LUX MUNDI

LIGHT OF THE WORLD ~ CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

CARDINAL POLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Status Public 2026

APPROVED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY ON:.....30/09/2026.....

CHAIR OF GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE:..... David R Evans. **.....**

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Important contacts

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1. Cardinal Pole School Vision, Mission Statement and Introduction

Cardinal Pole School Vision

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a learning community for all based upon partnership and respect. It is a strong and vibrant place which recognizes the importance and individual needs of every pupil and member of staff. Praise and encouragement are vital in creating a climate of learning and high expectations supported by teaching of the highest quality. The school is full of confident, creative and fulfilled young people and staff. They are celebrated as individuals – unique creations of God – who deserve our support, love and trust as they begin the great journey of life.

Mission Statement

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of service guiding young people on a path to Service, Opportunity, Aspiration, and Reward, founded on Catholic values. We serve our students through bespoke interventions that meets the needs of all. This is shared with all stakeholders, to empower our community to become "Lovers of Reading". Cardinal Pole Catholic School is committed to providing a range of opportunities for staff and students to become lifelong lovers of reading through workshops, authors visits, whole school events and programmes. We are a community of aspirant writers where talent is nurtured o flourish by expert and experienced staff, authors, and other professionals. We reward our literate learners by celebrating their successes, progress, achievements in all areas of literacy and beyond.

Introduction

Everyone at Cardinal Pole Catholic School who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as we are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. Our school staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children to prevent concerns from escalating. Our school will work with Children and Families Service, the police, health services and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers, contractors and/or apprentices, working in or on behalf of the school. It provides information about the actions the school expects from all staff, it will be updated annually and known to everyone working in the school and the governing body. It will be available to parents/carers on request and via our website.

This policy is in line with statutory guidance for schools and colleges;

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.

Please note: throughout this document, all references to the Safeguarding Team refers to the DSL and deputy DSLs.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), the Maintained schools governance guide and Academy trust governance guide. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupil.
- The London Child Protection Procedures
- The Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Operation Encompass
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training.
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This means our Governors and Headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a specific group of pupils (where we

can show it's proportionate). This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as: sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination.

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

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- 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 and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

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

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

Sharing of nudes or semi-nude images (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video. This also includes AI-generated intimate images.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following three safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and
defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA).
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA.
- The chief officer of police for an area in the LA area.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10).
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- Have English as an additional language (EAL).
- Are known to be living in difficult situations: for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are a looked after or previously looked after child.
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or frequently.
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

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

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education, including about racism. This is in the context of a whole school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence and harassment. This will be underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system as well as our planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour).
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.

5.1 All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and review this guidance at least annually. Staff who do not directly with children will also be required to read Part 1 of KCSIE 2026.
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online).
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems that support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy.
- The staff behaviour policy, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies.
- The online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education/who are absent from education.
- The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment. The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- That children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- That mental health issues can develop into safeguarding issues.
- That children may experience prejudice-based harm including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. These experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and ability to seek help.
- That children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children.
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time.
- That unauthorised absence can be a safeguarding issue.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.
- Where needed, we can refer a child for a community-based family help assessment.

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Peter McEvoy. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school

networks to keep pupils safe online. Together, the DSL and the Deputy DSLs make up the Safeguarding Team.

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

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school.
- Act as the school Prevent Lead.

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any safeguarding-related issues.
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies.
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support.
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up to date.
- Ensure that whenever a child leaves the school, their safeguarding file (if they have one) will be transferred to their new school.

In the event of the DSL being absent from work for any reason, their role will be covered by the Deputy DSLs.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job descriptions.

5.3 The Governing Board
The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners.
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and review their effectiveness.

This includes:

- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.
- Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards.

In addition, the governing board will make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
- That this policy reflects those children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed.
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.
- Ensure the school has a policy in respect to the use of restrictive interventions.
- Ensure the school has appropriate cyber security systems in place.
- Review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems at least once every academic year – as well as details on who should carry out these reviews.

The Chair of Governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher.

All Governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in its entirety.

5.4 The Headteacher
The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:

- Are informed of our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.

- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.

5.5 Virtual School Heads

Virtual School Heads (VSHs) have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.

VSHs also have a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care (children who live with a relative or close family friend). They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

6. Confidentiality

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if:

- It is not possible to gain consent.
- It cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent.
- To gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests. If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment, there's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.

The DSL will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. The DSL will also consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk).
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police.
- While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information (including personal information), and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

Arrangements should be in place setting out the processes and principles for sharing information within the school and with local authority children's social care, the safeguarding partners and other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

Where a child leaves the school, the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. The DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the Safeguarding Team.

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Has a disability.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan).
- Is a young carer.
- Is bereaved.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online.
- 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.
- Is a victim of modern slavery.
- Is suffering from mental ill health.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.
- Is a privately fostered child.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded.

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

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Always contact the Safeguarding Team immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger.

If necessary, the Safeguarding Team will make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police. However, anyone can make a referral.

The contact details for Hackney MASH are 020 8356 5500 (day) or 020 8356 2710 or email mash@hackney.gov.uk. For further information on reporting child abuse to your local council please see:

https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

For other, non-urgent, concerns or worries about a child, complete a blue Safeguarding Team Referral form which are available from the school main office and both staff rooms.

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you
If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the Safeguarding Team. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police directly and tell the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the Safeguarding Team if you have concerns about a child.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM
Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

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

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 2 of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have been specifically told not to, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve local authority children's social care as appropriate.

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

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils. Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM, or suspects that FGM has been carried out, or discovers that a pupil aged 18 or over appears to have been a victim of FGM, should speak

to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

If you are worried about a child, you should complete a blue Safeguarding Referral Form so that the Safeguarding Team can follow up your concern. The forms are available from the main office or from both staff rooms. Completed forms should be handed in to the main office.

If your concern is urgent you should speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately, and before you complete a Safeguarding Referral Form. An urgent concern is one where immediate action needs to be taken to prevent harm to a child.

Where possible, speak to the Safeguarding Team to agree a course of action. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the Safeguarding Team as soon as practically possible. You can also make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if needed. Share any action taken with the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

Early help assessment
If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to Local Authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

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

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

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

If required, the DSL will make contact with the referer and instigate appropriate escalation procedures.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism
If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the Safeguarding Team first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL or other member of the Safeguarding Team is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from Local Authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate. Inform the Safeguarding Team as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

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

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

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

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health

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. Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Warning signs might include:

- **Emotional Volatility:** Intense mood swings, explosive outbursts of anger, or persistent tearfulness that seem vastly disproportionate to the situation.
- **Social Isolation:** Not just wanting normal teenage privacy, but completely withdrawing into their bedroom, cutting off close friends, and abandoning peer groups entirely.
- **Academic Decline:** A sudden drop in grades, missing assignment deadlines, or severe anxiety surrounding school attendance and performance.
- **Changed Body Image & Eating Patterns:** Obsessive calorie counting, hiding food, skipping meals, or sudden, significant weight fluctuations.
- **Neglecting Personal Hygiene:** A noticeable, prolonged drop in daily self-care habits, such as refusing to shower, brush teeth, or change clothes.
- **Secretive Behaviour or Substance Use:** Unexplained disappearances, extreme secrecy regarding their phone or whereabouts, or signs of alcohol, vaping, or drug use.
- **Signs of Self-Harm:** Wearing long sleeves or trousers in hot weather to hide cuts or burns, or expressing feelings of complete worthlessness and hopelessness.

This list is not exhaustive. If you are worried about the mental health of a child, always refer to the Safeguarding Team.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

If you believe a child to be in immediate danger, always call the emergency services on 999.

If you have a mental health concern about a child, it must be referred to the Safeguarding Team using the process outlined in Section 7.4.

Further information and guidance on supporting young people's mental health can be found at mental health and behaviour in schools

7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher or Safeguarding Team as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors. The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the appropriate procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, you should report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies

and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. We recognise the intersection between misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour and are alert to the prevalence of harmful online material related to misogyny/misandry, including misogynistic influencers.

All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence.
- Could put pupils in the school at risk.
- Is violent.
- Involves misogynistic and misandrist ideology.
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nude images).

For some (but not all) forms of child-on-child abuse, it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators.

If staff are concerned about a pupil being exposed to misogynistic or misandrist content, they should refer their concern to the Safeguarding Team so it can be explored further.

See appendix 2 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

7.9 Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

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

- You must record the allegation and tell the Safeguarding Team, but do not investigate it.
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s).
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.
- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the Police if we have any questions about the investigation.

7.10 Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents. To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders: for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing-type violence with respect to boys.
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems.

- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners.
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed.
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.

We will ensure staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports.
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening: staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".
- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report.
- Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to.
- A friend may make a report.
- A member of staff may overhear a conversation.
- A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong.
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns.
- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.

  The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

  Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a sanction accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution: we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this.
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

7.11 Sharing of nude or semi-nude images ('sexting')
All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual, require a safeguarding response.

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the Safeguarding Team immediately.

You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL).
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff: this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s).
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care.
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed.)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response.
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown.)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services.
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment.
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual.
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved).

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to their SEN).
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes or semi-nude images (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL
If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers
The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police
If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through our Safer Neighbourhoods Team or 101. If urgent, a call will be made to 999.

Recording incidents
All incidents of sharing of nudes or semi-nude images, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to the recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage
Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nude or semi-nude images as part of our relationships and sex education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is.
- How it is most likely to be encountered.
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
- Issues of legality.
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images.
- The receipt of such images.

This policy on the sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- Putting safeguarding first.
- Approaching from the perspective of the child.
- Promoting dialogue and understanding.
- Empowering and enabling children and young people.
- Never frightening or scare-mongering.
- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes.

7.12 Reporting systems for our pupils
Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse, including anonymous reporting systems.
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils.
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- If any pupil has worries or concerns about abuse, they can speak in confidence to the Safeguarding Team, their pastoral team, or any member of staff.
- Pupils will be reassured that their concern will be taken seriously and passed on to the Safeguarding Team in confidence.
- Pupils are told of these arrangements at assemblies and during form time with their tutors.
- Safeguarding Team posters are displayed in prominent places around the school and on the school website.

8. Online safety and mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors. At Cardinal Pole our filtering system is provided by RM and our monitoring system is provided by Smoothwall.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones').
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

From September 2026, we will take steps to ensure that our school is mobile phone-free.

8.1 The 4 key categories of risk

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

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology.
- Keeping personal information private.
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online.
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim.

We will also:

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present.
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.

- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the four key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community.
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively.
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure our filtering and monitoring arrangements are reviewed annually, with the support of SLT and IT.

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our website

8.2 Artificial intelligence (AI)
Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

Cardinal Pole Catholic School recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Cardinal Pole Catholic School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our behaviour policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

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

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when.

We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s).

10. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or a medical need

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health or medical need can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils.
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Cognitive understanding: being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or being unable to understand the consequences of doing so.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse.
- The need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others.
- That these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care.

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils which includes:

- Individual support from the pastoral and SEND teams as required.
- A behaviour or wellbeing support plan if required.

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) does not itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. However, where an incident highlights that a child might be at increased risk of neglect, abuse, or exploitation due to their medical condition, a referral to children's social care will always be made.

Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the Safeguarding Team and the SENCO.

11. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- The provision of additional pastoral and/or academic support.

12. Looked-after children, previously looked-after children and young carers

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children, previously looked-after children and young carers safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements. The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads.

We have appointed designated teachers for looked after children, Peter McEvoy and Cynthia John, who are responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teachers are appropriately trained and have the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role. As part of their role, the designated teachers will:

- Ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

The school recognises that caring responsibilities can impact on a child's attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing and that early identification is essential ensuring young carers receive the support they need.

13. Pupils who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

While a child being lesbian, gay or bisexual is not a risk factor in itself, we recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay or bisexual can be targeted by other children and subjected to discriminatory bullying.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns in this respect should always be reported to the Safeguarding Team who will ensure that the child is appropriately supported.

14. Pupils who are gender questioning

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will always try to involve parents/carers in cases of pupils questioning their gender, unless to do so would pose a safeguarding risk to the child. We will always try to consider requests for support with social transition sympathetically and supportively and involve appropriate support services as required.

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they will be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

We will follow current government and DfE guidance around the use of toilet and changing-room spaces.

15. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

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

14.2 Other complaints
Complaints relating to other aspects of the school, e.g., premises, should be reported to the Headteacher or DSL so that they can be followed up and resolved.

14.3 Whistleblowing
The staff and Governors of Cardinal Pole Catholic School seek to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that members of school staff, parents, governors or the school community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, Cardinal Pole Catholic School has established a whistleblowing policy, or code of practice, which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially, and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion.

16. Record-keeping
We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child. Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available.
- Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

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

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.

To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- 5 days for an in-year transfer.
- The first 5 days of the start of a new term.

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child. At Cardinal Pole, safeguarding records are stored electronically on CPOMS. Some students have paper safeguarding files and these are stored securely.

17. Training

16.1 All staff
All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction,

including on whistleblowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, exploitation or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners.
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring.

Training will also have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:

- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment.
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas.

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

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

16.2 The DSL and Deputy DSLs

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every two years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They, or any other designated Prevent lead, will also undertake more in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies.

16.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge.
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

16.4 Recruitment: interview panels

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

18. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL, Peter McEvoy. At every review, it will be approved by the Local Governing Board.

19. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Behaviour; Staff code of conduct; Complaints; Health and safety; Attendance; Personal development; Online safety; Self-harm; Equality; Relationships and sex education, Supporting students with medical needs; First aid; Curriculum; Trips; Safer recruitment.

Appendix 1: Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, child to parent abuse or child to care giver abuse and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- Verbal abuse.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

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. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, oral sex or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (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.

Sexual abuse can also take place online.

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

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

If a member of staff has a concern relating to abuse of any kind, they will immediately report it to the Safeguarding Team who follow it up and make a referral to children's social care and the police as required.

Appendix 2: Specific safeguarding issues

Adult-involved nude or semi-nude image sharing incidents.

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police and children's social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement. There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person.
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images.
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform.
- Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes.
- Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits.
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images.

If a member of staff has a concern relating to sexually motivated incidents, they will immediately report it to the Safeguarding Team who follow it up and make a referral to children's social care and the police.

Financially motivated incidents.

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them.

- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account.
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person.
- The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person.
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first.
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform.
- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes.
- Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts.
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person.

If a member of staff has a concern relating to financially motivated incidents, they will immediately report it to the Safeguarding Team who follow it up and make a referral to children's social care and the police.

Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

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

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

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

If a member of staff has a concern relating to a child missing from education, they will report it to the Safeguarding Team who follow it up and make a referral to children's social care as required.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or

other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Children may be moved for the purpose of exploitation and this may constitute modern slavery.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs and alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or education.
- Not taking part in education.

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will immediately report it to the Safeguarding Team who will make a referral to children's social care and the police.

Child sexual exploitation
Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

Most sexual abuse is committed by individuals known to the victim, and it might constitute modern slavery.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will immediately report it to the Safeguarding Team who will make a referral to children's social care and the police.

Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)
Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there no reports or sexual violence or harassment, it doesn't mean it isn't happening. This is one reason why we introduced Whisper anonymous reporting in 2025.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Discriminatory behaviour of any kind.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse').
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) including those generated with AI.
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If a member of staff has a concern around child-on-child abuse, they will report it to the Safeguarding Team who will take appropriate action.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse
Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Older children may also experience and/or be the perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This can include sexual harassment.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day.

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Homelessness
Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL and deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will always make a referral to children's social care.

'Honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)
So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it.

If a member of staff has a concern around honour-based abuse, FGM or forced marriage, they will immediately report it to the Safeguarding Team who will make a referral to children's social care and the police.

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

Section 7.4 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Staff are legally required to report any real or suspected case of FGM personally to the police, as well as to the Safeguarding Team.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place.
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out.
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.

A girl having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable, or

- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously). Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE.
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period.
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour.
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem.
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider).
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin.
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out.
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.

A girl having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM, or

- Having limited level of integration within UK society.
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman".
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
- Talking about FGM in conversation: for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion).
- Being unexpectedly absent from school.
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive and any concerns around the possibility of FGM having taken place should always be shared with the Safeguarding Team.

Forced marriage
Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

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

The DSL will:

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

Preventing radicalisation
Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:
Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.
Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights.
Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either

of the above points.

Terrorism is an action, or actions that:

- Endanger or cause serious violence to a person/people.
- Cause serious damage to property.
- Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.
- Is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force. We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate and the NSPCC says that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

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

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

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in Section 7.4 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the Safeguarding Team.

Staff should always take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including the curriculum policy, behaviour policy and online safety policy.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools
Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence can occur:

- Between two children of any age and sex.

- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally).

Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence exist on a continuum and may overlap. Children who are victims of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence will likely find the experience distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. Such children need to be proactively supported.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt.
- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns.
- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again.
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs.
- Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours.
- Making clear that harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Recognising the intersection of misogyny and misandry and harmful sexual behaviour.

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in Section 7.4 of this policy.

Serious violence
Serious violence may involve:

- Physical assault against another individual.
- Carrying weapons such as knives.
- Threatening others with a weapon.
- Using weapons violently.

Serious violence frequently manifests out of unmanaged peer conflict or severe bullying situations and can be associated with child criminal exploitation, such as "county lines" gang activity.

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school.
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- Significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors to the school
All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

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

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge. Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or the organisation sending the professional, such as the local authority or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate).

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Team Referral form

SAFEGUARDING TEAM REFERRAL

Complete this form if you have any worry or concern about a child.
If your concern is urgent, you must speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team below immediately before completing this form.
Completed forms should be handed in to reception.

The Safeguarding Team are:
Mr McEvoy, Ms John, Mr O'Donoghue, Mr Tavares and Ms Hargreaves.

Staff name:	**Date:**
Child's name:	**Year & Form:**

What is your concern?

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FOR SAFEGUARDING TEAM USE ONLY			
Safeguarding Team Referral Categories			
Engaged in Gender Discrimination		Experienced Gender Discrimination	
Engaged in Harmful Sexual Behaviour		Experienced Harmful Sexual Behaviour	
Engaged in Online Abuse		Experienced Online Abuse	
Engaged in Physical Bullying		Experienced Physical Bullying	
Engaged in Racist Discrimination		Experienced Racist Discrimination	
Engaged in Religious Discrimination		Experienced Religious Discrimination	
Engaged in SEND Discrimination		Experienced SEND Discrimination	
Engaged in Sexual Harassment		Experienced Sexual Harassment	
Engaged in Sexual Violence		Experienced Sexual Violence	
Engaged in Verbal or Emotional Bullying		Experienced Verbal or Emotional Bullying	
Absence Concern		Experienced Bereavement	
Child Criminal Exploitation Concern		Experienced Domestic Abuse or Violence	
Child Sexual Exploitation Concern		Experienced Physical Chastisement or Abuse	
Other Concern		Experienced Neglect	
Radicalisation Concern			
Self-Harm Concern			
Substance Misuse Concern			
Wellbeing or Mental Health Concern			

Additonal notes

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