This will apply regardless of whether or not children who attend the provision are on the school or college roll.
- Any safeguarding concerns involving outside organisations will be addressed through our safeguarding policies and procedures, and in line with the local Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.
- Prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, making decisions about additional checks and ensuring volunteers are supervised as required.
- Ensure at least one person on an interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.
- Inform any new prospective employees' that online social media checks will be completed as part of the interview process (KCSiE 2024 Part Three Safer Recruitment).
- Recognising that certain children are more vulnerable than others, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## Looked After Children – The Role of Designated Teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- A Designated Teacher is appointed who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after. They have the appropriate training and will collaborate with the Virtual School to ensure that the progress of the child is supported.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and all class teachers will work closely together, as we recognise that children may have been abused or neglected before becoming looked after and may also have SEND. We will ensure they are fully supported, able to thrive and take the most out of their education or the learning opportunities we are able to provide by linking with the virtual school, their social worker, parents, and carers.
- We also recognise those children who were previously Looked-After potentially remain vulnerable and all staff will be informed of the importance of maintaining support for them through our school's systems.
- We will continue to recognise the importance of working with agencies and take prompt actions where necessary to safeguard these children, who may remain vulnerable.

## Children with Special Educational Needs

All pupils at Ash Lea School have special educational needs (SEN) and or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with SEN and or disabilities are especially vulnerable when identifying concerns due to their impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. It is important that we enable our pupils to have a voice to ensure they are able to tell us any concerns.

All staff are aware that additional barrier can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with SEND and be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. They may not always show outward signs and may have communications barriers and difficulties in reporting challenges, especially involving exploitation or incidents involving child-on-child harm, abuse, or harassment and particularly where that harassment or harm is of a sexual nature. Our staff's vigilance will be a supporting factor to keeping all children safe.

Our policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children which include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming their ability to disclose incidents or the risk of harm they feel subject to,
- addressing individual behaviour concerns and incidents considering the child's SEN and disabilities.
- recognising and having in place additional support for example to teach, advise, mentor and support children with SEND from online harms, hoaxes, bullying, grooming and radicalisation and enable them to have confidence and the ability to stay safe online, either in schools or outside the school environment.
- Pupils who need support with moving and handling have safe systems of work and staff are given appropriate training to support with this.
- Pupils who need support with personal care have an intimate care plan.
- Pupils who have medical issues have personal care plans and the school has a management of medication policy (awaiting agreement between the NHS and LA with regard to this agreeing responsibilities) and employs two health care assistants to manage the storage and administration of medication.
- All staff receive training (delegated responsibility) for the medical support that they give to pupils (this is completed to support the needs of individual pupils).
- The local authority also provide a policy and letter to confirm safer recruitment practices in relation to companies and staff who are commissioned to transport pupils to school.

## Taking action where concerns are identified

Our staff recognise the difference between concerns about a child and a child in immediate danger.

If staff have concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. A discussion should take place with the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead, to agree a course of action.

If a child is in immediate danger or risk of harm a referral will be made immediately to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and/or immediately to the police if at imminent risk of harm by the member of staff if required, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead being informed of the referral.

**If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about alleged abuse, there are a number of actions that staff will need to take to support the child:**

- The key facts will be established in language that the child understands, and the child's words will be used in clarifying/expanding what has been said.
- No promises will be made to the child, e.g., to keep secrets.
- Staff will stay calm and be available to listen.
- Staff will actively listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying.
- Where questions are asked, this should be done without pressurising, and only using open questions.
- Leading questions should be avoided as much as possible.
- Questioning should not be extensive or repetitive.
- Staff will not/ should not put words in the child's mouth but will subsequently note the main points carefully.
- The staff will keep a full written record duly signed and dated, including the time the conversation with the child took place, outline what was said, comment on the child's body language etc.
- It is not appropriate for staff to make children write statements about abuse that may have happened to them or get them to sign the staff record.
- Staff will reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform them and inform the child that this information will now have to be passed on.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be immediately informed unless the disclosure has been made to them.
- Information should be shared with children's social care without delay, either to the child's own social worker or to the MASH. Children's Social Care will liaise with the police where required, which will ensure an appropriate police officer response rather than a uniformed response.
- The Police would only therefore be contacted directly in an emergency or if a child is in immediate risk of harm, abuse, or danger.
- If unsure, the MASH has available a Consultation Phone Line during office hours where a conversation (without naming children) can be used to speak with a qualified social worker. No record of the conversation will be made it is purely an advice line.

**Staff should never attempt to conduct an investigation of suspected child abuse by interviewing the child or any others involved especially if a criminal act is thought to have occurred. The only people who should investigate child abuse and harm are Social Care, Police, or the NSPCC.**

## Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential; however, a member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to children; children will not be given promises that any information about an allegation will not be shared.

Where there is a child protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or to children's social care. When a child is in immediate danger children's social care/the police will be contacted.

The headteacher or Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff, including the level of involvement of other agencies, only on a 'need to know' basis.

All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children. They are aware that the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) should not be a barrier to sharing of information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm (KCSiE 24 paragraph 55).

Further guidance can be found by visiting Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website: <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp>

## Information Sharing

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment, and service provision to keep children safe. Rapid Reviews (RRs) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record and thereby understand the significance of sharing information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare and well-being of children (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, updated February 2024).

*We will adopt the information sharing principles detailed in statutory safeguarding guidance contained within:*

- *DfE KCSiE 2024 paragraphs 114 to 122 and Annex C.*
- *HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Paragraphs 28 to 34 and on pages 18 to 22.*
- *HM Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers* (Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)).

## Records and Monitoring (KCSiE 2024 paragraphs 66 to 67, Part Four, Part Five, Annex C)

Ash Lea started recording electronically confidential concerns on CPOMs. The transfer to a digital only file storing system has been completed to ensure effective system management and oversight and to ensure that systems align.

All staff and volunteers are aware of the important of reporting safeguarding concerns. Concerns forms are now completed electronically and any other relevant information and investigated.

All meetings and updates are recorded on a child with a confidential file are logged on CPOMs.

On a regular basis the files are reviewed by SLT. Pupils at Ash Lea may have a confidential file if they have had referrals to MASH, CAMHS on a Child Protection Plan. Many of our pupils have Child in Need meetings due to the fact they have respite care / short breaks they will now be recorded on CPOMs. Many of Ash Lea pupils are Looked After Children (LAC) or Vulnerable adults (Post 18); they have a separate recording system. This is monitored by the Designated LAC lead Luke Skillington, however documents are still held on CPOMs.

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records will provide a factual and evidence-based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions. The CPOMs system will indicate who completed the report and will indicate who else has viewed this. Any amendments needed or actions following this should follow as an action to the incident itself, maintaining a chronological trail within the incident. Any additional actions or amendments needed to information can be requested or edited by designated safeguarding leads, a record of such amendments is held by the system and a reason for

amendments is needed for these changes to be made. Where an opinion or professional judgement is recorded this should be clearly stated as such.

At no time will an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person; this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures. The body maps will be used in accordance with recording guidance and to support clarity for example of areas of injury, marks and bruising and or touching.

Any concerns will be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services e.g., MASH or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.

Chronology of incidents can be seen through each child's CPOMs file, which all pupils have. There is a summary front page which highlights key information about each child. Staff, particularly class teachers, will record any minor concerns on the chronology contained within CPOMs and will take responsibility for alerting the Designated Safeguarding Lead should the number of concerns rise or, in their professional judgement, become significant. Whilst all school staff can contribute, there are differing levels of access depending on staff roles. Issues of a serious safeguarding nature can only be seen by DSLs and specific staff, if alerted by DSLs. This is monitored continuously by DSLs to ensure that information is shared appropriately and shared sufficiently well to ensure that children remain safe at the school.

We will ensure all our files will be available for external scrutiny for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit as required by statutory guidance.

## Why recording is important

Our staff will be encouraged to understand why it is important that recording is comprehensive and accurate and what the messages from serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information. It is often when a chronology of information is pieced together that the level of concern escalates or the whole or wider picture becomes known.

Ash Lea School uses CPOMs electronic recording system. All schools will need to ensure the system adopted by the school and signed off by the Governing Body is robust, secure and appropriate, and should be mirrored in the following appendix and policy text.

We acknowledge without information being recorded it can be lost, miss informed, open to interpretation or change. This could be crucial information, the importance of which is not always necessarily apparent at the time. We will ensure all our recording is made in timely manner and is kept safe and signed off by one of our DSLs to evidence the reporting and information being used to safeguard the child and detail the 'child's journey through the safeguarding system.'

We acknowledge, on occasion this information could be crucial evidence to safeguard a child or be evidence in future criminal prosecutions.

## Recording Practice and Procedures

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child.

A recording of every incident or concern for the child will be made, including any telephone calls to other professionals. These will also be recorded on the chronology and kept within the child protection file for that child, as over time they are likely to help identify any patterns or emerging risks and needs. This will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child. Actions will be agreed, and roles and responsibility of each agency will be clarified, and outcomes recorded.

Further detailed recording will be added to the record of concern and will be signed and dated (as CPOMs will automatically do). Records will include an analysis of the event or concerns and will take account of the holistic needs of the child, and any historical information held on the child's file.

Support and advice will be sought from social care, or the early help service whenever needed. In this way a picture can emerge, and this will assist in promoting an evidence-based assessment and determining any action(s) that needs to be taken.

This may include no further action, whether an EHAF should be undertaken, or whether a referral should be made to MASH/Children's Social Care in-line with the NCC Pathway to Provision, made available by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Such robust practice across child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will assist the school and DSL team in the early identification of any concerns which may require addressing further and the prevention of future harm, risk, or abuse (through the concern and categories overview table and through an ongoing dialogue with class based staff).

## The Child Protection (CP), Child in Need (CiN) or Confidential file

(KCSiE 2024 Annex C pages 171 to 172 and paragraphs 101,121 to 122, 547 and 550).

As all pupils in the school have an EHCP plan, the school is in receipt of many documents that could be considered to be confidential; health needs and involvement from other agencies. These are stored on their CPOMs file. Any issues and significant contact in relation to contact with other professionals are held on CPOMs too. Due to pupils' vulnerabilities and for many, the fact that they are non-verbal, the school will also record unexplained bruises within their CPOMs file also. The system has the capability to categorise incidents differently and this alters the access that different groups of staff have.

The establishment of a Child Protection, CiN or Confidential Safeguarding file, which is separate from the child's main school file, is an important principle in terms of storing and collating information about children which relates to either a child protection or safeguarding concern or an accumulation of concerns about a child's welfare which are outside of the usual range of concerns which relate to ordinary life events. For the reasons outlined above, all pupils have a CPOMs file and this is used to monitor causes for concern, specific safeguarding issues as well as storing confidential documents containing information about pupils' health needs. It should be borne in mind that what constitutes a 'concern' for one child may not be a 'concern' for another and the child's particular circumstances will need to be considered for example if a child is subject to a child protection plan, CiN plan or has looked after status (LAC). Professional judgement will therefore be a key factor when making this decision and will need clear links between pastoral staff and those with Designated Safeguarding Lead responsibilities in school. On CPOMs many incidents are recorded and stored, but the categorisation of incidents or documents indicates what the concern relates to. The system grades the access that each different staff member can have and this also correlates to the involvement of that staff member with each child and with any specific incident. This structure puts the 'need to know' principle into practice automatically.



A 'child protection' or 'confidential safeguarding' file should be commenced in the event of:

- A referral to MASH/Children's Social Care.
- A number of minor concerns on the child's main school file.
- Any child is open to social care or Early Help Service.
- Involved with statutory safeguarding agency.

**All 'child protection' or 'confidential' files should contain the following**

- A front sheet.
- A chronology (all events on CPOMS are recorded chronologically, but there is no summary of this).
- A record of concern in more detail and body map, where appropriate.
- A record of concerns and issues shared by others.

Our school will keep electronic record on CPOMS of concerns about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to MASH/Children's Social Care (or similar) immediately, but these records will be kept within the separate concerns file.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead, to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect.

The 'confidential safeguarding or child protection' file can be active or non-active in terms of monitoring i.e., a child is no longer LAC, subject to a child protection plan or EHAF and this level of activity can be recorded on the front sheet as a start and end date. If future concerns arise, they can be re-activated and indicated as such on the front sheet and on the chronology as new information arises. This is more fluid in the case of pupils at Ash Lea due to their SEND.

**Transfer of child's child protection file, child in need, LAC, or confidential file (statutory requirement):**

We will adopt the file transfer guidance and arrangements contained in KCSiE 2024 and ensure when a child moves school/education provision their child protection/confidential safeguarding file is sent securely to their new educational setting when the child starts/ leaves the school/academy.

For those children subject of social care and safeguarding agency involvement will ensure the file is able to evidence the child's journey and include key information as described in KCSiE 2024. Should a child subject to social care involvement transfer schools, college, or education provider we will ensure the child's child protection or confidential file move is transferred within 5 days as required by KCSiE.

Our Senior DSLs will liaise directly with the receiving school, college or alternative placement and hold a discussion to share important information to support the child's transfer to ensure the child remains safeguarded, has any 'reasonable adjustments' agreed, and put in place and to ensure the changes



experienced by the child are as smooth as possible to enable a positive integration experience and engagement with new staff and learning.

In accordance with KCSiE 2024 we will maintain information on cohorts of children who have been open to social care, have had a social worker or who are closed to social care and may have returned to the family home. This information will only be considered for sharing 'if appropriate' with the new school or provider in advance of the child leaving to allow for the new school to continue supporting the children who have had a social worker or been victims of abuse, including those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme.

(KCSiE 2024 paragraph 121 to 122 and Annex C).

### **Educating Young People – Opportunities to teach safeguarding** (KCSiE 2024 paragraphs 128 to 136, Annex A & Annex C Online Safety).

We will teach children in an age-appropriate way about youth produced imagery, on-line risks associated with social networking to prevent harm by providing them with the skills, attributes, and knowledge to help them navigate risks, including covering online safety, remote learning, filters and monitoring, information security, cyber-crime, reviewing online safety platforms and use of mobile technology. We will ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

The education we provide for online safety will consider the need for children to learn using online technologies in a safe environment whether that be in school in the home or in a community environment. This will also be taught as part of a wider RSHE programme, as well as through other subject areas and ICT.

We will ensure a whole school approach is in place to promote giving children the space to explore key issues in a sensitive way and the confidence to seek the support of adults should they encounter problems or online harms, hoaxes or harassment including involving incidents of sexual violence, sexual harassment between children and other forms of exploitation.

We will carefully consider mobile phone use and how this is managed to ensure it is reflected in our mobile and smart technology policy. This will include where children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e., 3G, 4G and 5G). We are aware many children have independent and unsupervised access to smart technology and could mean some children, could be vulnerable to, sexual harassment, bullying, and exploitation via their mobile and smart technology. We will use opportunities to raise awareness of risks and share this with parents and carers where able. Pupils' mobiles will not be accessible during the school day and will be handed into class staff on arrival at school. Devices will be stored in a secure place. They will be returned to pupils for their transport home. In exceptional circumstances, when this is agreed by the headteacher, some pupils will use mobile phones in school if required for learning or medical purposes. Children will have access to school iPads and these are filtered in line with the new filtering standard.

Pupils will learn about online safety through the Ash Lea Curriculum and we involve other agencies like NSPPC (Consent course) and DARE. A list of e-learning resources for parents to use are on our web site: <https://www.ashlea.notts.sch.uk/e-safety/>

As well as work through the school's RHSE curriculum, the school have shared several links to parents and families through its website.

The school has a remote learning provision plan that is used for when pupils need to self-isolate and would be used as part of a contingency plan if this was needed due to a school based Covid related issue, or through prolonged periods of illness. This outlines learning support, but also the other support that the school will offer. Teachers and support staff understand this expectation and are well practiced at putting these plans into place.

## **Helplines and reporting**

- Children can talk to a Child Line counsellor 24 hours a day about anything that is worrying them by ringing 0800 11 11 or in an online chat at <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/>
- Where staff members feel unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feel they have a genuine concern that is not being addressed we acknowledge they may wish to consider whistleblowing channels. Likewise, if parents and carers are concerned about their child, they can contact the NSPCC Helpline by ringing 0800 028 028 0295, or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**Appendix 1 - NCC LA Flow Chart 2024-2025 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused or at risk of harm, neglect.**

**Appendix 2 – Body Map Guidance**

## Ash Lea School Child Protection & Safeguarding Flow Chart

‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, at risk of harm or neglect’.

### Appendix 1

#### Actions where there are concerns about a child’s welfare in and outside of school.

- Be alert to signs of abuse, question unusual behaviour or changes to presentation.

#### Where a child discloses abuse, neglect, sexual violence, sexual harassment, online harm.

- Listen to what they say, keep calm, reassure they are right to tell, and you will take action to help keep them safe.
- Inform them you need to share the information and what you are going to do next.
- Do not promise confidentiality, you will need to share/ report the information to appropriate services.

#### Discuss concerns with the Kate Davies (DSL), Caroline Morrison, Luke Skillington, Louise Staples (DDSL)

- The Safeguarding Lead will consider further actions including consultation with Children’s Social Care/ MASH (if a new concern).
- Concerns and discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded in writing and a ‘confidential concerns’ or a ‘child protection’ file should be opened, stored in line with the school child protection policy.
- At all stages the child’s circumstances should be kept under review and re-refer if concerned to ensure the child’s circumstances improve – **the child’s best interests must come first.**

#### Still have concerns - Refer to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Social Care

Have child/families’ personal details to hand and be clear about

MASH Tel: 0300 500 80 90

Consultation Line Tel: 0115 977 4247

(Office Hours Monday to Friday)

Where need is identified contact the Early Help Service

If the child is at immediate risk dial 101 and ask for assistance

Record all decisions and actions, working to agreed outcomes and within timescales. Escalate any emerging threats/concerns by adopting Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.

[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp)

#### Out of hours

#### Emergency

#### Duty Team

5.00pm –8.30am

Tel: 0300 4564546

NSPCC Whistle blowing

#### Safeguarding concern

Resolved /no longer held.

Support has been agreed, record decisions and any follow up actions.

#### Unmet needs identified.

Decide what actions are needed to support the

**Consult with the child young person, family, and relevant agencies:** Agree support, refer to NSCP ‘Pathway to Provision’ Guidance.

**Contacts:** For any allegations/concerns regarding an adult who works with (in either paid/voluntarily) employment with children contact the LA Designated Officer (LADO) for referrals Tel:- 0115 8041272. LADO Strategic Lead Tel: 0115 9773921

Cheryl Stollery – LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer Tel:- 0115 8041047

## Appendix 2

### **Body Map Guidance for Schools – At Ash Lea School Body maps are completed on Behaviourwatch**

**Medical assistance should be sought where appropriate.**

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

**\*At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures, the body maps should be used in accordance with recording guidance. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g., MASH or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.**

**When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds, and burns:**

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g., upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

**Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record.**