



Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Pupils

Date of review: November 2022

Date of next review: September 2023

Contents

1. Contacts
2. Introduction and Context
3. Policy Aims and Objectives
4. Responsibilities
5. Procedures
6. Prevention
7. Pupil Protection
8. Supporting Pupils and addressing Child-on-Child Abuse (including child on child sexual violence (CSV) and sexual harassment)
9. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
10. Honour Based Abuse (HBA)
11. Domestic Abuse
12. Modern Slavery
13. Cybercrime
14. If a Pupil Reports Abuse
15. Mental Health
16. Confidentiality
17. Supporting Staff
18. Whistleblowing
19. Staff Behaviour
20. Anti-Bullying
21. Racist Incidents
22. Gang Activity
23. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) including county lines
24. Health and Safety
25. E-Safety and Social Media
26. Cultural Issues
27. Children and the court system
28. Children with family members in prison
29. Homelessness
30. Appendices
 - i) Information on Signs and Symptoms of Abuse
 - ii) Safeguarding/Prevent Alert Form
 - iii) Flowchart detailing Procedure for Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations of Abuse of a Child
 - iv) The Role of the Designated Local Authority Officer (LADO)



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

I. Contacts

I.1 School contacts

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mr Joe Brawn
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs): Mr Sean Day, Mrs Natasha Doran (EYFS DSL Lead)
- Liaison Governor for Pupil Protection: Mrs Ruth Webber (07985 714513)
- Chair of the Governors: Mr Richard Tufft

The DSL and Deputy DSLs may be contacted on 01753 882474.

I.2 Contacts in County

- Education Safeguarding Advisory Service: 01296 387981
- Education Safeguarding Advisory Service: secure-esasduty@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01296 382070
- Bucks Family Information Service 01296 383293
- First Response (including Channel contact) 08454 600 001 (local rate: 01296 383962)
- First Response (including Channel contact) (outside of office hours): 0800 999 7677
- Pupil Abuse Police Investigation Unit: 01296 396 556
- Thames Valley Police (in an emergency): 999 (101 for local Police support)
- Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:
<https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership>
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): www.buckscg.gov.uk/socialcare

I.3 Other contacts

1. NSPCC (Helpline and Whistleblowing): 0800 028 0285
2. Pupil Line: 0800 11 11
3. Kidscape Bullying Helpline: 0845 1205 204
4. Samaritans: 0845 790 9090
5. CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk
6. Foreign and Commonwealth Office: 0207 008 0151 (Forced Marriages Section)
7. Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111
8. DofE Dedicated helpline re concerns of extremism – 0207 340 7264 (or email counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

2. Introduction and Context

2.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by *The Children Acts 1989 and 2004* and in line with the following:

- *Buckinghamshire Multi-Agency Information Sharing for Children, Young People and Families Code of Practice April 2012;*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022 (KCSIE);*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018 (WTTSC);*
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 February 2015;*
- *Supplementary Guidance re Disqualification under The Childcare Act 2006 August 2018;*
- *What To Do if You're Worried a Pupil is Being Abused March 2015;*
- *The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty Guidance;*
- *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales July 2015*
- *When to Call the Police (NPCC) 2020*

2.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2.3 Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

2.4 The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and to work together with other agencies to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place within the School to identify, assess, and support those pupils who are suffering harm or whose welfare may be in question. Governors will ensure that all members of staff at the school read and understand Part I and Annex A (if applicable) of KCSIE 2022 (September).

2.5 Safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility** and the school is fully committed to providing a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of each individual pupil. The staff recognise that they have an active part to play in protecting pupils from harm, and in ensuring early help is provided to pupils in need of support. This includes an expectation that teachers manage behaviour effectively and consistently for a safer environment. Each pupil's health, safety and welfare is of paramount concern.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

2.6 This policy must be read in the context of the following school policies:

- Safer recruitment;
- Whistle-blowing;
- Complaints;
- Health and safety and risk assessment;
- Staff handbook;
- Pupil supervision;
- School behaviour and sanctions;
- Information technology acceptable use.
- Anti-bullying policy
- PSHEE policy (for Sex and relationship Education)

3. Policy aims and objectives

- to support the pupil's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience through robust training programmes and a whole-school child-centred approach to safeguarding and online safety;
- to provide an environment in which pupils are listened to, feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties and to ensure that should they report abuse or harassment they will be reassured that they will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe and not made to feel that they are creating a problem;
- to raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard pupils and of their responsibilities in identifying and promptly reporting cases of abuse;
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring pupils known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure that the School contributes to assessments of need and support plans for those pupils;
- to acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils;
- to ensure the School has robust systems in place for ensuring that true and accurate records of events are kept securely, and to ensure that any such records clearly differentiate between fact and opinion;
- to develop a structured procedure within the School which all members of staff will follow in cases of suspected abuse;
- to develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding pupils;



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- to ensure that all staff who have access to pupils have been subject to Disclosure and Barring checks in line with current guidance. Volunteers and contractors working in the School are also checked in accordance with current guidance. Teachers appointed since April 2012 are subject to Prohibition from Teaching checks and senior leaders/managers appointed since September 2015 to Prohibition from Management checks.

4. Responsibilities

4.1.1 All staff are fully aware of their responsibility to safeguard pupils and that any concerns about a pupil should be shared with the DSL or, in their absence, a Deputy DSL.

4.1.2 The Head (or Interim Head) will make sure that the school's policies and procedures, adopted by the Governing Board, particularly those concerning referrals of suspected cases of abuse and neglect, are understood and followed by all staff, through regular updates and training for staff.

4.2 The Governing Body understand and will fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities to:

- ensure that that the School has a robust welfare and safeguarding pupil policy, which is reviewed annually, or whenever there are changes to government guidance.
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the welfare and safeguarding policy to ensure implementation is full and consistent.
- ensure that there is a DSL, who is a member of the School's senior leadership team, and Deputy DSL(s) in place, together with a Nominated Governor for Pupil Protection.
- recognise the importance of the role of the DSL and support him/her, ensuring the training necessary to be effective is undertaken.
- ensure cover is provided for the DSL when needed and appreciate the additional duties taken on by the member of staff when carrying out this role especially when there are on-going pupil protection issues.
- recognise and enhance the contribution the School can make to help pupils keep safe through the teaching of self-protection skills and encouragement of responsible attitudes through the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education curriculum.
- ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures in place which adhere to the Safeguarding Pupils and Safer Recruitment in Education guidance published by the Department for Education and legislation referred to therein.
- ensure the safeguarding needs of pupils, their families and the School are fully understood and resources allocated to meet identified needs.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- work with the DSL to complete a safeguarding audit for the School to evidence how it is meeting its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.
- maintain close links with children's services and LADO and contribute to arrangements for inter-agency working in Buckinghamshire.
- facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding through an understanding of the training provided to all staff. This also takes into account an understanding that teaching about safeguarding includes online safety and that a 'one size fits all' approach to safeguarding may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.
- ensure that safeguarding and child protection to be "at the forefront" and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. This will be monitored at each meeting of the Safeguarding Committee.

4.3 It will be the duty of the Chair of Governors to liaise with the LADO if any allegations are made against the Head.

4.4 The Liaison Governor for Pupil Protection will be trained in the area of pupil protection and liaise with the DSL as appropriate.

4.5 The Governing Body will carry out an annual review to ensure that the procedures under this policy are being discharged efficiently, that any weaknesses identified are remedied without delay and any amendments in light of changing regulations or recommendations become practice.

4.6 The School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is responsible for:

- working with the relevant safeguarding partners as defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:
 - (a) the local authority
 - (b) a clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area
 - (c) the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area
- referring a pupil to Children's Services (contact details are included in this policy) if there are concerns about a pupil's safety or welfare. Where significant harm is actual or likely referrals can be made without reference to a parent. Where the concern relates to general welfare matters, contact with external agencies will usually involve communications with parents as well. All referrals will be made without delay and within 24 hours to be followed up with a written referral within 24 hours.
- Working with the mental health leads (school counsellor and mental health and well-being coordinator) where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- Collaborating with the Head (or Interim) and Heads of Section
- Promoting educational outcomes of children in need by knowing and helping to address issues they're experiencing or have experienced, by:
 - Ensuring the school knows who its cohort of children who currently need a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort
 - Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising the lasting impact there can be on children's educational outcomes
- Promoting supportive engagement with parents and carers
- referring cases to the police where a pupil raises a concern or suspicion of female genital mutilation (FGM) within his family.
- referring cases to the Channel programme or the local police force where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- knowing when it is appropriate to call the police in accordance with guidance from NPCC
- ensuring staff are fully briefed about the potential for child-on-child abuse and the link between bullying, harassment and inappropriate use of the internet and forms of electronic communication.
- addressing online safety, including providing training for staff and assemblies and presentations to pupils and parents to ensure understanding as to the potential dangers.
- ensuring that detailed and accurate written records via CPOMS of concerns about a pupil are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and that any such records clearly differentiate between fact and opinion.
- ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records, with a front sheet listing dates and brief entry to provide a chronology.
- ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- acting as a focal point for staff concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals, including staff concerns for conduct and behaviour with their peers.
- ensuring that either they or another appropriately informed member of staff attends case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

planning meetings, contributes to the Framework for Assessments process, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents.

- ensuring that any absence of two consecutive School days, without satisfactory explanation, of a pupil currently subject to a child protection plan is immediately referred to his social worker.
- ensuring that if a pupil about whom there have been child protection concerns leaves the School, that such concerns and School medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the DSL at the pupil's new School as a matter of urgency. The original copy of significant documents will be retained at our School, and photocopies forwarded as above. The child protection file should be transferred to a new school or college within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within first 5 days of the start of a new term.
- meet the statutory requirement to keep themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant refresher training every two years provided by the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP), or the Education Safeguarding Advisory Service and, in between, keeping up-to-date with safeguarding development at least annually or when new statutory guidance is provided; all staff are required to do refresher training annually through educare online training to ensure they are up-to-date with annual developments.
- There is the expectation that the DSL (and Deputy DSLs) have a good understanding of:
 - How to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children
 - Specific harms that can put children at risk
 - The important role they play in providing information and support to children's social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
 - The lasting impact adversity and trauma can have on education, behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this
 - The difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication
 - Children in need (those with disabilities, or relevant health needs, and young carers), who have specific needs that the DSL should be alert to

5. Procedures

- 5.1 All parents/carers are made aware of the School's responsibilities regarding pupil protection procedures through publication of the relevant policies and reference to them in our new pupils' papers sent to parents when their son joins the School.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- 5.2 In accordance with the School's policy, staff working at the School in regulated activity are subject to pre-employment checks, including Disclosure and Barring and disqualification and prohibition checks at the time of their appointments if appropriate. This applies to and includes teaching and non-teaching staff, whether part-time, temporary, supply, or visiting staff such as musicians and sports coaches and senior school leaders. Teaching staff will also be checked through the Teaching Regulation Agency, previously known as the NCTL, which provides information about whether those who will be carrying out 'teaching work' are subject to a sanction or restriction by an EEA professional regulatory authority for teachers
- 5.3 All adults (including supply teachers and volunteers) will be made aware of the School's policy and procedure for pupil the promotion of pupil welfare and their protection, and the name and contact details of the DSL as part of their induction into the School.
- 5.4 All staff who have individual contact with pupils will undertake online training in pupil protection in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and bullying; how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse. A record of safeguarding training will be maintained by the school and made available to inspectors in accordance with Parts 3 and 4 of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2014. The information will also be shared with Governors to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities under Part 8 of the same regulations. If they have not done any training within two years prior to their appointment, they are required to do this before they start work. They are then regularly updated on welfare and safeguarding as required, but at least annually. Other staff are provided with pupil protection training by the DSL when they start work and are then regularly updated at least annually.
- 5.5 All staff and volunteers will be made aware of their individual and collective duty to report concerns to the DSL. In effect, the promotion of welfare and safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility'. This individual safeguarding responsibility does not end once staff or volunteers have informed the DSL of any concerns, although specific details of further actions may be appropriately withheld by the DSL as information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis. If after a referral the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL (or the person who made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the pupil's situation improves. All contacts with children's services and/or the LADO will be fully recorded, including responses from external agencies. The school will always ensure that referrals to external agencies are actively pursued so that the right help is provided to pupils at the right time.
- 5.6 Our lettings' policy will seek to reflect the on-going responsibility the School has for safeguarding those using the site outside of normal School hours, ensuring the suitability of adults working with pupils on School sites at any time. In this connection, checks will be undertaken to ensure the suitability of all contractors to be on the site and in contact with children.
- 5.7 Allegations of significant concern about conduct or abuse may be made against a member of staff, a volunteer, a governor, a pupil, parent or other person connected to the School.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff will be dealt with according to the statutory guidance set out in part four of KCSIE (2022).

- 5.8. If a staff member has any concerns about a pupil (as opposed to a pupil being in immediate danger) he/she must inform DSL or a Deputy DSL immediately. A referral will always be made to the LADO and the School will act on the advice provided. All communications will be recorded on CPOMS. If, a pupil is in imminent danger or is at risk of harm, any member of staff may make a simultaneous referral to Children's Services at Buckinghamshire Council on 01296 383962 and/or call the police on 999 immediately.
- 5.9 If a member of staff is made aware of any allegation of abuse, or if knowledge of possible abuse comes to his/her attention, it is his/her duty to listen to the pupil, to provide reassurance and to record the pupil's statements, but not to probe or attempt to influence the pupil's account. The School is not empowered to conduct a formal investigation – this is the duty of statutory agencies.

On hearing an allegation of abuse or complaint about abuse directly from a pupil, a member of staff should limit questioning to the minimum necessary for clarification; leading questions should be avoided. No guarantees of confidentiality must be given; rather the pupil should be told that the matter will be referred in confidence to the appropriate people in positions of responsibility.

Staff will reassure any victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. The victim(s) shouldn't be given the impression that they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The member of staff should make and submit an accurate written record and inform the DSL or a Deputy DSL immediately. All allegations or suspicions of abuse or cases where there is reasonable cause to suspect a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, will be reported to the local authority designated officer (LADO) within 24 hours.

If the allegation of abuse concerns the DSL, the member of staff should inform the Head. Should the allegation be against the Head, the member of staff must inform the Chair of Governors (or, in his absence, the governor responsible for safeguarding) without the Head being informed first. The principle to be followed is one of upward reporting.

In all cases of concern about staff conduct to children, the LADO will be contacted. The LADO and the Head will decide in the circumstances what further steps will be taken, including police action, further monitoring or the implementation of a strategy discussion.

If the allegation concerns a member of staff, a volunteer or another pupil he/she would normally be informed as soon as possible after the result of any initial investigation authorised or conducted by the LADO is known. Advice will always be sought from the LADO first, however. The School will normally appoint a member of staff to keep the person informed of the likely course of action and the progress of the case. In the case of staff, this could be a trusted colleague or a representative of a professional body or trade union, as appropriate. If the LADO or any of the statutory pupil protection authorities decide to take the case further, any staff member concerned may be suspended if this is felt appropriate. The reasons and justification for suspension will be recorded and the staff



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

member informed of them, any suspension will be discussed with SLT. In the case of a member of staff, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. In the case of a pupil, the matter will be dealt with under the School rules.

Staff may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure and without prejudice pending further investigations by the relevant agencies.

The outcome of investigation of an allegation will record whether it is substantiated (sufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), unsubstantiated (insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), false (sufficient evidence to disprove it) or malicious (sufficient evidence to disprove it and that there has been a deliberate act to deceive). If it is established that the allegation is malicious, no details of the allegation will be retained on the individual's personnel records. In all other circumstances a written record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file.

If the LADO or any of the statutory pupil protection authorities decide to take the case further, any staff member concerned may be suspended if this is felt appropriate. The reasons and justification for suspension will be recorded and the staff member informed of them. In the case of staff the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. In the case of a pupil the matter will be dealt with under the School rules.

During the investigation the School in consultation with the LADO will decide what information should be given to parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with. In reaching their decision due consideration will be given to the statutory provisions relating to reporting restrictions identifying teachers who are the subject of allegations from pupils.

Any pupils who are involved will receive focused support and help. If an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation, prior to dismissal, of a member of teaching staff, the School will consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence). The School will make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission whenever the Commission's guidelines deem it appropriate to do so.

The School will report to the DBS, within one month of leaving the School any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with pupils. This includes dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed term contract, no longer using a supply teacher engaged directly or supplied by an agency, terminating the placement of a trainee or volunteer, no longer using staff employed by a contractor and resignation and voluntary withdrawal from any of the above.

The school will also explore instances where a member of staff or volunteer has behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. The matter here is one of transferable risk and will therefore take into account instances where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school which did not include children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. For example, a member of staff is involved in domestic violence at home. Even



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

though no children were involved, the school will seek to determine what triggered these actions and could a child in the school trigger the same reaction, therefore being put at risk.

The school will apply the same approach to supply teachers as to other staff and will inform the supply agency of its process for managing allegations, liaising directly with their human resource manager.

5.10 Staff should have due regard to the relevant data protection principles in relation to the sharing and withholding of personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- for schools, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harms test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice.

5.11 The School will liaise with parents on all matters regarding the general welfare of pupils and the provision of early help. Where child protection concerns are identified, the School will decide in conjunction with Children's Services and/or the LADO as to how and when parents will be informed of referrals.

5.12 It is important for pupils to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective or coordinated action. Effective communication between professionals is the essence of this work. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, failure to recognise patterns of concern, poor record-keeping, failing to listen to the views of the pupil, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

6.0 Prevention



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

6.1 The School recognises that it plays a pivotal part in the prevention of harm to its pupils by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

6.2 The School community will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables pupils to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.
- ensure that all pupils know there is an adult in the School whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- allocate time in PSHEE to discuss safeguarding issues such as appropriate behaviour and why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right; time in ICT to promote safe use of the internet and online platforms including social media; assemblies, drama and RS to promote tolerance, mutual respect and understanding; assemblies, designated Form times and Biology lessons to address relationships and sex education (RSE). This accords with the School's duties to actively promote Fundamental British Values (FBV) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).
- Record any emergent safeguarding concerns on CPOMS, under 'cause for concern'. This could be anything from lateness, to not eating e.g. anything out of the normal for that pupil.
- There are several other mechanisms that we use across the year to keep our whole community safe these can be found at:

<https://sites.google.com/thorpehouse.co.uk/thorpehousepastoralcare/home>

6.3 In the first instance, staff who consider that a pupil may benefit from early help should discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board referral threshold document. The school may also seek advice from ESAS. The DSL will support staff in liaising with external agencies and professional in an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. If early help is appropriate, the matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving.

6.4 The School recognises its duty to assess the risk of pupils possibly being radicalised, including support for extremist ideals that are of terrorist ideology. As with any other safeguarding risk, it is an expectation that staff will act if they observe behaviour that concerns them. For this reason, all teaching staff are required to complete *Prevent* training either online or through dedicated INSET inputs so they can recognise the pupils at risk.

6.5 If a member of staff has a concern regarding a pupil who they feel is being drawn into radicalisation or is displaying views that could be considered to be extremist, they must speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL and complete the Safeguarding/Prevent Alert Form.

6.6 The role of the DSL in preventing young people from being drawn into terrorism is two-fold:



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- To listen to members of staff's concerns and act upon them;
- To report any concerns to the Local Authority's Prevent Lead – see above for contact details.

6.7 The DSL will consider if it is appropriate to share any information with a new school or college in the event of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme, and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

7.0 Pupil Protection

7.1 Everyone who works at the School has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils. They should be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and other safeguarding concerns such as child-on-child abuse, self-harming, body image issues, mental health concerns and know what to do and who to speak to if they become concerned about a pupil or if a pupil discloses to them. Thorpe House takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and will investigate any allegations with utmost diligence.

7.2 The following is intended as a reference for School staff and parents/carers if they become concerned that a pupil is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

The Children Act 1989 defines abuse as when a pupil is suffering or is likely to suffer 'significant harm'. Harm means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development. Four categories of abuse are identified - Neglect, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Emotional Abuse.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Categories of Harm or Abuse:

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

The School will pay close attention to other forms of harm potentially affecting children. These are examples only. Staff must be alert to specific issues at all times and take the required actions to raise concerns.

- child abduction
- child missing from education – please see separate policy
- child missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- child sexual violence (CSV)
- bullying including harassment, child-on-child abuse, cyberbullying - please see separate policy
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- peer-on-peer abuse
- private fostering



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- preventing radicalisation
- sexting and nude selfies
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

Signs of Abuse, Harm and Additional Support

The School recognises that some children today are the victims of neglect and/or physical, sexual or emotional abuse and that staff of the School, by virtue of their day-to-day contact with and knowledge of the children in their care, are well placed to identify such abuse and offer support to children in need. The Law defines someone as a child until he or she is 18.

Children Act 1989 Section 17 – Places a duty on the local authority to provide services to children *in Need*:

“A child is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development ...[or] health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority... or...he/she is disabled”

Children Act 1989 Section 47 – Duty on the local authority to investigate cases where it is believed a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm:

*“where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, **significant harm.**”*

Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):

- the pupil says he/she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference;
- there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries;
- the pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour;
- the pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons;
- the pupil's development is delayed;
- the pupil loses or gains weight;
- the pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed; and
- the pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his or her parents or carers.
- the pupil has 'gone missing' from School for a period of time with little or no notice; or there is a pattern of repeated absence.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Any member of staff who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred should follow the procedure as laid out in this document

NOTE

These categories are not mutually exclusive and pupils may well be subject to more than one form of abuse.

- 7.3 Pupil abuse occurs to pupils of both sexes and of all ages and in all cultures, religions and social classes. All pupils have a right to be protected.

Identification of pupil abuse is difficult and normally requires both social and expert medical assessments. Medical assessments should only be conducted by a paediatrician or medical professional nominated by Children's Services or by the LADO.

Information on signs and symptoms is given at the appendices to this policy. It is not exhaustive and it should be remembered that abuse is only one of many causes which could produce any one symptom.

Initially, a situation may not seem particularly serious but it is worth remembering that prompt help given to a family in trouble may prevent a more serious situation from developing.

- 7.4 Staff must report to the Police cases where they discover that an act of FGM (female genital mutilation) appears to have been carried out. Unless the member of staff has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such cases with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

- 7.5 Children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The School's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing are detailed in the Missing Pupil Policy.

- 7.6 **Child abduction** is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As part of the PSHEE programme, reflecting the awareness that as children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. The lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Resources that are used include: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org

- 7.7 The school also addresses the reality of modern slavery. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

removal of organs. Where there is perceived to be an instance of a child victim of modern slavery, the school, as a First Responder Organisation, would make a referral to the NRM (National Referral mechanism). The school would also ensure the Local Authority children's services are contacted immediately. Child victims do not need to consent to enter the NRM, and as such, an NRM referral would always be made using the Modern Slavery Portal: <https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start>

Even though children do not need to consent to enter the NRM every effort should be made to ensure the child understands what is happening.

The DSL would also make a referral to the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG)

8.0 Supporting Pupils and addressing child-on-child abuse

8.1 The School recognises that a pupil who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame himself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

It is recognised that abuse can take place inside and outside of school or online and staff are reminded to be vigilant to the possibility that multiple safeguarding issues will overlap with one another.

8.2 The School recognises that it may provide the only stability in the lives of pupils who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. At the same time, all staff understand the need to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and never assume that the school community is not vulnerable to the possibility of abuse.

8.3 The School accepts that research shows that the behaviour of a pupil in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our School will support all pupils by:

- encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of School life including through the curriculum.
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the School.
- monitoring all absences from School and promptly addressing concerns about irregular attendance with the parent/carer. Any pupil absent for ten school days, where it has not been possible to make contact with a parent/carer, will be reported as a Pupil Missing in Education to the local authority via completing the online CME school notification form.
- If a child leaves Thorpe House School the Head (or Interim) will notify the Local Authority if the Head believes that the child is being home educated, has ceased to attend school, is medically unfit to attend school, is in custody or if the child has been permanently excluded.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- The Head (or Interim) will inform the local authority whenever children enter Thorpe House School at times other than at the normal transition points (Y3, Y7 and L6) or at times other than the start of the academic year. The DSL will ensure that any Child Protection files are transferred securely to a child's new school as soon as possible and that a confirmation of receipt is obtained.
 - Children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. If a child goes missing or runs away this may be linked to abuse or neglect, which may include Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation. It may also indicate mental health problems, risk of travelling to conflict zones, substance abuse, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Members of staff who suspect that a child has run away or gone missing should follow the Missing Pupil Policy.
 - liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of pupils.
 - if a pupil has medical needs, liaising with the parent/carer, GP and/or matron to ensure that an appropriate care plan is in place.
 - notifying Social Care (First Response) as soon as there is a significant concern.
 - ensuring that an up to date list of pupils who are subject to a Care Order or who are accommodated by the Local Authority is regularly reviewed and updated.
 - notifying Social Care (First Response) when a pupil attending the School is privately fostered. This means when a pupil lives with someone other than their parent, step-parent, aunt, uncle or grandparent for a period of more than 28 days.
 - seeking appropriate advice, support and guidance to enable relevant staff to critically evaluate safeguarding information and concerns, and to act on them appropriately.
 - providing continuing support to a pupil (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the School by ensuring that such concerns and School medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the DSL at the pupil's new School as a matter of urgency. The original copy of significant documents will be retained at our School, and photocopies forwarded as above.
- 8.4 The school takes bullying very seriously and bullying incidents are treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.
- 8.5 The school recognises that boys with SEND are a vulnerable group and we take particular care with regard to their safeguarding and wellbeing.
- 8.6 **Child-on-child abuse** can take different forms and it is recognised that child-on-child abuse may be taking place even if not reported:



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- Sexual violence (e.g. rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault) and sexual harassment (“unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” which can occur online and offline and is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment, and/or facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse). Staff are encouraged to read the government guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges)
- Examples of sexual harassment include:
 - Sexual comments
 - Sexual jokes/taunting
 - Physical behaviour such as brushing up against someone
 - Online sexual harassment which may include non-consensual sharing of images, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages on social media, sexual exploitation through coercion and threats.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- upskirting, typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence and may constitute sexual harassment. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.
- Physical abuse (e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling)
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying
- Sexting or Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (YPS) which refers specifically to the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Technology and the use of social media mean that children are at risk of online abuse (as well as face to face) and children can abuse their peers online through:
 - Abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages
 - Non-consensual sharing of indecent nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, especially around chat groups
 - Sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don’t want to receive such content
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

The risk of child-on-child abuse is minimised by staff understanding the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between peers so that it is not allowed to create an unsafe environment and a culture that normalises abuse and by explaining what abuse is during Form Times and assemblies as part of the PSHEE curriculum and setting out clear expectations for how pupils should approach other pupils within the structure of the core values of the school. The issue of consent is covered within the PSHEE curriculum. Any allegations of child-on-child abuse should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible who will record the allegation on CPOMS. The allegation will be investigated by senior pastoral



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

staff and appropriate sanctions applied. The police will be notified if there is evidence that a criminal act has been committed.

In the event of an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- The allegation should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible in person, by phone and supported by recording of recording on CPOMS which will trigger an e-mail alert.
- The victim should be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The DSL will make a risk and needs assessment which will consider the protection and support of the victim, the risk and needs of the alleged perpetrator and any actions necessary to protect children, adult students and staff.
- All details will be logged onto our CPOMS system and Sexual Harassment log.
- The DSL will consider:
 - The wishes of the victim
 - The nature of the alleged incidents
 - The ages of the children involved
 - The developmental stages of the children involved
 - Any power imbalance between the children
 - Whether the alleged incident is a one-off or part of a sustained pattern of abuse
 - Whether there are on-going risks to the victim, other children or staff
 - Whether there are related issues which may form a wider context
 - The DSL will engage with children's social care and other agencies, including the police, as necessary.
 - When an act that can be seen as a sexual harassment act on a Thorpe pupil on another Thorpe pupil. Staff should make parents aware the perpetrator and victim. Ideally the perpetrators parent should be invited into discuss this first with a Safeguarding Lead and another staff member present. All discussions should be recorded on CPOMS.
 - Where appropriate the Safeguarding lead should take advice from Social Care and ESAS.

The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities can be more prone to child-on-child group isolation than other children and will consider extra pastoral support for those children.

Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', staff should follow the procedures below rather than the School's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies:

- Staff do not need to wait for child to make a disclosure and should act on any concerns immediately. It may be that someone has overheard a conversation that suggests a child may have been harmed or a child's behaviour may be an indicator.
- Ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the child.
- Notify the DSL or DDSL immediately of the concern. In the event that this is not possible, the member of staff should contact BSCP themselves and speak to the first response Team to receive guidance and follow their direction on making a referral if deemed appropriate. It may also be the case that the BSCP advise notifying the police.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation. The School will take advice from the Buckinghamshire Children Safeguarding Partnership on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the alleged victim and perpetrator. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the Safeguarding Partnership, that parents are informed as soon as possible.

8.7 Early help for children may benefit pupils who have:

- A mental health need
- Health conditions
- A family member in prison or affected by parental offending
- A risk of honour based abuse
- Persistently been absent from education (including absences for part of the day)

9. Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse and can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity which includes physical contact and non-contact activities. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Child Sexual Exploitation can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

These activities can be broadly separated into two areas:

- sexual exploitation through street grooming
- online sexual exploitation.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Sexual exploitation through street grooming can include:

- grooming a child for a sexual purpose. This might involve befriending the child, gaining their trust, giving them drugs, alcohol or gifts, asking them to perform sexual acts as a favour or in exchange for something
- the movement of children within the UK for the purpose of sexually abusing them (also referred to as internal trafficking)
- the trafficking of children into the UK from other countries for the purpose of sexually abusing them
- controlling a child through physical or psychological means or through the use of drugs for a sexual purpose
- receiving money or goods in payment for someone to have sex with a child (also referred to as child prostitution)
- paying or exchanging goods for sex with a child.

Online sexual exploitation can include:

- grooming children online for the purpose of sexually abusing them. This might involve an adult pretending to be a child, befriending the child through online chat rooms, social networking websites, email, mobile telephone messaging, gaining their trust, stalking their online activities
- asking children to participate in non-contact sexual activities such as engaging in sexual conversations online or via mobile telephone
- asking children to take and share indecent images of themselves online or through a mobile telephone. This may be consensual or non-consensual.
- asking children to display sexualised behaviours or perform sexual acts that are recorded or shared live via webcam. This may include causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- the creation, storage and distribution of child abuse images (also referred to as child pornography or indecent images)
- arranging to meet a child in person for the purpose of sexually abusing them.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation. Signs include:

- unexplained gifts
- unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- drug use, alcohol abuse
- going missing, running away, homelessness
- disengagement with school, not in school, truancy, exclusion
- repeat sexually transmitted infections; in girls repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- inappropriate sexual behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- children who have older girlfriends or boyfriends
- association with older men
- hanging out with groups of older people, anti-social groups, other vulnerable peers
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- contact with known perpetrators
- self-harming, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault
- getting into/out of different cars
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing their location
- gang fights, gang membership
- engagement in offending, criminal activity
- police involvement, police records.

It is not the case that a set number of signs mean definitively that a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation. The more signs, however, the greater the risk of sexual exploitation.

Any member of staff who becomes concerned that a pupil may be at risk of child sexual exploitation should speak to the Deputy DSL for their section or DSL immediately.

10. Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)

HBA encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Such abuse often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation). Members of staff need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If a member of staff has a concern regarding a child that may be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the DSL (or Deputy) who will activate safeguarding procedures. In the case of FGM, since 31 October 2015, there is a mandatory duty to report it to the police and inform the DSL.

11. Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 came into effect on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic violence and abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been (i.e. including ex-partners), intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality and are “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act). The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background, can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The school will work with the police (Operation Encompass) to provide emotional and practical help to children who are victims of domestic abuse.

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening and those carrying out the abuse can act very different when other people are around. Children and young people might also feel frightened and confused, keeping the abuse to themselves.

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or bullying
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- drug or alcohol use
- eating disorders
- problems in school or trouble learning
- tantrums
- withdrawal.

12. Modern Slavery

12.1 The school also addresses the reality of modern slavery. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Where there is perceived to be an instance of a child victim of modern slavery, the school, as a First Responder Organisation, would make a referral to the NRM (National Referral mechanism). The school would also ensure the Local Authority children's services are contacted immediately. Child victims do not need to consent to enter the NRM, and as such, an NRM referral would always be made using the Modern Slavery Portal: <https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start>

12.2 Even though children do not need to consent to enter the NRM every effort should be made to ensure the child understands what is happening.

12.3 In the event of a case of modern slavery, the DSL will make a referral to the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG).

12.4 Indicators of modern slavery may include (but are not limited to):

- poor physical or mental health (Individuals with mental or physical health conditions may also make them more likely to become a victim of modern slavery in the future)
 - headaches
 - dizzy spells
 - chronic pain
 - untreated conditions
- physical injuries



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- scars
- psychological trauma
 - poor memory
 - poor concentration
 - problems with cognition
 - depression
 - anxiety
 - isolation
 - attachment and identity issues
- unexplained medical symptoms
- post-operative pain
- difficulties with relationships
- hostility
- aggression
- self-harm
- suicidal thoughts
- low self-esteem
- psychosis
- substance abuse
- going missing, unwillingness to explain their whereabouts
- change of personality
- excessive receipt of text messages/phone calls and or having multiple mobile phones/sim cards
- unexplained amounts of money, new items
- sexualized behaviour
- fearful and emotional about family or dependents

13. Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources;
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

It is recognized that children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), will consider referring the child into the Cyber Choices programme, a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

14. If a Pupil Reports Abuse

Thorpe House prides itself on its culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils, and on its excellent pastoral support structures.

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried, including their Form Tutor and Head of Section. It is important that the member of staff sets the boundaries firmly at the outset of such a conversation, making it clear that no one can offer absolute confidentiality. A pupil who is insistent upon confidentiality should be referred to an external source, such as ChildLine (details are given in the Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality Issues, which will be displayed in the homework diaries, and on notices in the sick bays). If the pupil is only prepared to speak if absolute confidentiality is guaranteed, the member of staff should terminate the conversation at that point. The adult should provide the DSL with a written account of what has transpired as a matter of urgency via CPOMS. The school also has several reporting incident boxes, located around the school, for pupils to leave notes to draw attention to possible abuse.

Information about possible abuse may come to a member of staff in several ways - direct allegation from a child that has been abused, through a friend, relative or other child, through a child's behaviour or through observation of an injury to the child.

In the case of an allegation being made by the child concerned or by a third party it is important to remember that:

- Defendants have been acquitted where leading questioning or inappropriate investigation has been proven.
- It is vital that subsequent enquiries should not be prejudiced by detailed questioning in school.

If a pupil decides to speak to a member of staff about the fact that either he, or a pupil known to them, is being bullied, harassed or abused, the member of staff should:

- React professionally, and remember that they are not carrying out an investigation, (which is a task for specialists).
- Take what the child says seriously, and calmly, without becoming emotionally involved.
- Make it clear why unconditional confidentiality cannot be offered, (drawing on the policy for pupils on confidentiality issues as necessary).
- Explain that any adult member of staff is obliged to inform the DSL, if safeguarding issues are involved, in order that specialist help can be arranged.
- Remind the pupil that they could speak directly to the DSL.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- Explain that only those who have a professional “need to know” will be told, and, if appropriate, measures will be set up to protect the pupil from retaliation and further abuse.
- Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell, and that he/she is not to blame for having being bullied or abused.
- Allow the child to tell his or her own story, without leading questions.
- Record what has been said, and allow the pupil to look at the notes and ensure that they are content that it is an accurate record. The notes should record the date, time and place of the conversation and should be signed. The notes should use names and not initials.
- Preserve all evidence such as notes, mobile phones containing text messages or clothing.
- Inform the DSL as soon as possible - at least by the end of the morning/afternoon session of that day.
- Inform the Head (or Interim) immediately in cases where abuse from a member of staff is alleged, or if the incident happened inside the school, or on a school trip. (If the Head (or Interim) is involved the Chairman of Governors should be told immediately).
- Where there are evident signs of physical injury, that may (or may not) be the result of abuse or bullying, medical help should be summoned, or the pupil should be taken to the sick bay. In serious cases, the Police should be informed from the outset.

Latest guidance in KCSIE 2022 further states that staff:

- Do not need to wait for a child to make a disclosure, they should act on any concerns immediately
- May overhear a conversation that suggest a child may have been harmed or a child's behaviour may be an indicator
- May confiscate devices for evidence to hand to the police, if the report includes an online element
- Can ask children outright if they've been harmed and what the nature of the harm was
- Should keep in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- Should reflect back, using the child's language, when hearing a report
- Should recognise it may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse

It is also important to remember that a disclosure could mean there have been other victims. This may mean that the school has to balance the victim's wishes against the school's responsibility to protect other children.

If a member of staff feels that a pupil's behaviour or words suggest that they are considering harming themselves or committing suicide the member of staff should inform the DSL as soon as possible.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the school during the investigation. This is in addition to following other steps within this policy as appropriate.

A bullying incident (including cyber-bullying) could be treated as abuse and therefore a child protection concern and will be covered by the remit of this policy if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes the requirement to refer any such abuse to social services.

In the event of a disclosure regarding child-on-child abuse, all children involved whether perpetrator or victim, are defined as being 'at risk'. All high level red sanctions for child-on-child will be noted separately from CPOMS on a bullying log.

The DSL will consider how best to support and monitor the pupil concerned through any process of investigation, liaising closely with parents, carers, Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP), or other agencies involved to identify the support strategies that will be appropriate. On being notified of a complaint or suspicion of abuse, the action to be taken by the DSL will take into account:

- the local inter-agency procedures of Bucks Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the Children's Social Care Office (CSCO) or the police;
- the child's wishes or feelings and
- duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.

If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the DSL will consult with the CSCO on a no names basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made immediately. If a referral is made by telephone, the DSL will confirm the referral in writing to the CSCO within 24 hours via a Multi-Agency Confirmation Form (MACF). If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the DSL will contact the CSCO again. The DSL will ensure that the child is kept up to date with appropriate information relating to the referral as advised by CSCO. In the case of pupil on pupil abuse then it is likely that all the pupils involved, whether perpetrator or victim, will be referred.

If it appears that the child has not suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm but that they would benefit from additional support then the DSL will make a referral to the relevant Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) through an Early Help Assessment (EHA) Form Part I and may also use the Family Common Assessment Framework (FCAF) procedure. The DSL and Heads of Section are aware of which pupils are already receiving support or who may be at risk.

In the case of serious harm, the Police will be informed from the outset.

If all parties agree that no clear case has been revealed, the DSL will ensure that a watching brief is maintained to monitor the child's continuing welfare.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) would provide advice and preside over the investigation of any allegation or suspicion of abuse directed against anyone working in the school.

All allegations will be reported to the LADO immediately and within one working day at the latest.

15. Mental Health

- 15.1 All staff should be 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.
- 15.2 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 15.3 Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- 15.4 If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the school's safeguarding policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.
- 15.5 All staff recognise that they have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

16. Confidentiality

- 16.1 The School recognises that all matters relating to pupil protection are confidential and that the DSL or Head will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff strictly on a need-to-know basis only. Only DSLs will be able to see safeguarding records via CPOMS. However, staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard pupils.
- 16.2 Staff will not keep duplicate or personal records of pupil protection concerns. All information will be reported to the DSL and securely stored only in the designated location within the School, separate from the pupil records.
- 16.3 Provision is in place for the information to be accessed in the absence of the DSL in an emergency.
- 16.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a pupil to keep secrets which might compromise the pupil's safety or well-being, or that of another.

17. Supporting Staff



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- 17.1 The School recognises that staff working in the School who have become involved with a pupil who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 17.2 The School will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support. This could be provided by the Head (or Interim) or another trusted colleague, or a representative of a professional body or trade union, as appropriate.
- 17.3 In consultation with all staff, we have adopted a code of conduct for staff at our School. This forms part of staff induction and is in the staff handbook. We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour in order to define and underpin the safe working practices adhered to within our School.
- 17.4 The School is committed to safer recruitment processes. Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work, for example, checking social media and addressing any concerns in an interview, right to work checks, additional overseas checks (if necessary), verifying identity, taking up references, checking work history and confirming medical fitness for the role. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the School may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service. Full details of the School's safer recruitment procedures for checking the suitability of staff is set out in the School's Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- 17.5 The School has protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or pupils themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised. On attending the School visiting speakers will be required to show original current identification documents including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence.
- 17.6 The school has a rigorous induction process for new staff, see induction policy, that focuses on safeguarding. As part of their induction all staff are made aware of systems within Thorpe which support safeguarding and these are explained to them as part of staff induction. It is an expectation that all new staff read and familiarise themselves with the following:
- KCSIE Part 1
 - the child protection policy;
 - the behaviour policy;
 - the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
 - the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
 - the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

18. Whistleblowing

If a member of staff has concerns about the school's approach to safeguarding, he or she should report it at once to the Head (or Interim) (or to the Chair of Governors where the concern relates to the Head). Concerns about safeguarding do not, in this instance, include non-safeguarding allegations against individual members of staff which is addressed in the school's separate whistleblowing policy which should be followed in such cases.

Whistleblowing concerns relate to the school's approach to safeguarding and might include a belief that the Safeguarding staff (or an individual member of the Safeguarding team) are not following procedures appropriately. This may be in response to the handling of an individual case or a wider mishandling of safeguarding situations.

Wherever possible the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No member of staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that they do so with reasonable belief that their concern is substantially true and in the public interest.

19. Staff Behaviour (See Staff Code of Conduct)

- 19.1 In general, pupils should be encouraged to discuss issues that are troubling them with their parents or guardians.

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a pupil. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Where possible, a physical gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and pupil at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car.

- 19.2 Physical contact with pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

- 19.3 Physical Restraint



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a pupil is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL or Head who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the School's nursery/EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their pupil the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

19.4 Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Staff should not give their personal mobile telephone numbers to pupils except in an emergency. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones. The Group Leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The school mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The Group Leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit.

Avoid comments to or about pupils which could be taken to have sexual overtones. Group discussions which could be interpreted as having sexual overtones must only take place if they are justified in the context of the teaching programme. Similarly, the use of books, videos and films of an explicit or sensitive nature should always have a clear link to the scheme of work and in the case of the latter, be of an acceptable 'rating' for the age group for whom they will be used.

Take special care in a one-to-one situation with a pupil and if possible inform a colleague if this situation arises. If possible, leave the door open and position furniture appropriately between the member of staff and the pupil. This is particularly relevant to music teachers.

Staff should take particular care to ensure that their conduct should not be misconstrued when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of school trips or extra-curricular activities. Standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff should be no different from that which applies within school.

Members of staff should exercise caution if invited to attend non-school social functions with pupils, outside school hours. They should, ideally, have another colleague with them



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

and must be aware that their presence will be taken as meaning they are a teacher "on duty" or "responsible".

If a pupil either intentionally or accidentally makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff or makes a suggestive approach to a member of staff, the member of staff must tell the pupil that his/her language or behaviour is inappropriate, record the incident and report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This is necessary should accusations be made later. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must then decide on the appropriate course of action.

Staff must be aware that it is a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship or engage in sexual activity with a child under 18 or a young adult over 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

Staff should not transport pupils in their cars without prior permission from the DSL/ Head, except in an emergency, or if express permission has been given by the parent(s). If transport is in a member of staff's car for the purposes of a school event prior permission should also be received from the parents. Staff must not give pupils casual lifts though it is acknowledged that if a member of staff has children of their own within the school there may be instances where pupils are transported in a vehicle outside of the school context, for example on a social occasion to a party at the weekend.

Repeated e-mail (or letter) communication between staff and pupils may also be open to misinterpretation. Communication via e-mail, of course, remains a matter of public record, even if deleted. Staff must always use a school email address and not their personal one.

Members of staff should not be in contact with current pupils using social media sites. Furthermore, pupils must not make friendship requests to or accept friendship requests from members of staff and equally, members of staff must not make or accept friendship requests from pupils. If a member of staff receives a friendship request from a pupil then the request must be immediately rejected and the matter reported to the Head (interim) as appropriate who in turn will speak to the pupil.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all schools in the UK. Hitting a pupil, whether in the spirit of fun or otherwise, or any other form of physical restraint is unacceptable. Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to calm the situation have failed.

Staff should respect a pupil's privacy in toilets, showers and changing rooms. It is advised that on school trips and expeditions that staff and pupils do not use facilities at the same time. When at a motorway service station, staff accompanying a trip should use the facilities before pupils or just before returning to the coach once the pupils have already returned to the vehicle.

On a residential trip, if a pupil falls ill, the pupil should remain in their own room and medical attention given in view of others, whether it be in their room or in the corridor or



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

in a medical room. Staff should not be on their own with a pupil under any circumstances. Pupils should not be coming into staff bedrooms to receive treatment.

If a pupil falls ill on a trip and requires hospital treatment, a staff member should remain with the pupil until parents have arrived and are able to take parental responsibility. This applies even if a parent has given consent for an ambulance crew to take their child to hospital.

19.5 Transporting pupils

It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a senior member of staff.

19.6 Confidentiality

Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

19.7 Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

Photographs of pupils will only be taken with their parents' permission (provided in writing via consent form). Photographs taken using staff iPads or the School mobile phone, e.g. at fixtures or on trips, should be downloaded to the School photography folder on return to School and immediately deleted from the device. No staff member is permitted to take photographs on their personal mobile telephone.

The Lower School site is a no mobile phone zone and use of phones is prohibited in all areas except for the Lower School staff room.

19.8 Allegations against a member of staff

19.8.1 Allegations that may meet the harms threshold: initial response

Where allegations may meet the threshold that a person working in the school (including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers) may pose a risk of harm, that person will have:

- 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;



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- 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

In such instances:

- The school will do basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish facts before contacting the local authority designated officer (LADO)
- A case manager (likely the Head/Interim) will designate a lead investigator to carry out investigations into allegation
- The case manager will discuss any concerns about the welfare of other children in the community or member of staff's family with the DSL, and make a risk assessment. The DSL may then need to make a referral to children's social services.
- In the event of behaviour that has happened outside of school it may be that this might make an individual unsuitable to work with children (known as transferrable risk) and where appropriate the case manager will carry out an assessment of transferrable risk

19.8.2 Allegations that may meet the harms threshold: allegation outcomes

- As another alternative to suspending a member of staff, the school may consider moving the child to a class where they won't come into contact with the staff member
- No information about the staff member involved will be shared with other staff or parents not directly involved
- For reports found to be 'unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious', the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps
- For reports found to be 'deliberately invented or malicious', the school that will consider possible disciplinary action in line with the behaviour policy

19.8.3 Allegations that don't meet the harms threshold ('low level' concerns)

The school seeks to promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

In the event of allegations that do not meet the harms threshold, the school will still take the concerns seriously and take appropriate action to safeguard children.

Thorpe House encourages an open and transparent culture which enables the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution. These professional boundaries are set out clearly in the **Staff Code of Conduct**.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

A 'low level concern' does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold which indicates a person would pose a risk of harm. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

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

Examples of such behaviour could 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.

The Head will record any allegations, including those that do not meet the 'harms threshold' and will take appropriate action to safeguard children.

20. **Anti-Bullying**

Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under pupil protection procedures.

21. **Racist incidents**

We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under pupil protection procedures.

22. **Gang Activity**

We acknowledge that incidents of gang activity (www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-pupils-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity) may lead to consideration under pupil protection procedures.

23. **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) including county lines**

Child Criminal Exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. Girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too, even though their experience may be different.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people, or vehicle crime and threatening/committing serious violence.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- children who go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- children who have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- children who are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- children who are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- children who are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- children who owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- children who have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: 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. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

It is recognised that children may become trapped as they or their families may be threatened with violence and they may be coerced or entrapped into debt or into carrying weapons. They may carry weapons as a form of protection.

It is important that children involved in criminal exploitation need to be treated as victims themselves (particularly older children), even though they may commit crimes themselves.

24. Health and Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our pupils both physically within the School environment and undertaking School trips and visits.

25. e-Safety and Social Media (see relevant policy)

25.1 It is recognised that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks and the school takes precautions to restrict access to mobile devices whilst at school and also seeks to educate the pupils about the responsible use of mobile devices and interactions on social media.

25.2 All staff should be aware of the School policy on e-safety and social media which sets out our expectations relating to:

- creating a safer online environment.
- giving everyone the skills, knowledge and understanding to help pupils and young people stay safe online.
- inspiring safe and responsible use and behaviour.
- use of mobile phones both within School and on School trips/outings.
- use of camera equipment, including camera phones.
- what steps to take if you have concerns and where to go for help.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

25.3 The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but for the purposes of the safeguarding policy is categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example:
 - pornography
 - fake news
 - racism
 - misogyny
 - self-harm
 - suicide
 - anti-Semitism
 - radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example:
 - 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; for example:
 - making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography)
 - sharing other explicit images and online bullying
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If it is thought that pupils, students or staff are at risk it will be reported to our service provider, Riverlite, and reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)

25.4 Parents are actively encouraged to play a part in protecting their children from inappropriate use of the internet and social media and are invited into the school for an e-safety awareness event each year.

25.5 The ever-changing nature of e-safety and social media means that the school will regularly (at least annually) review what it is doing to address these changes.

25.6 The school will be sent a break down by Riverlite of the hits on the school filters each week. This will be viewed by the DSL\Interim Head and any concerns may be raised if safeguarding and/or behaviour concern.

25.7 As advised from KCSIE 2022, the school will give regular eSafety advice to parents via the school newsletter.

26. Cultural Issues

We are aware of the cultural diversity of the community and seek to work sensitively to address the individual cultures of our students and their families as they relate to safeguarding.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

27. Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

The guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an [online child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

28. Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

29. Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation: [here](#).

Related documents and policies:

Staff handbook;

A.5 ICT Acceptable Use Agreements

A.12 E-safety and use of mobile technology in school policy

A.18 Recruitment, Selection and disclosures policy (covering safer recruitment)

B.8 School behaviour and sanctions;

B.9 Complaints

B.10 Anti-bullying policy

C.29 Health & Safety policy

C.41 Pupil supervision

C.43 Risk and Risk Assessment policy

C.47 Whistle-blowing



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

INFORMATION ON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse (Injury)

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

Always remember that symptoms that are difficult to explain could be the result of inflicted injuries.

The following is not definitive or exhaustive but does provide a guide to the more common non-accidental injuries and taken in conjunction with the skin map indicates situations in which more expert advice should be sought:

Bruises

Most injuries to pupils are accidental and can be explained simply, all pupils receive bumps and bruises as a result of normal play. Most falls or accidents produce one bruise on a single, usually bony, surface.

Bruising in accidents is usually on the front of the body as pupils generally fall forwards, and there may be marks on their hands where they have tried to break their fall.

Bruising may be faint or severe. Some skins show bruising very easily, others do not. Bruises on black pupils for instance are more difficult to detect.

There may be a pattern to bruising, e.g. after the weekend.

Unusual sites for accidental bruising

- Back, backs of legs, buttocks (except occasionally along the bony surface of the spine).
- Mouths, cheeks, behind the ear.
- Stomach, chest.
- Under the arm.
- Genital, rectal area (but ask if the pupil is learning to ride a bike).
- Neck

Bruising to buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital or rectal areas, could be an indicator of sexual abuse.

Common types of non-accidental injuries:

- Symmetrical black eyes are rarely accidental, although they may occur where there is a fracture of the head or nose and blood seeps from the injury site to settle in the loose tissue around the eye. A single black eye may be the result of an accident or abuse. Careful



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

consideration is required whenever there is an injury around the eye. It should be noted where the lids are swollen and tender and if there is damage to the eye itself.

- Bruising in or around the mouth (especially in small babies).
- Grasp marks on arms – or chest of a small pupil.
- Finger marks (e.g. may be 3-4 small bruises on one side of the face and one on the other).
- Symmetrical bruising (especially on the ears).
- Outline bruising (e.g. belt marks, hand prints).
- Linear bruising (particularly on the buttocks or back).
- Bruising on soft tissue with no obvious explanation.
- Different age bruising on a pupil at any one time other than on the common sites of accidental injury in a pupil of that age.

Bites

These can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bites are oval or crescent shaped. If the distance is more than 3cm across, they must have been caused by an adult or a pupil with permanent teeth.

Burns/Scalds

It can be very difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns but as a general rule of thumb, burns or scalds with clear outlines are suspicious as are burns of uniform depth over a larger area and also splash marks above the main burn areas (caused by hot liquid being thrown).

Remember also:

- A responsible adult should check the temperature of the bath before a pupil gets in.
- A pupil is unlikely to sit down voluntarily in too hot a bath and cannot accidentally scald its bottom without also scalding its feet.
- A pupil getting into too hot water of its own accord will struggle to get out again and there will be splash marks.
- Small round burns may be cigarette burns (but may be friction burns, and accidental, if along the bony protuberances of the spine).

Scars

Pupils may have scars, but notice should be taken of an exceptionally large number of scars of differing age (especially if coupled with current bruising), unusual shaped scars (e.g. round ones from possible cigarette burns), or of large scars that are from burns or lacerations that did not receive medical treatment.

Fractures

These should be suspected if there is pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. The most common non-accidental fractures are to the long bones (i.e. arms, legs, ribs). It is very rare for a pupil under one year to sustain a fracture accidentally. Fractures also cause pain, and it is difficult for a parent to be unaware that a pupil has been hurt.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Factors associated with injuries which may be non-accidental are:

- Where the explanation is not consistent with the injury or with the stage of development of the pupil.
- Where there are changes of explanation, no explanation or an excessively plausible explanation of injuries observed.
- Where there has been an unreasonable delay in seeking medical advice which is obviously needed.
- Where there is a history of frequently repeated injury even though the explanation for each individual occurrence appears adequate.
- Constant complaints about a pupil (realistic or unrealistic).
- Over-hasty or violent reaction to a pupil's naughty or annoying behaviour.
- Unrealistic expectations of a pupil's performance, i.e. toilet training, walking, feeding, etc.

Neglect

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

Warning signs apart from the pupil's obviously neglected appearance include:

- Inappropriate clothing or lack of clothing and an unawareness of the parent/carer that a pupil is inadequately dressed for the prevailing weather conditions.
- A pupil who appears under-fed and is frequently unwell with a permanent runny nose.
- A pupil who is left unsupervised or with a variety of different carers.
- A pupil thriving away from home.
- A pupil with poor language development and/or other developmental delay.
- A pupil whose parents persistently fail appropriately to seek and/or follow medical advice.

Non-organic failure to thrive may be characterised by:

- Pupils with poor weight gain demonstrable on centile charts.
- Poor growth, sparse hair and poor skin tone.
- Perverse eating habits, gorging food, stealing food, enormous appetite.
- Poor sleeping patterns.
- Developmental delay.
- Solitary play behaviours with poor peer group relationship but attention seeking from adults.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Sexual Abuse

It has become increasingly apparent in recent years that pupils are sexually abused to a far greater extent than was previously recognised or acknowledged.

It is essential that professionals in contact with pupils accept that pupils of both sexes and all ages from infancy to adolescence are abused.

The abuse is often kept very secret by a variety of methods and may carry on for considerable periods of time before it comes to anyone's attention.

Sexual abuse often presents in a veiled way. Although some victims have genital injuries or sexually transmitted disease, relatively few show such a florid picture.

Recognition of sexual abuse is more likely to come from either a direct statement from the pupil or more often from suspicion based on the pupil's circumstances, behaviour or physical symptoms or signs.

The following are commonly-observed physical, emotional, and behavioural indicators but the lists are not exhaustive and none of the signs need to be present in a pupil who has been abused sexually.

Those indicators marked with an asterisk * should be taken as very serious indicators that sexual abuse has occurred until proven otherwise, as should any allegation by a pupil that he or she has been sexually exploited. The others should alert professionals to the possibility of abuse. Clearly, suspicion increases when several features are present together.

Physical Signs

- *Genital lacerations or bruising.
- *Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Abnormal dilation of anus or urethra.
- Itching, soreness or unexplained bleeding from anus.
- Pain when passing urine, recurrent urinary tract infections, secondary enuresis.
- Faecal soiling or retention.

Behavioural Signs

- Sexually explicit or frequent sexual preoccupation in talk and play.
- Sexually provocative relationships with adults.
- Hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words, play or drawings.
- Excessive sexual awareness or knowledge of sexual matters, inappropriate to a pupil's age and development.

General

- Undue fear of men.
- Running away from home.
- Suicide attempts and self-mutilation.
- Pupil psychiatric problems, including behavioural problems, withdrawal, onset of wetting or soiling, severe sleep disturbances.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

- Behaviour indicating a role reversal in the home, e.g. a daughter taking over the mothering role.
- Inappropriate displays of affection between fathers/daughters or mothers/sons, e.g. flirtatious or seductive behaviour, more like lovers than parent and child.

Behaviour especially noticeable in School

- Learning problems, poor concentration, sudden drop in School performance. Although for some sexually abused pupils, School may be a haven and they arrive early, are reluctant to leave and may perform well.
- Marked reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for PE, swimming etc.
- Poor peer group relationships and inability to make friends.
- Regular avoidance and fear of medical examinations.
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may take the form of failure to meet a pupil's need for affection, attention and stimulation (even though good physical care may be provided) or there may be constant verbal abuse, rejection, scape-goating, threats of violence or attempts to frighten the pupil.

Conversely, some parents may be so over-protective and possessive that they prevent normal social contact or normal physical activity. Both states can be difficult to document or evaluate, but may have crippling long term effects on a pupil's development.

Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Pupils suffering from emotional abuse may:

- Exhibit excessively clingy or attention seeking behaviour.
- Be fearful, withdrawn or emotionally 'flat'.
- Constantly seek to please.
- Be over-ready to relate to anyone, even strangers.
- Have an impaired ability for enjoyment or play.
- Lack curiosity and natural exploratory behaviour.
- Be retarded in language development.
- Have a low self-esteem and feeling of worthlessness.
- Show eating disturbances, growth failure or lack body tone.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Domestic violence is very damaging to a pupil's emotional development. Where a pupil is living with domestic violence, Schools should consider making a referral to Social Care if the pupil shows any indicators of significant harm.

Certain characteristics have been found to be associated with all forms of abuse, including:

- a history of abuse in the childhood of one or both parents.
- violent behaviour of the parents towards each other or other signs of stress in the adult relationship.
- immature parents often feeling socially isolated.
- parents of low intelligence.
- parents who have significant mental problems.
- pupils with special needs, especially communication difficulties.
- a recent pregnancy.
- parents who have previously abused a child or where there has been suspicion of previous abuse.
- situations of social stress, e.g. financial difficulty, poor housing.
- situations where there appears to be a lack of 'bonding' between the parent and the pupil.

Some pupils may be more vulnerable to abuse due to particular circumstances such as:

- pupils at risk of harm from abuse linked to a belief in spirit possession on the part of their parent, carer or wider community.
- pupils being trafficked from abroad.
- pupils at risk of being forced into marriage.
- modern slavery

The School is committed to ensuring that mechanisms are in place to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of colour or background, have equal access to services of the same quality and are treated as individuals requiring appropriate care.



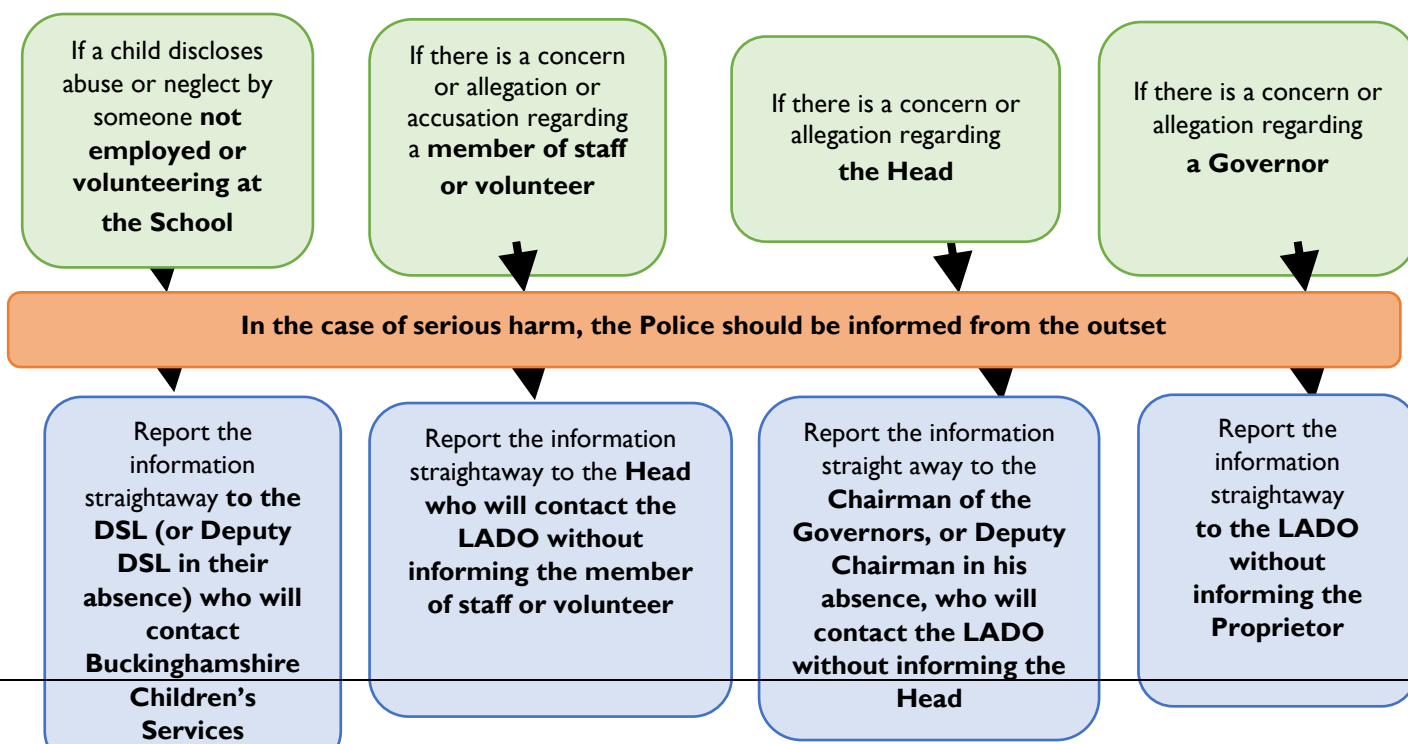
All teaching staff have access to the training for CPOMS. For staff who have not been trained or who cannot access a computer, they should complete the safeguarding alert form (below) as a matter of urgency.

Safeguarding concerns are raised in three ways on CPOMS dependent on:

1. **Cause for concern** – this is any ‘niggling doubt’ staff may have regarding a small issue that may lead to a future safeguarding concern, EG Lateness, untidiness, poor dress etc.
2. **Additional Services** – any additional family support or information you may support the parents with to support home life.
3. **Contact with External Agency** – This is when a referral has been made by the school about disclosure or we have contacted them to speak about the incident for advice.

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE ON A CHILD

The following safeguarding procedures apply where you become aware a member of staff/volunteer has, or a child discloses to you that an adult has behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child.





SAFEGUARDING/PREVENT ALERT FORM

Safeguarding concerns should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead via CPOMS or as a paper copy if this is not possible.

Pupil's name:	
Class :	Form tutor:
Details of concern:	
Any other relevant information:	
Signed:	Date:
Name, printed:	Position:

The following section is for the Designated Safeguarding Lead to complete:

Action, including names of anyone contacted within BSCP:



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Follow-up:

THE ROLE OF THE LADO (LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER)

The role of the LADO is set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)* and is governed by the Authorities duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and SSCB Inter-Agency Policy and Procedures. This guidance outlines procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone who is self-employed.

The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of 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 or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

The LADO is responsible for:

- Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers.
- Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom an allegation is made.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.
- Recommending a referral and chairing the strategy meeting in cases where the allegation requires investigation by police and/or social care.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO is available to discuss any concerns and to assist the school in deciding whether there is a need to make a referral and/or take any immediate management action to protect a child.



THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL

Keeping Children Safe in Education makes it clear that anybody can make a direct referral to **Children's Services including the LADO and other external agencies.**