



MELBOURN VILLAGE COLLEGE

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Date reviewed: (Assistant Principal) September 2024

Date for next review: 2026

Ratification by Local Advisory Board:

Document Control		
Edition	Issued	Changes from previous
1	December 2023	New policy
2	September 2024	Updated policy

Policies/Documents referred to in this policy	Post holders/Persons named in this policy
<p>This policy links to other school policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-bullying Attendance and Punctuality (including CME) Behaviour (including medical needs) Drugs Education and misuse Equality and Diversity policy Health and Safety policy Looked After Children (see also Section 22 of Children Act 1989) Racist and Homophobic Incidents Sex and Relationships Education Special Educational Needs and Medical conditions Students Acceptable Use Staff acceptable Use Pupil Personal Mobile devices Safeguarding Handbook for Staff Code of Conduct (Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (May 2019)) Whistleblowing Allegations against staff and volunteers Recruitment and selection Educational Visits First Aid and medication Complaints procedures Use of Reasonable force and restraint IT and online safety Policy <p>Legislation and relevant documents relating to this policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) Children Act 1989, 2004 Education Act 1996, 2002 (Section 175) School Standards and Framework Act 1998 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated senior member of staff for safeguarding. Deputy senior designated members of staff for safeguarding Designated Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding. Prevent Lead Domestic Violence Lead

<p>Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DfE 2012 Sexual Offences Act 2003 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 The Prevent Duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015) Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (July 2015) Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (September 2021) Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS December 2020) Disclosure and Barring Service – Regulated Activity, DFE September (2012) Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (Feb 2022) Domestic Abuse Act (2021) Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)</p> <p>Relevant manuals kept in school: Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023) Ofsted: Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years Education and Skills Settings (September 2023) What to do if you are worried if a child is being abused – advice for practitioners. (March 2015) Teacher Standards 2012 Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children and young people (July 2019) Guidance for all practitioners in the working together with children and families to provide early help, targeted and specialist support (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board CPSCB, November 2018)</p>	
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Review Frequency: Annual

Designated Safeguarding Lead	John Barnes
Deputy designated safeguarding leads	Caroline Deadman Niki Smith Vincent French Sean Pollock
Designated Governor for Child Protection	Alice Hurrell

INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (0 -19 years old) is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
 - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
 - preventing impairment of children's mental or physical health or development;
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- (Working Together to Safeguard Children December 2023)

If staff have a concern, they should act on it. They should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action. Staff should also be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Staff should not assume that other professionals will share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) supports school and college staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information.

Wherever possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) who will help staff decide what to do next. Options include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment;¹ or
- a referral for statutory services,² for example as the child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

Melbourn Village College fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended) to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This responsibility is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2024). All staff must be made aware of their duties and responsibilities under part one of this document (set out below).

Staff should read the above document together with 'Annex B' of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2024 and 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners' (March 2015) if they are working directly with children. For those staff who do not work directly with children or where English is a second language, Annex A can be issued instead; the school will make a decision on a case-by-case situation.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families all staff in school have a responsibility to:

- Identify concerns "early" to prevent them from escalating
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn

¹ Local agencies including the three safeguarding partners should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in Chapter 1 of [Working together to safeguard children](#).

² Local authority children's social care has the responsibility for clarifying the process for referrals (Chapter one of [Working together to safeguard children](#)).

- Identify children who may benefit from early help
- Know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected
- Follow the referral process if they have a concern
- Understand responsibilities in relation to the Teacher Standards (2012) which states that teachers should 'safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.'

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools and colleges can be found on the [TES](#), [MindEd](#) and the [NSPCC](#) websites. School and college staff can access government guidance as referred to in the Melbourn Village College Safeguarding Handbook.

“Early” help is defined as follows:

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

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- 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 drugs or alcohol themselves

Where reasonably possible, the school will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This goes beyond the legal minimum, and is good practice to give the school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

“Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care.”

The school will work together with the District Team to coordinate Early Help. This will be conducted through regular multi-agency meetings to discuss need. Decisions will be centred around the ‘Effective Support for Children and Families in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire’ (November 2018) document

Effective early help relies upon the School and local agencies working together to:

- Ensure staff in school identify concerns early.
- identify children and families who would benefit from early help;
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023)

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the school including governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, office staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the school and its governors.

It is consistent with the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board procedures.

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos

PROCEDURES for identifying and referring cases, or suspected cases, of abuse or exploitation. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A)

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN Processes are followed to ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed.

This policy is available to parents on request and is on the school website.

1.0 PREVENTION

- 1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.
- 1.2 The school will therefore:
 - 1.2.1 establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe in both the real and the virtual world and are encouraged to talk and are actively listened to
 - 1.2.2 ensure children know that there are trusted adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate
 - 1.2.3 include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safer from abuse and exploitation both in the real and the virtual world and information about who to turn to for help
 - 1.2.4 Tailor our curriculum to be age and stage of development appropriate so that it meets the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.
 - 1.2.5 Incorporate into the curriculum, activities and opportunities that enable children to develop their understanding of stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
 - 1.2.6 Ensure that all school staff challenge instances of prejudice related behaviour, including but not limited to, instances of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

1.2.7 The Personal Development Programme will reinforce essential skills for every child and includes:

- How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe and how to seek help or advice.
- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- About online risks, including that any material someone provides has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removed potentially compromising material placed online
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- The impact of viewing harmful content
- That specifically explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including prison
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, control, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based abuse and FGM and how they can affect current and future relationships.
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent and how and when that can be withdrawn (in all contexts including online).

This is taken from the Relationship and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) DfE 2021

1.2.5 Melbourn Village College will use the Safer Corridors Toolkit developed by the Cambridgeshire PHSE Service which supports schools and colleges in preventing and reducing sexual violence and harassment and responding to incidents.

2.0 PROCEDURES

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board 'Inter-Agency Procedures'. A copy of these procedures can be found on their website: <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/>

2.1 **The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection is: John Barnes**

2.2 **The following members of staff have also received the Designated Safeguarding Lead training:**

Vinnie French, Caroline Deadman, Niki Smith, Sean Pollock

2.3 **The nominated governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection is: Alice Hurrell**

2.4.1 The Requirements of the DSL post is as follows:

- To have the skills and ability to identify signs of abuse and exploitation.
- To know how to refer concerns to the appropriate investigating agencies.
- Act as a point of contact with the 3 safeguarding partners.
- Maintain detailed and accurate written records of child protection concerns and ensure they are kept securely.
- Offer support, advice and give a level of expertise to all members of the school staff team.

- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding (including digital and online safety) and when deciding to make a referral by liaising with the relevant staff
 - Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school Child Protection Policy and the Cambridgeshire Child Protection Procedures.
 - Child protection training is part of the induction for all new staff in the school and that they are also linked into any relevant training.
 - Be responsible with the Head teacher for the annual review and update of the School Safeguarding Policy and the presentation of this to the Governing Body.
 - Ensure that a copy of the School Child Protection Policy is available for any parents who request to see it.
- Be aware of students who have a social worker
Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with relevant school staff
- Contribute to the Child Protection Conference and Core Group processes by either attending or ensuring the relevant member of staff attends. Provide written reports as required in an appropriate and timely manner.
 - Ensure that the Head teacher is updated on a regular basis about all issues and child protection investigations, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children’s Act and police investigations.
 - Refer cases to the Channel programme and support staff who make referrals
 - Ensure that relevant safeguarding files are copied and forwarded appropriately when a child/young person transfers to another school.
 - Be part of the team who review and monitor any causes of concern relating to pupils which are raised in school.

2.4.2 The Governing body and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare.

2.4.3 The DSL should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. (See Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, Annex B)

2.4.4 The activities, as 2.4.1, of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately Designated Safeguarding Lead trained deputies.

2.4.5 The lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL and cannot be delegated.

2.4.6 The DSL and DDSLs should undergo the two-day training provided by the Education Child Protection Service

2.4.7 This training should be updated **every two years**.

2.4.8 In addition to the formal training set out above, the DSL and DDSLs should refresh their knowledge and skills e.g. via bulletins, meetings or further reading at **least annually**.

2.4.9 Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) states “During term time, the designated safeguarding lead and/or a deputy should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.’

Staff will be able to access a member of the designated safeguarding team throughout the school term. There will always be one DDSL available in the school day. In the unusual circumstances when this is not

possible, 'staff should consider speaking to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or take advice from social care.'

2.4.10 Governing bodies should ensure that DSLs and DDSs take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. The Designated Personnel have access to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which encompasses Police and Social Care. The Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) is also available. Contact numbers can be found later on in this policy. The school should liaise with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, clinical commissioning group and police) as appropriate and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018.

2.4.11 Governing bodies should ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

- the name of the designated person/s and their role
- how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online
- 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
- how to pass on and record concerns about a pupil
- what is meant by, and the importance of, showing professional curiosity
- that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and exploitation, and for referring safeguarding concerns to the DSL/DDS
- that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn where to find the Multi – Agency Procedures on the CPSCB website
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. The DSL should be notified as soon as possible if this occurs.
- the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- The role of filtering and monitoring and the process for reporting issues
- If they (staff) have concerns about safeguarding practices within school, they should follow the Whistleblowing policy.
- If they (staff) feel they cannot raise an issue with school advice can be sought from the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline. (0800 028 0285)

2.4.13 The Governing Body will ensure all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, at induction. The training should be **regularly updated**, as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

2.4.14 Governing bodies should ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies, including low level concerns and allegations against staff

2.4.15 Governing bodies should ensure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the school website

2.4.16 Governing bodies should ensure that this policy is available publicly either via the school website (<https://www.melbournvc.org>) or by other means.

2.4.17 The Governing bodies should ensure that the school promotes educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children (including children with a social worker) are experiencing/have experienced with teachers and school and leadership staff.

2.4.18 Where pupils are educated off site or in alternative provision, the school and the provider will have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns between the two agencies. Written confirmation that the alternative provider has carried out appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working at the establishment will be sought by the school. The school continues to hold responsibility for safeguarding that pupil and 'should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

2.5 Multi agency working

It is recognised that the school has an important role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the school will work with the CPSCB. Chapter 3 of [Working together to safeguard children \(July 2018\)](#) provides detailed information.

The school will:

- work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all students
- co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018), with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups. These reports will be shared with the family.
- notify the relevant Social Care Team immediately if:
 - it should have to exclude a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
 - there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
 - there is any change in circumstances to a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan

2.6 Record Keeping

2.6.1 Melbourn Village College will keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately

2.6.2 All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate safeguarding file for each child.

2.6.3 Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- the child's wishes and feelings
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- A record of any discussion/communication with parents, other agencies etc

- 2.6.4 The school will ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location.
- 2.6.5 When a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school within 5 days, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 3 2024 (p167) and the Education Safeguarding Team's Guidance on Keeping and Managing Child Safeguarding Records. The Child Protection Chair and Social Work Team will also be informed. The DSL will consider whether it would be appropriate to share information with the new school/college in advance of a child leaving.
- 2.6.6 Melbourn Village College will make parents aware that such records exist except where to do so would place the child at risk of harm.
- 2.6.7 All actions and decisions will be led by what is considered to be in the best interests of the child.
- 2.7 **Confidentiality and information sharing**
- 2.7.1 Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 principles. The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.
- 2.7.2 Child protection records are subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. This means that a parent, or young person of sufficient age and understanding, may make a request to see the child protection record. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parents to see child protection requests, they will refer the request to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.
- 2.7.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take advice from the Information Governance Team and together a decision will be made about what information to share. This decision will consider the balance between the potential risk to the child and the principle of working openly and honestly with parents.

The school will comply with the seven golden rules as below:

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

(Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers) DfE July 2018

- 2.7.4 Melbourn Village College will ensure that the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will only disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, considering what is necessary, proportionate and relevant.

Aim to gain consent to share information and be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent where to do so might place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime

- 2.7.5 The school will make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- 2.7.6 We will also ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

In cases where the 'serious harm test' is met, schools must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice.

2.8 Communication with Parents/Carers

The school will:

- ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties in the school prospectus/website.
- undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action.
- discuss with Children's Social Care if we believe that notifying parents could place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. *[Further guidance on this can be found in the Effective Support for Children and Families in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough].*

- 2.8.1 Particular circumstances where parents **may not** be informed include any disclosure of sexual abuse or physical abuse where the child has an injury or where it may lead to the loss of evidence.
- 2.8.2 Record what discussions have taken place with parents or if a decision has been made not to discuss it with parents, for example if the school/college believes that notifying parents could place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, the rationale must be recorded. Records may subsequently be disclosable to relevant partner agencies if Child Protection proceedings commence.

3.0 SUPPORTING CHILDREN

3.1 We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on those children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support. We also recognise that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. School staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but may notice behaviours that are of concern. Where staff have a concern about a child, they should raise this issue by informing the designated lead or a deputy. A log of concern should be completed.

3.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may become withdrawn.

3.3 We recognise that some vulnerable children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

3.4 The school will support the student through:

3.4.1 Providing curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation

3.4.2 Creating an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community

3.4.3 Applying the school's behaviour policy will support vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred

3.4.4 Liaising with the senior mental health lead where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health in school/college for advice on case management.

3.4.5 Liaising with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, MHST, Cambridgeshire Sexual Behaviour Service or District team

3.4.6 Promoting supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances

3.4.7 The school recognises that whilst **any** child may benefit from early help, staff are encouraged to consider the wider environmental factors present in a child's life which could pose a threat to their welfare or safety, (contextual safeguarding). Staff are required to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children in particular circumstances.

3.4.8 When a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Protection Review Manager and Lead Social Worker from Social Care will also be informed

3.4.9 When a child is missing from education, the school will follow the procedure as set out in Cambridgeshire's Children Missing Education guidance and inform the Education Welfare Officer and Social Care if a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan/CIN or there have been ongoing concerns.

3.4.10 The school will maintain an admissions register and monitor attendance as set out in the School's attendance policy.

3.5 **Children Frequently Absent from Education**

School recognises that children who are absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, modern slavery, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM or forced marriage.

The school monitors and follows up on the attendance of individual pupils closely, as outlined in the Attendance Policy, and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence.

The school endeavors to hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil to provide additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child who is absent from education is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

When a child is absent from education, the school follows the procedure as set out in Cambridgeshire's Children Missing from Education guidance. The school will inform Social Care if a child who is absent from education is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

3.6 **Children misusing Drugs and Alcohol**

3.6.1 The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- to believe the pupil's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
- where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.
A log of concern will always be completed.

3.7 **Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers**

3.7.1 Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

3.7.2 When the school receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures.

3.7.3 This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers

- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
- Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency
- Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment
- Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child

Previous logs of concern will be reviewed as part of this process.

3.8 Children Living with Domestic Abuse

- 3.8.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 applies to those aged 16 or over, and introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

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

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16).

Domestic Abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are 'personally connected' regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour.

- 3.8.2 Where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.
- 3.8.3 Schools are ideally placed to offer appropriate support, alongside other agencies, whether families are in crisis, or whether there are early signs of potential abuse.

Melbourn Village College is working in partnership with Cambridgeshire Police and Cambridgeshire County Council to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their home; this scheme is called Operation Encompass.

In order to achieve this, Cambridgeshire's Education Safeguarding Team will share police information of all domestic incidents to which Police have been called, where one of our students has been present, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSL)/Domestic Abuse (DA) Lead.

On receipt of any information, the DSL/DA Lead will decide on the appropriate support the child may require. The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the 'Cambridgeshire and Peterborough *Joint Agency Protocol for Domestic Abuse – Notifications to Schools, Colleges and Early Years settings*'.

3.9 Children at risk of 'Honour Based' abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- 3.9.2 So called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including breast ironing, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

The new Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2023 bans marriage for 16 and 17-year-olds, who no longer will be allowed to marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent, as the legal age of marriage rises to 18.

It is now illegal and a criminal offence to exploit vulnerable children by arranging for them to marry, under any circumstances whether or not force is used.

School will manage any concerns relating to forced marriage sensitively and will report concerns immediately via the procedures outlined in this policy.

- 3.9.3 "FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways". (Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation, April 2016).
- 3.9.4 The age at which FGM is carried out varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy.
- 3.9.5 FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK. It is also illegal to take a girl out of the UK to have the procedure completed in a country where it is legal.
- 3.9.6 The school takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBA, through training. Any indication that HBA is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be dealt with under the safeguarding procedures outlined in this policy.
- 3.9.7 In accordance with the Female Genital Mutilation Act, it is a statutory duty for teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. Teachers should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve social care as appropriate, but the teacher will personally report to the police that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.
- 3.9.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make appropriate and timely referrals to Social Care if HBA is suspected. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice. The case will still be referred to Social Care even if it is against the pupil's wishes, as it is legal duty for school staff to report this.

3.10 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 3.10.2 Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- 3.10.3 CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- 3.10.4 Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups.
- 3.10.5 Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.
- 3.10.6 It is important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse.
- 3.10.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's [Exploitation \(CSE / Criminal/Gangs\) Risk Assessment and Management Tool](#) and refer to Social Care if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of CSE.
Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.
- 3.10.8 Melbourn Village College is working in partnership with Cambridgeshire Police and Cambridgeshire County Council to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have gone missing through the Operation Encompass scheme. Cambridgeshire's Education Safeguarding Team will share police information of missing child episodes with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSL). On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child may require. The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.

4.0 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- 4.1 CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

The school recognises that young people who go missing can be at increased risk of child criminal exploitation, modern slavery and/or trafficking and has procedures in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

If staff are concerned that a student is involved in CCE, they should log a concern immediately and pass to the Designated Safeguarding lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete the Safeguarding Children

Partnership Board's [Exploitation Risk Assessment and Management Tool](#) and refer to Social Care if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

5.0 Child-on-Child Abuse

We recognise that child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; upskirting part of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act, April 2019) and initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

5.1 This section of the policy sets out:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse;
- how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be investigated and dealt with;
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported;
- a clear statement that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”;
- recognition of the gendered nature child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms child-on-child abuse can take, such as:
 - sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - the sending of nudes and semi-nudes

5.2 What is it?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

The Department for Education has published detailed advice on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (September 2021). Below is a summary of that advice.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. The school recognises that:

- It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence³ and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:

³ [Girlguiding's Girls' Attitudes Survey 2017](#) found 64% of girls aged 13-21 had experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment at school or college in the past year.

The Women and Equalities committee (WEC) found a number of large scale surveys find girls consistently reporting high levels of sexual harassment and sexual violence in school: [WEC report- paragraph 13](#).

- sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- it will not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, vaginas and penises is important. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk

5.3 What do we mean by sexual violence and sexual harassment between children?

The departmental advice, when referring to sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.⁴ This includes: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. The advice sets out that sexual harassment is ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and/or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Introduction

It is recognised that reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure.

- if required, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and children’s social care colleagues in order to prepare the school’s responses; and
- the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) will ensure that local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including the victims and perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Detailed information on support for schools and colleges is included in the departmental advice.

5.4 Dealing with Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur wholly online, concurrently online and offline, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Melbourn Village College will:

- Make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.
- Provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

⁴ legislation.gov.uk

- Make decisions on a case-by-case basis.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, offer appropriate support and take the wishes of the victim into account when decision making.
- Implement measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and if necessary other children and staff members, safe. Record any risk assessments and keep them under review.
- Give consideration to the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer to the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's [Child Sexual Abuse Assessment Tool](#) if there is a concern that a young person may have experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment or other forms of sexual abuse.
- Liaise closely with external agencies, including police and social care, when required.
- Refer to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five', 2022, 'for full details of procedures to be followed in such cases. Also see 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' (UKCIS, December 2020)

Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, awareness of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general will be considered so they can offer support and act appropriately.⁵ Information is at: [CPS: children as victims and witnesses](#).

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, the school will protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be in place for the children involved.

Action following a report:

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will complete a safeguarding picture. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered.
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: might a crime have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children (e.g. is the alleged perpetrator significantly older);
- is the alleged incident a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- are their ongoing risks; and
- other related issues and wider context. Where incidents and or behaviours are associated with factors outside the school or college and/or occur between children outside the school or college the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering contextual safeguarding. This simply means assessments of children in such cases should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Safeguarding and supporting the victim

- The school will consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. The schools recognises that by the very nature of

⁵ It is not the role of schools and colleges to provide legal advice or support to victims, alleged perpetrators or parents in respect of a criminal justice process. Rather, schools and colleges should be aware of their own position and responsibilities.

sexual violence and sexual harassment a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator.

- The needs and wishes of the victim is paramount (along with protecting the child) in the response. We recognize, It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, will be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority will be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them.
- The victim will never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis.

Ongoing Considerations: Victim and alleged perpetrator sharing classes

Once the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) have decided what the next steps will be in terms of progressing the report, the school will consider again, the question of the victim and alleged perpetrator sharing classes and sharing space at school or college. This will inevitably involve complex and difficult professional decisions, including considering their duty to safeguard children and their duty to educate them.

Each report is considered on a case-by-case basis and risk assessments are updated as appropriate. Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim.

The school will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises and on transport to and from school where appropriate. This is in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator. Close liaison with the police will be a feature of this response.

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school will consider any suitable sanctions in line with the behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion.⁶

Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle will be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport.

It is clear that this process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support will be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis.

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator

The school will:

- safeguard the victim (and the wider student body) and provide the alleged perpetrator with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implementing any disciplinary sanctions.
- consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator and nature of the allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An alleged perpetrator may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. Harmful sexual behaviour in young children may be a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. Advice will be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist services and the police.

⁶ Maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units should follow the statutory guidance [here](#). Independent schools and colleges should consider excluding as per their own policies.

All forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

The school will therefore:

- Create a whole school protective ethos in which child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
- Provide training for staff about recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of peer abuse, with girls more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators.
- Ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up.
- Include within the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers and online.
- Provide high quality Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and/or enrichment programmes including teaching about consent.
- Ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of child-on-child abuse, referring any concerns of child-on-child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) in line with safeguarding reporting procedures.
- Ensure that staff understand that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk. School will ensure that these children have a trusted adult in school to talk to.
- Recognise the risk of intra familial harms and provide support to siblings following incidents when necessary.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer to the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's [Child Sexual Abuse Assessment Tool](#) if there is a concern that a young person may be displaying sexually harmful behaviours, may have experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment or other forms of sexual abuse.

6.0 Prevention of Radicalisation

- 6.1 Children are susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.
- 6.3 The Counter-terrorism and Security Act, 2015 places a duty on authorities (including schools) 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. These duties should be seen alongside schools' duties to promote British values as a means of "building children's resilience to radicalisation".
- 6.4 Staff in schools should be made aware of this duty; the governing body will ensure that the Lead for Safeguarding has undertaken Prevent awareness training and that all staff receive training about the Prevent duty.

The Prevent Lead at Melbourn Village College is John Barnes

- 6.5 When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Prevent Lead. The school's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.
- 6.6 See also 'The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers', DfE (June 2015) and 'Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales' (July 2015) (paras 57 – 76) for duties on staff in schools.

7.0 ONLINE SAFETY

Although the internet is an amazing resource that allows students to communicate with others and to be creative, it is essential that we safeguard our students from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Students with mobile and smart phones often have unlimited access to the internet, and it is our responsibility to ensure that they are safe and that they understand how to keep themselves safe. This section should be read in conjunction with the Trust's IT and Online Safety Policy, and our Acceptable Use Policy for students and staff.

7.1 Melbourn Village College understands the four areas of risk as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024). These are:

- **CONTENT** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content such as: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide radicalization and extremism.
- **CONTACT**: being subject to harmful online interaction with other users such as: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as young people to groom or exploit students for sexual, criminal or other purposes
- **CONDUCT**: personal online behavior that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images (consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying
- **COMMERCE**: risks such as gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

7.2 Melbourn Village College ensures that these risks are explicitly taught through the IT and Personal Development curriculum. The teacher with responsibility for Online Safety will ensure that any online concerns are relayed to parents, students and staff.

7.3 Melbourn Village College has ensured that there are appropriate filters on our system to help keep students safe online, whilst being nonrestrictive at the same time. Identified members of staff will also monitor staff and students' activity online through the NetSupport Programme and Smoothwall Programme. The DSL and the teacher with responsibility for Online Safety are the only people who can monitor the wording used by members of staff and will act on a case by case basis.

7.4 Staff who have any concerns about a student and their activity online, should follow the Melbourn Village College Safeguarding procedures in a timely fashion. If a child reports the receiving or send of nudes or semi nudes, teachers should ensure that they follow the guidance in **Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS December 2020)**. An excerpt from this document can be found in the Appendices to this policy.

8.0 PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Three types of DBS checks are referred to in this guidance:

- **Standard**: this provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC), regardless or not of whether they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The law allows for certain old and minor matters to be filtered out;
- **Enhanced**: this provides the same information as a standard check, plus any approved information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed; and

- **Enhanced with barred list check:** where people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children, this allows for an additional check to be made as to whether the person appears on the children’s barred list.⁷

A more detailed description of the three types of DBS checks is provided on the [DBS website](#).

7.1 The school will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to the government guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2023) and the Local Authority’s Safer Employment Policy.

7.2 **The following members of staff have undertaken Safer Recruitment training**

Employee	Date completed training	Date of refresher training
John Barnes	28.09.23	
David Wilson	20.09.23	
Dee Lyne	02.08.23	
Simon Luxton	04.09.23	
Vinnie French	18.09.23	
Christopher Bennet	15.10.21	

7.3 **Allegations that may meet the harms threshold (Part Four, Section One)**

- 7.3.1 Any allegation of abuse made against teachers, (including supply staff, other staff, volunteers and contractors) that meets the harms threshold as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024, Part Four, Section One, will be reported, via a Staff Log of Concern straight away to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head Teacher.
- 7.3.2 In cases where the Head Teacher is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Chair of Governors. The school will follow the procedures set out in Part Four of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’, 2024.
- 7.3.3 The school will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a teacher, member of supply staff or other staff, volunteer or contractor and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’, 2024 *and the school's HR Policies*.
- 7.3.4 The Headteacher will ensure that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. The LADO will advise on all further action to be taken.
- 7.3.5 Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

⁷ The DBS maintains ‘barred lists’ of individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. In addition, where an enhanced DBS certificate is obtained, and this includes a barred list check, the certificate will also detail whether the applicant is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 167A of the Education Act 2002 prohibiting that individual from taking part in the management of independent educational institutions in England and/or Wales respectively.

7.3.6 Where the school or college identify a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, they should contact children's social care and as appropriate the police immediately.

7.3.7 Melbourn Village College will consider:

- **Looking after the welfare of the child** - the designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.
- **Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation** - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

7.3.8 The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff, supply staff or volunteers relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff, supply staff or volunteer is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

7.3.9 Staff (including supply staff and volunteers) who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. However, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

7.4 **Concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (Part Four, Section Two)**

7.4.1 Low level concerns that do not meet the harms threshold should be reported via a Staff Log of Concern form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will talk with the Headteacher immediately. NB: The term low level does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms test.

7.4.2 In cases where the Headteacher is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Chair of Governors. The school will follow the procedures set out in Part Four, section 2 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2024.

7.4.3 The school/college will deal with any such concern, no matter how small, where an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

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

7.4.4 All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing on a Staff Log of Concern form. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. All forms should be taken to the DSL, who will immediately share the concern with the Headteacher.

7.4.5 All Logs of Concern will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Once looked into, all Logs of Concern will be kept on a member of staff's Personnel file, which are locked away in the HR manager's office. We will also log all concerns on a spreadsheet so that we can easily monitor the concerns logged.

7.5 We will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with

promptly and appropriately. This will enable the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school/college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

- 7.5.1 We will ensure that **all** staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents/carers as advised within the Local Authority's Code of Conduct: 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (February 2022). As part of the Induction process, all staff including supply staff, volunteers and contractors, will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.
- 7.5.2 All staff have signed to confirm that they have read 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (February 2022).
- 7.5.3 The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Trust). Sexual relationships with Sixth Form students is also considered unlawful and could result in legal proceedings as above.
- 7.5.4 The school will ensure that communications between pupils and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.
- 7.5.5 In line with the Trust, Melbourn Village College will ensure that all visitors will be provided with a relevant coloured lanyard. This will ensure the safety of both visitors and students. The colours used follow the agreed Trust protocol:
- blue for staff,
 - red for visitors without DBS checks,
 - yellow for visitors with DBS clearance
 - black for Governors or/Trustees
 - green for contractors

Any visitor on a red lanyard, must always stay with a member of staff or a visitor with a yellow lanyard. If a visitor to the school is found without a lanyard, they should be approached and directed to the Front of School immediately.

8.0 Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after⁸ is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead

⁸ A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after-child) as defined in section 22 Children Act 1989, means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who is voluntarily accommodated by a local authority.

should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after-child) as defined in section 22 Children Act 1989, means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who is voluntarily accommodated by a local authority.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is Niki Smith , and the Support Worker for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is Niki Smith.

9.0 Children with Disabilities, Certain Health Conditions, Additional Needs or Special Educational Needs

We recognise that, statistically, children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse.

When applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with SEN and disabilities, schools should consider the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group. To safeguard a student and others, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, schools and colleges can reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint. Guidance is available here: [use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools](#).

The school has pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or challenging behaviours. The school will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with parents/carers.

10.0 Governing Body Safeguarding Responsibilities

The governing body should ensure it facilitates a whole school/college approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

10.1 The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It aims to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in school are effective and comply with the law and government guidance at all times.

It will:

- Nominate a governor for safeguarding and child protection who will take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and practice and champion child protection issues.
- Ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate governor safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training will be regularly updated.

- Ensure governors and trustees are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 201022, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Ensure an annual safeguarding report (Annual Safeguarding Monitoring Report for Governors) is made to the full governing body and copied to the Education Child Protection Service. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay
- Ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is annually reviewed and updated and shared with staff. It will be published on the school website.
- Ensure that children’s exposure to potential risks while using the internet is limited by having in place age appropriate filtering and monitoring systems.
- Ensure children’s wishes and feelings are taken into account where there are safeguarding concerns.

11. Use of School Premises for non-school Activities

- 11.1 If the governing body provides extended school facilities or before or after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school’s arrangements for safeguarding as written in this policy shall apply.
- 11.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another organization or individual, either on or off school site, the governing body will seek assurance that they have appropriate policies and procedures in place to keep children safe and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.
- 11.3 The governing body will use the guidance on ‘Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings’ which details the safeguarding arrangements that schools and colleges should expect these providers to have in place.

12. Monitoring of Safeguarding Policy

- 12.1 This policy will be updated annually. This will take into consideration staff views and any new guidance and policies during this time.
- 12.2 An annual report to Governors will be produced.
- 12.3 Regular checks on CP files and SCR will made and recorded.
- 12.4 Annual external checks will be sought on safeguarding procedures

This policy was ratified on:

Signed by the Headteacher:

Chair of Governors:

Categories of Abuse

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

Physical Abuse - 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. It can also be when a child is a victim of Domestic Violence.

Neglect - 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.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Emotional Abuse - Is the persistent emotional maltreatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- Worthless
- Unloved
- Inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet another persons needs

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views
- deliberately silencing them
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- preventing participation in normal social interaction
-

It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment 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 a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

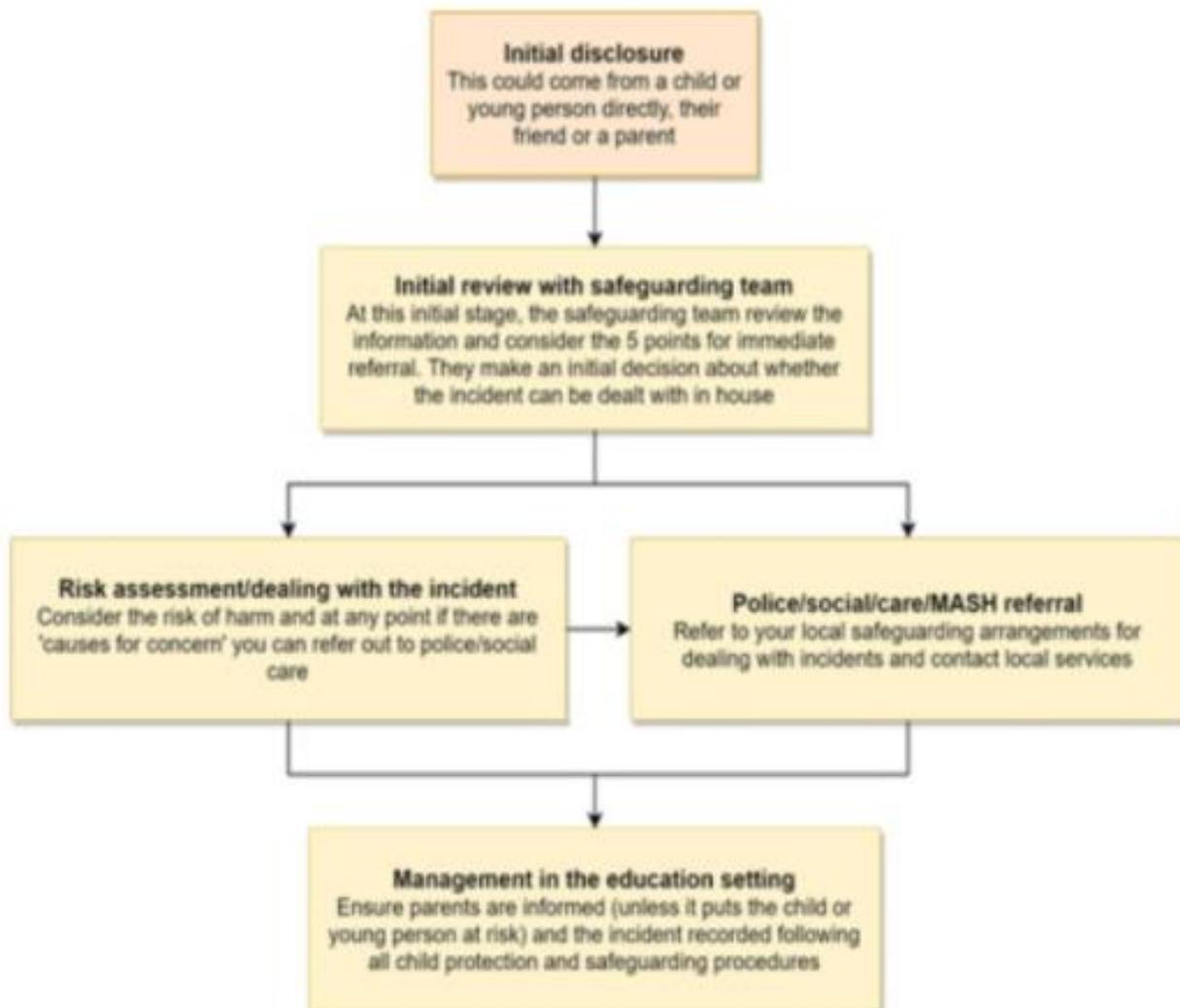
- physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex)
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside or inside of clothing
- non-contact activities involving:
 - children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,
 - children in watching sexual activities
 - or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
 - grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Responding to a disclosure about sending or receiving a nude or semi nude



Dealing with Allegations or Concerns about an Adult Working with Children

Allegation or concern raised about a member of staff or adult

Does it meet the harm threshold? The harm threshold is met where it is alleged that an adult working (or volunteering) in the school has:

- *behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or*
- *possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or*
- *behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or*
- *behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (see KCSIE Part 4)*

You may wish to consider the questions in Box A below to help you decide the answer to this question.

YES

NOT SURE

NO

Contact CCC LADO on
01223 727967 or via
LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

The LADO will ask for specific information about the issue and confirm whether or not it meets the harm threshold. If it does, they will begin a formal process to manage the allegation. If it doesn't meet the threshold then they will record the information and advise you to treat the issue as a Low Level Concern. You will need to inform the staff member that LADO hold information on

This is a Low Level Concern. Consider carefully what action to take in response, taking advice from your HR Provider as appropriate. Keep a record in a secure central file. An example form for this purpose is available for use if required.

If you need **further advice** on any aspect of this then please contact either:
Phil Nash on 01223 699448 or 07920 270820 or Sara Rogers on 07990 936820

Box A:

- How long has the adult or member of staff worked for you?
- Have there been any previous concerns raised?
- Is this a one-off or part of a pattern of behaviour?
- Has the member of staff previously been given advice in this area?
- Would an associated pattern of behaviour (if it exists) be seen by others? (How closely do they work with other colleagues?)
- Might this have been a planned action or event?
- Could this behaviour be inadvertent? What is the likelihood of this?
- Could this be the precursor to more concerning behaviour?
- Did it occur in a 'public' or 'private' place? Was this in school or out of school?
- If electronic devices are involved, have any relevant files been deleted and is there any evidence of this?
- If this relates to inappropriate language, what is the precise nature of the language used? How inappropriate is it? What was the context – where was this, and who were the listeners? Could this be seen as 'banter' or might it have more

Useful Contacts - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board – Safeguarding Multi-Agency Procedures <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/>

Education Safeguarding Team ECPS.General@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit Tel: 101

Useful Contacts - Cambridgeshire

Education Safeguarding Manager – Sara Rogers sara.rogers@cambridgeshire.gov

Early Help Hub (EHH) Targeted Support Service Tel: 01480 376666

Customer Service Centre – social care referrals Tel: 0345 045 5203

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Tel: 01733 234724

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: 01223 727967

Named Senior Officer for allegations

Senior leadership Adviser – Phil Nash [Tel:07920 270820](tel:07920270820)

Prevent officers prevent@cambs.police.uk Tel: 01480 422596

Relevant Documents

“Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” (Feb 2022)

“Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers” (July 2018)

“Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges” ([Sep 2024](#))

Keeping Children safe during community activities, after school clubs and tuition: non statutory guidance for providers running out of school settings (April 2022)

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges. Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges (March 2023)

“The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers” (June 2015)

“Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales” (July 2015)

“Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges” (September 2021)

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS December 2020)

“What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners” (March, 2015)

“Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” (July 2018)