



Resilience **E**mpathy **S**elf-Awareness **P**ositivity **E**xcellence **C**ommunication **T**eamwork

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2025-2026

Reviewed	September 2025
Next Review Date	August 2026

New Delaval Primary School

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy Location	Written	Review Date	Person Responsible
School Website and Safeguarding noticeboard	September 2025	August 2026	Mr Paul Struthers

This Policy for Child Protection & Safeguarding has been formulated by Staff and Governors of the School to support the aims of the School. In particular, the children in our care will be happy, confident and independent who will contribute to the Local Community. This policy will also embody our aim to use our RESPECT characteristics to promote positive relationships, experiences and behaviour with a calm and consistent approach. The effectiveness of these policies will be reviewed on a regular basis by Staff and Governors to ensure they continue to support our aims. We aim to promote these policies across the Community in order to ensure that they are living documents which support us in our everyday work.

This policy is available on the school website and is referenced in our staff handbook as well as being available electronically, it is also made available to all visitors.

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Policy Statement and Principles

New Delaval Primary fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This policy is one of a series in the school's safeguarding portfolio which includes :

- Code of Conduct
- Behaviour
- Personal and intimate care
- Complaints procedure
- Antibullying
- Dignity at Work
- Whistleblowing
- SEND
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Staff discipline, grievance and disciplinary
- Relationships and Health Education

Ofsted inspectors will consider how well leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where children's and learners' welfare are promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children or learners who need extra help of who may be suffering or likely to suffer harm. Inspectors will evaluate how well statutory and other responsibilities are met and how well staff exercise their professional judgement in keeping children and learners safe. This policy contributes to the setting's commitment to all local and national requirements.

Education inspection framework (EIF) 2025

This framework is available on the school website and our school practise is made available to all visitors in the form of a safeguarding handbook.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- The school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- To maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
- Safer children make more successful learners
- This policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.
- To develop nurturing relationships in partnership with families and support agencies to ensure that every child is able to thrive.

Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children/young

people are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support and protection.

At New Delaval School pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities and the school is fully committed to this as part of the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers, visitors and governors and are consistent with those of the local safeguarding partnership (NSSP).

Policy Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identify, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

Policy Aims

- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practise.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent., in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- The [Teachers' Standards guidance](#) state that teachers, including head teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- The statutory guidance, [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for safeguarding to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools. As stated in this guidance schools are relevant agencies in the new safeguarding arrangements established by the three key safeguarding partners (the LA, the CCG and the police)
- The statutory guidance, [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#), is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and pupil referral units.
- All staff must read, and evidence that they understand the content of Part One of this guidance and have all been issued with a copy. A record to confirm this is held in the school office.
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 – Advice for practitioners is non-statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action and copies are available on our safeguarding notice board in the PPA room.

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that **all school staff** are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns.

Roles and responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mr. Paul Struthers, Head Teacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mr. T. Hutton, Mrs. J. Wilkinson, Mrs. C. Johnson, Mrs. M. Archer & Mrs. L. Williamson-Horne

Nominated Child Protection Governor: Mrs. Ann Douglass

Contact details for NCC: One Call 01670 536400 - School's Safeguarding Team Tues to Wed 07731007896 or use individual team members contact details

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, receiving annual updates and face to face training provided by the safeguarding board every two years. In Northumberland the expectation is that the DSL attends a half day refresher, facilitated by the LA every two years and on the alternate year they attend safeguarding training relevant to their school and local context, supporting their professional development and delivered by suitably qualified providers
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NSSP) procedures <https://www.proceduresonline.com/northumberlandcs/index.html>
- makes staff aware of NSSP training courses (all available through Learning Together <http://ncc.learningpool.com/>) and the latest policies and procedures on safeguarding
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx#earlyhelpassessmentforms>
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan has unexplained absences
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is sent securely to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The pupil's social worker should also be informed of the change in school
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- ensures that all appropriate staff members have a working knowledge and understanding of their role in case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency planning meetings, to ensure that they attend and are able to effectively contribute when required to do so
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the NSSP
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with governors and trustees

- liaises with the nominated governor and headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) as appropriate
- ensures a record of staff attendance at child protection and safeguarding training is maintained
- ensures staff are kept up to date with key priorities within the LA, including learning from serious practice reviews
- makes the child protection & safeguarding policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- has the lead role for Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour in the school and ensures the school meets all requirements set out in the LA procedures
- reports concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, following the Prevent referral process and refer cases by e-mail to OneCall . If the matter is urgent then Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In cases where further advice from the Police is sought dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264)
- Meet all other responsibilities as set out for DSLs in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.
- whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

The Deputy Designated Person(s):

Is/are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

If the DSL (or deputy) are not available, staff should contact a member of the leadership team to seek advice. Advice can also be sought from colleagues in One Call, the Local Authority's single point of access on 01670 536400.

The governing body:

Ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures
- has a staff code of conduct, which is reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website

- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head teacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is updated at least annually and will receive regular updates. The DSL receives face to face refresher training at two-yearly intervals and accesses an annual update in line with the Local Safeguarding Board requirements
- ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy
- ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and NSCB and national guidance.

An annual audit will be submitted, as required, to the local authority, including an action plan. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

The Headteacher:

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- school leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- contacts the DO immediately an allegation is made against a member of staff, seeking advice and then works with the DO to follow the advice received

- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being an active listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and NSSP procedures
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media.

Abuse of Position of Trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

The school's Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by staff members. A record to confirm this is stored in the school office.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- displaying early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- looked after or returned home after a period of care
- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs or misusing substances themselves
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism or being radicalised
- showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation (inc County Lines)
- privately fostered

This updated list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

Helping Children to Keep Themselves Safe

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. We will therefore raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep them safe, this will include activities to improve their resilience. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment and positive ethos where children feel secure, supported and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to, can learn, develop and feel valued;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

Curriculum- Teaching Children to be Safe

We, as a school, recognise that for some children that abuse can be completely normalised - especially if this has continued for a period of time. We aim to support our children in knowing what 'OK' and 'Not OK' is. Alongside our curriculum we also ensure staff are listening and that our children know that staff have the time to listen and support them.

The type of topics the curriculum covers:

- healthy and respectful relationships- including boundaries and consent
- being equal- stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- laws relating to abuse and unhealthy relationships
- Online and Offline safety
- Being safe in the community
- Knowing who can help

Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment and positive ethos where children feel secure, supported and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to, can learn, develop and feel valued;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, develop resilience and that they know to whom to turn for help through the delivery of half-termly safeguarding units as part of the Computing curriculum and also half-termly units of work from Project Evolve which will be linked and delivered through PSHE topics.

Support for Those Involved in a Child Protection Issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, ensure that lines of communication are maintained
- following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies
- providing access to supervision for those staff dealing with child protection issues

Complaints Procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the headteacher and governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is available on the school website and on the Safeguarding notice board in the PPA room. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

Whistle Blowing if You Have Concerns About a Colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code, available on the Safeguarding notice board in the PPA room, enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the head teacher should be reported to the chair of governors (Mrs Anne Douglass). Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure immediate actions

Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. In the event of suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2018) and in the school's Allegations Against Staff policy.

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Staff Training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a mandatory briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff, including the head teacher (unless the head teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. The NSSP recommends staff receive annual updates and a detailed programme (either online or face to face) at least every three years.

The DSL (and deputies) will receive annual safeguarding training, with subjects to reflect local and national priorities and including a refresher session on their roles and responsibilities every two years.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection and safeguarding policy and code of conduct and have read Keeping Children Safe in education (Part 1) Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's visiting staff Safeguarding Information leaflet, a copy of which will be given to them on their arrival.

Safer Recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and the school's Staff Recruitment procedures, policy and checklist.

- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.
- The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

- Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.
- The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Single Central Record (SCR)

As a school we maintain a digital record of all our checks to ensure staff, governors and those in regulated activity are safe (as much as possible) to work within our setting. This information is only kept during the terms of employment or activity within the school.

The SCR is audited termly by the Headteacher/DSL to ensure the accuracy of information held.

Regulated Activity

Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) part three.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised Volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site Security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The head teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitors should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended School and Off-site Arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures via EVOLVE.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect pupils we will:

- seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them

Online Safety

Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat and Instagram.

Unfortunately some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

The school's online safety policy, available on the school website and to staff on the Office 365 platform, explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our child protection procedures.

Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 who have permission to walk home without an adult are allowed to bring mobile phones to and from school. Once in school the mobile phones are handed to the class teacher who will store them in a secure container until the end of the day. At the end of the day phones will be returned to pupils to take home.

In New Delaval Primary School all staff and pupils must sign and agree to our acceptable use policy when logging onto school equipment. This policy is updated annually or whenever new information is added. Each time there is a change or addition to the document then users are prompted to re-read and agree before continuing their use of the device. Pupils receive regular online training through both the Computing and the PSHE curriculum referencing the Education for a Connected World objectives.

All staff receive annual online safety training and certificates to confirm this is are held in the school office and electronically on SIMS.

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
- › 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

The Four Key Categories of Risk

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

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

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- › Teach our 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
- › 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 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
- › 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 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school’s IT systems.

- › Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety
- › 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

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 Bard.

New Delaval Primary 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.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

Filtering and Monitoring

When pupils use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems, which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness.

- Filtering refers to the technology preventing access to harmful or inappropriate content, whilst monitoring refers to the practical steps staff take to ensure harmful or inappropriate access is not made. NDPS use the FORTINET Filtering system Fortigate.
- Monitoring can include:
 - Physical monitoring- staff being vigilant when Children are using devices
 - Live monitoring- using SENSO Cloud that screen captures trigger words/phrases
 - Monitoring individual devices/users
- We make sure that any school devices used away from the school site are also subject to filtering and monitoring procedures.
- Each year our designated safeguarding lead, along with our IT team and a governor, review our filtering and monitoring procedures to ensure that they effectively prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content.
- All our staff undertake training to understand the risks of poor filtering and monitoring, and know how to share their concerns
- All our staff have taken part in annual cybersecurity training

However, many pupils are able to access the internet using personal devices on journeys into school and going home. To minimise inappropriate use, we as a school have a mobile device policy and ask parents/carers to adhere to the guidance stated.

Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images.

To protect pupils, we will:

- seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

Staff/pupil Relationships and Online Contact

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation. This is stated in our Digital Safety Policy and Code of Conduct policy.

Child Protection Procedures

Recognising Abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people. The four types of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect.

Details of the definitions of the 4 types of abuse are included as Appendix A

Detailed below are a number of specific categories where there is evidence of increased vulnerability, and all school staff understand the need to be particularly vigilant, taking advice from the DSL if they believe they identify a child who may need extra support or referred to an external agency

Children Missing Education (CME)

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The school will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

The school will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not in school. This means we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update school as soon as possible if numbers or other details change.

In response to the latest DfE guidance the school has staff who understand fully what to do when children do not attend regularly, appropriate procedures/policies for pupils who go missing from school and staff are trained to recognise signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict

zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. The school have procedures in relation to taking pupils off roll when they leave school to be home educated, move away from the school's location, remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age, are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards) or are permanently excluded. We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority. When a pupil leaves the school, we will maintain a record of their new school and the expected start date.

The school's behaviour and attendance lead will submit a monthly return to the LA, indicating children missing education and the DSL must review this submission before it is sent to ensure they are aware of any concerns or can add additional information.

The DfE's guidance on Children Missing Education is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education> and the LA guidance is available on the Virtual School web page

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Virtual.aspx#childrennotinschool>

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head teacher

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Domestic Abuse (via Operation Encompass)

Our school is fully engaged in Operation Encompass and we recognise the importance of all staff having a basic understanding in relation to domestic violence and the impact it can have on children. The school notifies all parents that we are partners with the LA and police in relation to Operation Encompass and new staff receive a briefing as part of their induction.

Staff understand that violence perpetrated by a child on their parent is also a form of domestic violence and as such will seek advice from the DSL when they are made aware of such incidents

Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Peer-on-peer Abuse

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or procedures implemented to address the bullying are deemed to be ineffective, the head teacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

Children with Sexually Harmful Behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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

The school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and Relationship and Sex Education curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_safeguarding_ex.html

Criminal Exploitation of Children (County Lines)

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity and includes drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. See Appendix A for further details

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Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – mandatory reporting applies

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

See Appendix A for further details

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Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

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Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Nationally, Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form however schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy and extreme right wing factions.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

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Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_childrn_away.html

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will also give special consideration to children who are:

- displaying early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- looked after or returned home after a period of care
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs or misusing substances themselves
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
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By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

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- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs or misusing substances themselves
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation (inc County Lines)

Peer on Peer Abuse

Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves as peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence, gender based violence, initiation- type violence and rituals and sexting. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or part of growing up. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse and this must always be considered when cases are reviewed.

At our school we believe that all children have the right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm from adults and other children. We recognise that some students will negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school which are of a safeguarding nature. This could include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and also include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation, some of the following features will be found –

- the allegation is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or more vulnerable pupil
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other pupils in school

- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the school may have been affected by this behaviour

To support young people in this situation we will follow our usual safeguarding procedures ensuring all information is recorded and reported to the DSL , with particular reference being made to NSSP guidance on abuse by children and young people.

http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_abuse_child_yp.html

In cases of 'sexting' we will follow the guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCIS) published in August 2017: 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges, responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551575/6.2439_KG_NCA_Sexting_in_Schools_WEB_1_.PDF

m) Domestic Violence

Our school is fully engaged in Operation Encompass and we recognise the importance of all staff having a basic understanding in relation to domestic violence and the impact it can have on children. The school notifies all parents that we are partners with the LA and police in relation to Operation Encompass and new staff receive a briefing as part of their induction.

Staff understand that violence perpetrated by a child on their parent is also a form of domestic violence and as such will seek advice from the DSL when they are made aware of such incidents.

Contextual Safeguarding

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

Impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking action

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999

- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a written record (Yellow disclosure forms are kept on each classroom notice board)
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If You are Concerned About a Pupil's Welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed or their patterns of attendance may have altered. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use CPOMS to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention will be managed through the Early Help process.

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx#earlyhelpassessmentforms>

If a Pupil Discloses to You

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'

- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil's mother think about all this
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the yellow disclosure form and hand it to the designated person
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying Parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care.

Referral to children's social care

- **The DSL will make a referral to children's social care** if it is believed that a pupil **is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm**.
- The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.
- The DSL should keep relevant staff informed about actions taken, they do not need to share all information but staff must be confident their concerns have been actioned

Confidentiality and Sharing Information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Yellow disclosure forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not routinely be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information, including Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour notifications will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information without consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the head teacher or DSL.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and pupils on request, and is available from the school office upon request.

The Child's Wishes

Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Reporting Directly to Child Protection Agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the head teacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)

Monitoring and Review

The DSL, Headteacher, and Governing Body will review this policy annually. Updates will be made immediately where new legislation or guidance arises.

Date Ratified by Governors	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	

APPENDIX A DSL Share Drive and other important links

To access DSL area of the Virtual School SharePoint copy the link into your search bar –
<https://northumberland365.sharepoint.com/sites/DSLInSchoolsAPs/>

Contact Justine Clephane if you are unable to access

Northumberland Procedures Manual -
[Local Resources \(trixonline.co.uk\)](http://trixonline.co.uk)

Be Connected Padlet - <https://padlet.com/nies1/be-connected-lx9us64xc7vv5az7>

APPENDIX B Definitions of Abuse

Four categories of abuse (from WTtSC December 2023)

Physical abuse - A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (previously known as Munchausens by Proxy)

Emotional abuse

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

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

Neglect - The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy 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 caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Appendix C Indicators of Abuse

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DSL.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their schoolwork
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

APPENDIX D Children more vulnerable/ at greater risk

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. At NEW DELAVAL PRIMARY SCHOOL school we endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by providing a safe space for any child to speak with a trusted adult of their choice.

Children Who Are Absent from Education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

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

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

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

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) the school has:

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

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

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

The school's attendance lead will submit a monthly return to the LA, indicating children missing education and the DSL must review this submission before it is sent to ensure they are aware of any concerns or can add additional information

The school procedures reflect the latest DfE guidance

[Working-together-to-improve-school-attendance](#) and [Children-missing-education guidance](#)

The LA guidance is available on the Virtual School web page

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Virtual.aspx#childrennotinschool>

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some children.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the policy/procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in RHSE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or procedures implemented to address the bullying are deemed to be ineffective, the head teacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

Cared for Children and Previously Cared for Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head teacher

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The management of children with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Children who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible

Sexual exploitation of children

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

The school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the RHSE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

[Child Sexual Exploitation \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com)

Criminal Exploitation of Children

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity and includes drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

[Gang Activity, Youth Violence and Criminal Exploitation Affecting Children \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com)

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

[Forced Marriage \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://trixonline.co.uk)

Legal Marriage

It is also worth noting that The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 came into force in February 2024 means that 16- and 17-year-olds will no longer be allowed to marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent. Any concerns that students may be getting married should be referred to the DSL.

Radicalisation and Extremism

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Nationally, Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form however schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy and extreme right-wing factions

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

Prevent - Safeguarding Children and Young People against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (proceduresonline.com)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

When a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Domestic Violence

Our school is fully engaged in Operation Encompass, and we recognise the importance of all staff having a basic understanding in relation to domestic violence and the impact it can have on children. The school notifies all parents that we are partners with the LA and police in relation to Operation Encompass and new staff receive a briefing as part of their induction.

Staff understand that violence perpetrated by a child on their parent (Child to Parent Violence and Abuse CPVA (Child to Parent Violence and Abuse)) is also a form of domestic violence and as such will seek advice from the DSL when they are made aware of such incidents

[Domestic Violence and Abuse \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

Mental Health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

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

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Our school has a senior mental health lead for staff and 3 Thrive practitioners for our children to offer immediate support.

Sexual Violence or Sexual harassment

Considering confidentiality and anonymity

This school recognises that in cases related to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment there may be situations where the young person asks the school not to tell anyone about the incident and all staff are aware of their duty to report concerns to the DSL

Risk Assessments

Report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will include the time and location of the incident and subsequent risk assessments will include any actions required to make the location safer.

Impact on any siblings

The school recognises the importance of understanding intra-familial harms and will identify any necessary support for siblings following incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

APPENDIX E Specific Considerations

Specific Considerations

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)

Children staying with host families

The school may make arrangements for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms, and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable

Boarding Schools and Children's Homes

Research has shown that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings. All boarding schools and residential special schools comply with the National Minimum Standards for their setting and are appropriately inspected (You should expand on this paragraph with further relevant information if you provide accommodation to pupils)

Schools with Sixth Formers

This section should be included when the school deals with young people who have reached their 18th birthday

If the student is over 18, and is not a danger to themselves, permission must be obtained from the student to share the information they have disclosed with outside agencies.'

We recognise that some procedures are different for those young people and adults over the age of 18 years. Once the student has reached the age of 18, he/she may be classed as a vulnerable adult. The definition of this is in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

- A person who has reached the age of 18 and
- is in residential accommodation or sheltered housing
- receives domiciliary care or any form of health care
- is detained in lawful custody
- is by virtue of an order of the court under supervision by a person exercising functions for the purposes of part one of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- receives the welfare service of an agency outside the school
- receives any service or participates in any activity provided specifically for persons who fall within subsection 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2009
- payments are made to him/her (or to another on his/her behalf) in pursuance of arrangements under section 57 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001
- requires assistance in the conduct of his/her own affairs' child (i.e., a pupil at school who has not yet reached their 18th birthday)

In general, adult safeguarding procedures should be implemented for 18-year-olds and in these situations. Children's Safeguarding should remain equal partners throughout the process so any issues that impact on the service can be addressed. These situations may be complicated by the different procedure's timescales and processes.

[Adult Safeguarding - Information for professionals](#)

Appendix F - School Paperwork for recording concerns

A 'yellow' disclosure form should be used to record concerns in writing and passed to the DSL – or teaching staff can make use of CPOMs.



CPOMs Protocol

This addendum to our safeguarding policy is to ensure our record keeping and reporting procedures are **accurate, factual and succinct**. This ensures that we can more effectively ascertain what actions are required with the information shared.

Logging an incident->

- ✓ Please only complete on your own name- I can merge separate incidents/viewpoints into one now
- ✓ Where possible use bullet points in the incident box
- ✓ Only select the main category- please don't tick all that apply unless the incident started as one and became another
- ✓ Please ensure you set the date/time of the incident- not when the form was completed
- ✓ Assign- please don't complete this
- ✓ Files- you can attach any photos or evidence
- ✓ Alert- ensure all SLT are alerted as any of us could pick it up

If the incident is urgent or a child/adult is in immediate risk of harm please tell a DSL before completing the CPOMS. Where a disclosure of harm is shared this will also need immediate DSL notification.

Guidelines for wording/phrasing of incident write up ->

Please note- anything written on CPOMs could be subject to a Freedom of Information request. This means it can be read by pupils, parents, police and wider professionals.

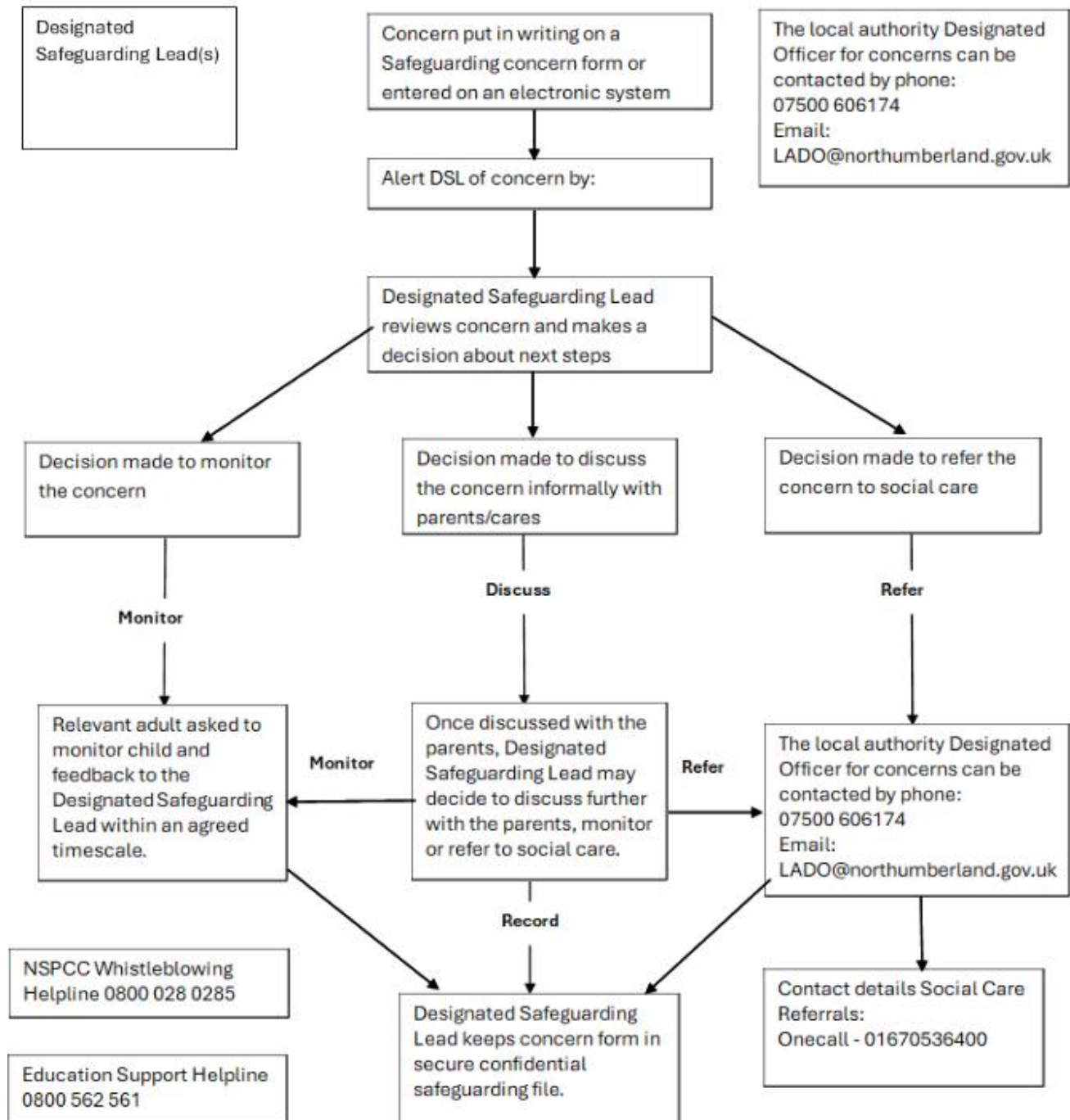
X Opinions X	√ Facts √
Really angry	The pupil shouted, stomped, tipped over
Threatening	The pupil ran/hit/threw/bit
Rude	They said, repeated
Aggressive	They had clenched fists, punched, marked, broke
Abusive	They said ""
As per	NEW DELAVAL PRIMARY SCHOOL has said this on another occasion
We feel that....	The trigger was
The impact is that....	We had to
Typing protocol- please don't use CAPITALS or !!!! to emphasize frustration or meaning Ambiguous language- be direct and succinct. Words and phrasing can completely change an incident Physical contact- be specific (how and where) about any physical hold, movement or comfort given	

Reflection-> This is an incredibly important part of recording a behavioural incident but can also be used for challenges at home. Please share in the incident box what you/the team have done to follow up or what you are putting in place to prevent a reoccurrence.

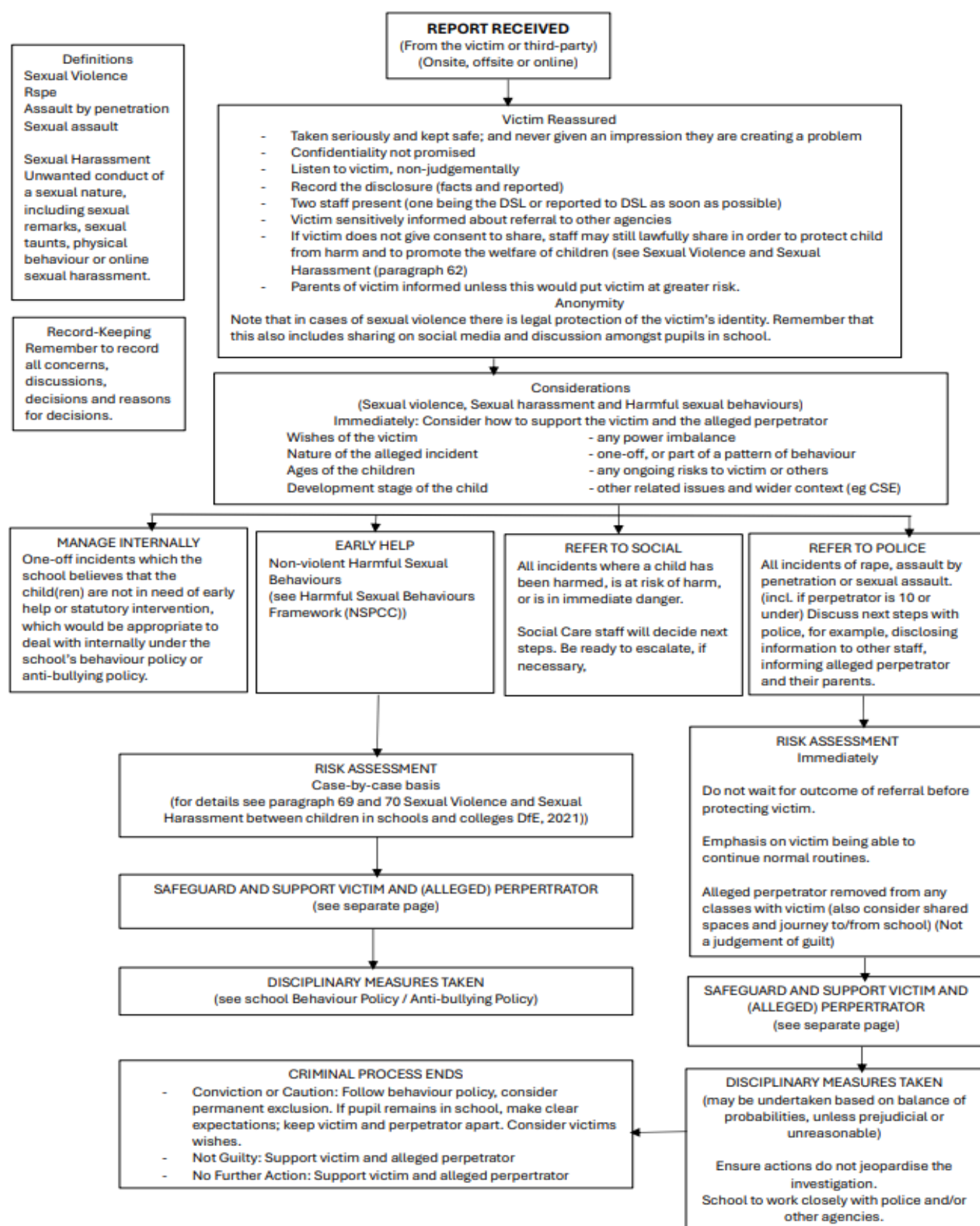
Response-> The SLT will always respond to every CPOMs incident. This may just be 'Acknowledged' or to clarify further details. If you are required to respond to an action, then please do so within 24hrs.

Appendix G - Flowchart for following up concerns

FLOWCHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



Appendix H - Flowchart for sexual violence and sexual harm



Appendix I - Standards for effective Child Protection Practice in Schools

A school should measure its standards regarding safeguarding against the expectations of the Ofsted Framework

[Ofsted handbooks and frameworks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-handbooks-and-frameworks)

and the arrangements of the Northumberland Children's and Adults Safeguarding Partnership

<https://www.proceduresonline.com/northumberlandcs/index.html>

OFSTED- How we inspect safeguarding in schools

Posted by: [Lee Owston, National Director Education](#), Posted on: 9 November 2023

In this blog, we'll consider safeguarding through the course of an inspection. We'll explain some of the main activities we undertake and why. You'll find lots of references to [keeping children safe in education \(KCSIE\)](#) too. That's because it sets out the Department for Education's (DfE) expectations, as the regulator, of a school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Keeping children safe is an important part of all our work. As an organisation, we are always reviewing our approaches to inspection to make sure it's as positive and effective as possible.

Schools tell us that discussions about safeguarding can sometimes feel quite pressurised during inspections. Some of the concerns about getting decisions right in this space are natural. It's important to stress that inspectors will be looking at whether schools have made the right decisions to keep children safe, not looking to catch schools out on technicalities. We want the very best for children and protecting them from harm is paramount.

Before we consider the journey of inspection, it's important to be clear what we mean by a 'culture of safeguarding'. We've updated our definition to take account of what we know matters most. We expect all schools to have an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first. We have provided further clarification in our handbook at paragraph 367 on what this means. Inspectors will consider the safeguarding culture that has been established in the school when making a judgement. Judgements will rarely rest on single issues. Inspectors will take into account a range of evidence so that they are able to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.

Before the inspection

We contact schools the day before their inspection to set out the documents and information we'll want to see when we are on site. We also have a longer conversation with the headteacher to talk about the school and plan the inspection.

In terms of safeguarding, we ask schools to start by providing some specific information before the inspection – this is outlined in paragraph 107 of the handbook:

- the single central record (SCR)
- a list of referrals made to the local authority
- any referrals made to the local authority designated officer regarding staff or other adults
- a list of all open cases with children's services or social care and all pupils who have a multi-agency plan

We specifically ask schools to provide us with 'brief details' about the resolution of any referrals to the local authority. To clarify, these 'brief details' can just be drawn from local records – for example, what support was provided and by whom, or whether the case is ongoing, or the situation is now being monitored.

The records that schools draw from should have enough detail for the inspector to be able to understand the overall concerns that have been identified and the support and help that is in place for children. The exact level of detail required is explained further in paragraph 68 of KCSIE, but they should:

- be clear and comprehensive
- detail how concerns were followed up
- note any actions taken, the decision reached and the outcome

During the inspection

Discussions about safeguarding are woven throughout the inspection and will be informed by the information and records provided. We explain more in our [webinars](#) and the handbook, but there are a few main activities:

- reviewing the single central record
- meeting with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- discussions with staff and pupils.

The single central record

When we review the SCR, we're checking against the minimum recording requirements as set out in paragraphs 268 to 272 of KCSIE. We might also ask questions about recruitment more widely, such as:

- How are posts advertised?
- Who sits on appointment panels and what training do they have?
- How are new staff inducted?

We typically carry out the check at the start of the inspection. We do it at the start so that if there are any minor safeguarding improvements that can be rectified during the inspection, schools have the opportunity to do so. We discuss further what we mean by minor safeguarding improvements below.

All that said, we'll want to know that this document is well managed, and that staff are suitable to be working with children. Sadly, some predatory people do try to join the staff of schools. The SCR is an important safety mechanism.

As [our chief inspector has said before](#), there is no expectation that governors and trustees go through the SCR themselves. But governors and trustees are responsible for making sure that their school fulfils its statutory duties. It's therefore important that governors and trustees have mechanisms in place to make sure that key safeguarding and safer recruitment duties are undertaken effectively.

Meeting with the designated safeguarding lead

Inspectors will meet with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to explore the culture of safeguarding more fully. We'll specifically ask the DSL whether there have been any safeguarding incidents or allegations since the last inspection. If there have been, leaders should be able to demonstrate how they have used the guidance in KCSIE to respond appropriately. This is likely to involve information-sharing with the right agencies and people (more about this below).

We'll often sample case files and discuss referrals in this meeting. As part of these discussions, we are assuring ourselves that any concerns are dealt with in a timely way. By that, we mean without any unnecessary delay. Timings will depend on local thresholds and guidance. We'll explore how any referrals are made, what actions are taken and how things are resolved.

We'll also ask about staff training and how leaders make sure that staff have the relevant knowledge and skills to safeguard children effectively. Above all, all staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and

know what to do if they have concerns about a child, no matter how minor those concerns might be. These expectations are set out fully in part 1 of KCSIE.

Information-sharing is a big part of effective safeguarding. Expectations are set out fully in KCSIE and you can find a useful guide to information sharing in [Working together to safeguard children](#). We may discuss information-sharing further on inspection. Examples of the kind of questions we might ask are:

- What arrangements are in place to receive and share records at points of transfer?
- To what extent are you alert to the potential needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils that arrive at your school?
- How do you inform receiving schools of any concerns or support you have provided?

Topics of discussion with the DSL will vary from school to school depending on context. We'll want to know that they understand their pupils' needs and that the school acts on any concerns in a timely and effective way.

The meeting with the DSL is also an opportunity for us to be assured that this is a school that is reflective and receptive to challenge. By that, we mean that staff understand that keeping children safe is an ongoing endeavour and that there are always aspects of work that can be improved. If we spot something that perhaps does not quite look right, we'll want to explore this and make sure the school's systems keep children safe.

Discussions with staff and pupils

Inspectors will take lots of opportunities to talk to a range of stakeholders during different activities. We'll prioritise talking to staff and pupils. From a staff perspective, we'll be keen to know about their training and the actions they should take if they have a concern. We might explore the particular context and how any local issues are factored into training. For example, this might be about support for looked after children or unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children.

When speaking to pupils, we'll want to know that they feel that there are people at the school who they can talk to if they have a concern, and who will act on those concerns. We'll do this in an age-appropriate way. And we will not automatically assume that anything worrying that might come up is representative of all pupils' views. If pupils do raise any worries, we'll make sure we share these with the relevant staff in school and test out views with wider groups. We'll be very careful not to jump to any conclusions and will be mindful of confidentiality.

That commitment to evaluating things proportionately extends to any concern that staff, parents or pupils might share in surveys too – we will weigh any matters carefully and speak with more people and explore wider evidence if we need to.

Making a judgement about safeguarding

Inspectors will reflect carefully on all the evidence they gather to arrive at a judgement. We will judge safeguarding as effective or ineffective. In 99% of inspections that we undertook in the last academic year, we judged that safeguarding is effective.

Inspectors can also identify what we have described in the handbook as 'minor safeguarding improvements.' Examples might include administrative errors in paperwork or out-of-date policies.

Minor improvements, by definition, are those that do not have an immediate impact on the safety of pupils. Where it is possible to do so, we'll want to be satisfied that the school will address them before the end of the inspection, although we understand that some things might reasonably take a little longer.

To reassure you, and as we explain in our webinars and training for inspectors, we know that schools cannot be everything to everyone. KCSIE is a vital tool for schools when it comes to safeguarding. Schools that are fulfilling their duties, by ensuring that they have systems in place to protect children from harm, will know they are doing all they can.

If we do judge safeguarding to be effective but that some minor improvements are required, that will not stop the school being judged good or outstanding.

In the rare circumstance that we judge a school to be inadequate due only to ineffective safeguarding arrangements, we will return for a monitoring inspection within 3 months from the publication of the report. This will broadly follow [our other monitoring inspections](#) but will focus on whether safeguarding is now effective. If the school has resolved the safeguarding concerns, its overall grade is likely to improve.

We understand that schools can be worried about how their safeguarding practices will be judged. However, Ofsted does not expect anything from schools beyond what is set out in KCSIE and our handbooks. If schools have an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first, and if they are following the requirements set out in KCSIE, they (like the vast majority of schools) will be judged to have effective safeguarding.

Find out more

If you want to know more about our inspection of safeguarding you can find [a dedicated recorded webinar on our YouTube channel](#). For more information about the SCR you can watch [a KCSIE series](#) from the DfE.

This blog supports our [wider series of webinars for schools](#). School leaders, staff and governors have asked to hear from us directly. Our webinars and blogs aim to do exactly that.

Appendix J - Dealing with allegations against people who work with children
Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers, or contractors

At NEW DELAVAL PRIMARY SCHOOL we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors who can be contacted by asking the office for their contact information.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the headteacher/principal.

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent, or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or because of vetting checks undertaken.

The headteacher/principal must decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).

Allegations

It is an allegation if the person* has:

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

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

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

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

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

Low-level Concerns

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

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;

- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.

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

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

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

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

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing- by email or paper including:

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

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

Records must be kept confidential, held securely, and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

What is a Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO?

The role of LADO was initially set out in the HM Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and continues in Working Together 2018.

The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

This role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers and all adults outside the school workforce. They capture concerns, allegations, or offences; this can include concerns about their own personal life, e.g., incidents of domestic violence or child protection concerns relating to their own family.

If there is an allegation against the Headteacher then concerns should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors and LADO.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures. **Schools should seek advice from the LADO as soon as an allegation is made.**

The LADO coordinates information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible – the LADO for Northumberland is **Louise Okenabrirhie Tel: 07500606174**

lado@northumberland.gov.uk

For safeguarding information for professionals, including LADO contact details, please follow this link:

[lado-information-and-flowchart.pdf \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

To make a referral use this form [LADO Agency Referral Form \(office.com\)](#)

Call: 03000 268835