Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. Aims

Phoenix Bay School aims to ensure that:

Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.

Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.

All staff are able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, kept safe and never made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

2. Legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- Teacher Standards 2012
- Information Sharing 2024
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- DfE guidance on Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2022
- UKCIS guidance on the sharing of nude and semi-nude images 2022
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales 2023
- The Prevent Duty for England and Wales 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty 2012 (PSED)
- Filtering and Monitoring standards for schools and colleges
- DfE Data Protection Guidance for schools 2024
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984)

- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and the Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Children are defined as everyone under the age of 18.

The following three safeguarding partners will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- Torbay, Devon and Plymouth local authorities (LA)
- Torbay & South Devon clinical commission group (CCG)
- Devon and Cornwall Police, under the direction of the Chief Officer for Police

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

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

Working together to Safeguarding Children Definition

- Providing held and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

4. Equality statement

Phoenix Bay School recognise that some children are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children.

We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances.

In some cases, possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs, or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.

Some children may also find it harder to tell others about abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

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

- is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (regardless of whether they have a statutory education, health, and care plan).
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.

- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school, colleges and is alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- has returned home to their family from care.
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- is at risk of being radicalised.
- is a privately fostered child.
- has an imprisoned parent or carer or is affected by parental offending.
- is experiencing mental health, wellbeing difficulties.

5. Roles and responsibilities

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

Phoenix Bay School plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing students for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment.

5.1 All staff

All staff at Phoenix Bay are expected to read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) in full.

All staff will:

- Read and understand KCSIE 2026 Part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, along with this policy, the school's Relationships and Behaviour policy, E-Safety policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have read the guidance and policies and there are no updates on their DBS.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)

All staff will be aware of:

- the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online
- safeguarding issues that often overlap and can put children at risk of harm, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- school systems to support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct policy, the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour and Relationship policy, On-line Safety Policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- the universal services, community-based early help and the targeted early help level of Family Help for Devon, Torbay, Plymouth and any other linked local authority(ies) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- the fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- what to look for to identify children who need help or protection
- mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

At Phoenix Bay School the DSL:

- is Ben Miller, a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- holds ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring)
- is available during term time school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- can also be contacted out of school hours, if necessary, via their mobile phone and email.

- will liaise with the Principal to inform them of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult – see Appendix 5
- will liaise with the Principal to ensure the school fully adheres to the DfE searching, screening and confiscation guidance for school paying particular attention to the requirements in respect of strip searching and the encouragement to involve parents in decision making
- acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole school community
- will have the necessary knowledge and understanding to recognise possible children at risk of contextual and/or extra familial abuse or exploitation
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is appropriately trained with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals but at least annually
- will refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the MASH, and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Enquiries must be followed up in writing, if referred by telephone
- will keep detailed, accurate records, either written or using appropriate online software, of all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. The rationale for all decision making will be recorded alongside concerns
- will ensure that all such records are kept confidential, stored securely and are separate from pupil records, until the child's 25th birthday
- will ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional file is marked on the pupil records
- will ensure that when a pupil leaves the school, relevant child protection information is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file) within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives ensuring secure transit and that confirmation of receipt is obtained
- in addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL of the new school or college in advance of a child leaving; for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. All transfers should be made securely
- will liaise with the LA, its safeguarding partners and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- has a working knowledge of Torbay, Devon, Plymouth and any other linked Local Authority safeguarding procedures
- will ensure that either they, or another staff member, attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings; contribute to assessments, and provide a report where required which has been shared with the parents/carers

- will ensure that if a pupil has a child protection plan and is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days their social worker will be alerted to the fact
- will ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood, and agree to work within the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Relationships and Behaviour policy, Staff Code of conduct and KCSiE 2026 and ensure that the policies are used appropriately
- will organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training, and provide a minimum of annual updates on (including online safety) for all school staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences
- will contribute to and provide, with the Principal, Directors and Advisory Board, the "Audit of Statutory Duties and Associated Responsibilities" (S175/157 audit) to be submitted annually to the relevant LA
- understands locally agreed processes for providing family help assessments and intervention and will support members of staff where early/family help is appropriate, or completion of the exploitation tool is necessary; and
- will ensure that the name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and deputies, are clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

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

5.3 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)

All DDSLs are trained to the same level as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are:

- Nev Stanton
- George Hughes
- Hannah Kenny

In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the Principal will determine the deputy responsible for assuming all the functions above.

5.4 Directors and Advisory Board

The Directors and Advisory Board will ensure that they facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies will operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

The Directors and Advisory Board will approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law and holding the Principal accountable for its implementation.

The Directors will appoint a link director to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. This is always a different person from the DSL. The link Safeguarding director is Jacqui Sloane.

The chair of the Advisory Board will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Principal, where appropriate (see Appendix 3).

All Directors and Advisory Board members will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety every year. Section 15 of this policy has information on how Directors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.5 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems, which support safeguarding, including this policy and CPOMS, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to Parents/Carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see Appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, although they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- They should also identify and engage with key professionals, such as DSL's, SENDCo's, Social Workers, Mental Health Leads, and others.

5.6 Virtual School Heads

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of students with a social worker.

6. Confidentiality

Confidentiality and sharing of personal data are addressed within the GDPR Policy https://phoenixbay.co.uk/policies/ in line with DfE Data Protection guidance for schools. Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. If staff need to

share ‘special category personal data’, the DPA 2018 contains ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child’s best interests.

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There’s no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn’t consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there’s another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim’s wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL will consider that:
    - Parents or carers should usually be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
    - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to the local authority children’s social care
    - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims’ identities
- The government’s information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 ‘golden rules’ for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers, and Directors across Phoenix Bay School must follow the procedures outlined below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

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

If a child is in immediate danger or in an emergency dial 999

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm. Anyone can make a referral.

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly and ensure that a child protection concern form is completed on the school safeguarding system, CPOMS.

Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership (TSCP):

https://www.torbaysafeguarding.org.uk

Torbay Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	01803 208100
Torbay 'MASH' email	mash@torbay.gov.uk
Out of Hours emergency duty team	0300 4564 876
Or the police	101 non urgent/ 999

Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership (Devon SCP):

https://www.devonscp.org.uk/make-a-request-for-support/

MASH enquiry	0345 155 1071
Out of Hours emergency duty team	0345 6000 388
Or the police	101 non urgent/ 999

Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP):

https://plymouthscb.co.uk/making-a-referral/

Family's First Team	01752 668000
MASH enquiry	01752 307535
Or the police	101 non urgent/ 999

7.2 Child Protection Procedures

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence.

Phoenix Bay School recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a relative is unwell, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or needs safeguarding.

In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and then record on CPOMS. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a pupil making a report of abuse or displaying behaviours that suggest they may have been abused.

We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to tell someone they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

A child who tells/shows that they have been abused may have to tell their story on several subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the pupil staff will:

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and not overact or give any indication of being shocked or alarmed – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk.
- take what the child is telling them seriously.
- avoid asking leading questions, where possible allow the child to take the lead.
- limit questions to those necessary to try and obtain a context.
- where sexual abuse has been alleged or a report of criminal abuse do not ask additional questions, inform the child you will contact DSL for advice, however, do not stop the child talking.
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations.
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.

- avoid admonishing the child for not telling them sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong; and
- tell the child what will happen next.

If a pupil talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible on CPOMS in the child's own words. Staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should include the time and location of conversation, the member of staff's initials recording the conversation including their job role in brackets, and it should also detail who else was present.

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

If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL and DDSL's are not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or take advice from the local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible (MASH).

Early help (family help)

Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, including from universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help.

If early help is appropriate, the appropriate member of school staff will liaise with other agencies in setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

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

All school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs

- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage,
- and is a privately fostered child.

Young carers

Phoenix Bay School staff are alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.

Referral

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

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will decide within one working day of a referral what course of action to take and will inform the person who made the referral of the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

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

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's MASH and/or the police immediately.

Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

7.4 If you discover that FGM has taken place, or a student is at risk of FGM

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police.

The duty applies to all persons employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' within Phoenix Bay School, whether or not they have qualified teacher status.

Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per Phoenix Bay Schoolchild protection procedures.

If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101.

School staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators of FGM which are set out in Appendix 4. Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per Phoenix Bay School's child protection procedures. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

7.5 Radicalisation and Extremism

Phoenix Bay School is clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follow Department for Education guidance.

Phoenix Bay School seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

7.6 Mental health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education 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. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise.

These could include:

- significant changes in behaviour,
- ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- withdrawing from social situations,
- not wanting to do things they usually like, and
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. Phoenix Bay will ensure that any interventions offered are evidenced as safe and effective and appropriate for the need and phase of education.

If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should follow this child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy. If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

7.7 Racist Incidents

A racist incident is 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'. (Recommendation 12 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry).

This includes refusal to co-operate with others on the basis of race, racist remarks or jokes, racial intimidation and name-calling or cyber bullying.

Racism, as with other forms of discrimination, can be considered a hate crime. As such it may be necessary to report this to the police. The behaviour policy will be considered for all incidents of racism.

All racist incidents will be recorded sent to the local authority.

7.8 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers,

volunteers, and contractors), then: This should be referred to the principal, who will consider whether an onward referral to the LADO is required.

If the concerns/allegations are about the principal, this should be referred to the chair of advisory board. The principal/chair will then follow the procedures set out in Appendix 3, if appropriate.

A low-level concern is low level concern is adult behaviour to children that does not meet the harm threshold but causes other staff members or children to notice, for example, having favourites, using inappropriate language or taking photographs on their mobile phone. This concern will be raised with the principal who will deal will investigate it and, where necessary give words of advice and undertake monitoring that the behaviour isn't repeated again.

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school's low-level concerns policy.

If an allegation is received relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing The LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

7.9 Allegations of abuse made against other students

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. All staff should be clear as to the school's child-on-child abuse policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should recognise that racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety and should be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in schools it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse (whether these concerns are thought to have taken place on or off-site) they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). As part of this, staff should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example immediately after school).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and in

worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator. As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that child-on-child abuse is preventable. As well as knowing how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early, staff should know that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or follow the guidance for reporting a concern in section 7. Recognising abuse and taking action.

Child-on-Child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents,
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse),
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm,
- physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment - which may include misogyny/misandry,
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI,
- 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 (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or dismissed as "banter," "just having a laugh," or "part of growing up," as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for students.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of students harming other students will be addressed under our school's Behaviour and Relationships policy; however, this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- It is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- It could put students in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos

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

- Staff record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female students, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure students are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alerted to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners

- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

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

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

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

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or LA children's social care to determine this

- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.10 Nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with this child protection policy. The DSL will take a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual. All such incidents require a safeguarding response, with a proportionate approach that considers the age, development, and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

The DSL or equivalent will refer to the full 2024 guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, for managing incidents.

In the latest advice for education settings (UKCIS, 2024), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. Nudes and semi-nudes can be shared online via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps, forums, or involve sharing between devices using offline services. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'. The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nudes are not always sexually or criminally motivated.

This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency.

What to do if an incident comes to your attention

Report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent immediately.

- **Never** view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – **this is illegal** (see note below).
    - **Note**: In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for the DSL (or equivalent) only to view the image to safeguard the child or young person. That decision should be based on the professional judgement of the DSL (or equivalent).
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- **Do not** delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- **Do not** ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).

- **Do not** share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- **Do not** say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- **Do** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

Initial review meeting

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

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

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

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- What the DSL knows about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the imagery is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

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

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the students involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

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

Informing parents

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through either the local neighbourhood police or by dialling 101.

Recording incidents

All Incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded.

Curriculum coverage

Students are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nude or semi-nude images as part of our PSHE, Relationship and Sex Education and computing curriculum. Teaching covers the following:

What it is

- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation. Students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

The policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes The school will follow up in the event of an incident.

8. Reporting Systems for our Students

Where there is a safeguarding concern, Phoenix Bay School will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

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

To achieve this, we will

- Put systems in place for students to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well-promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for students
- Make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Students have access to a 'child-friendly safeguarding policy', which is accessible to students in classrooms and on the website
- We educate students about the 'child-friendly safeguarding policy' through discussions in our relationship and sex education curriculum.
- We use TED (tell, explain, describe) as our therapeutic approach, as well as reassuring students.

9. On-line Safety and the use of Mobile Technology

To address this, Phoenix Bay School aim to**:**

- Have robust processes, including filtering and monitoring systems in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers, directors and Advisory Board members across all sites.
- The Directors and Advisory Board will review the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards and discuss with our IT provider to ensure Phoenix Bay School meet the standards.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Establish clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones throughout the entire school community.
- Establish precise mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate
- All staff should understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories,
- **contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; 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**: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying, and
- **commerce**: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

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

- Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
    - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
    - Keeping personal information private
    - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
    - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring students are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
    - Educate pupils around new and relevant online safety risks including misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories.
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training annually and receive relevant updates, when necessary, around relevant and/or new online safety risks such as misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety through our website, direct communications, and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
    - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when students are not present
    - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of students on their personal phones or cameras

- Make all students, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and directors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems formally reviewing the effectiveness of any system annually
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Ensure the school E-safety policy is readily available to all via the school website which explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and how we respond to online safety incidents
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy and online safety policy annually

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our E-Safety policy, which you can find on our website.

10. Notifying Parents/ Carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The must be handled sensitively and the DSL/DDSL's will normally do this in the event of a concern, suspicion or report. Other staff members will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's MASH e.g., familial sexual abuse.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure us approach to information sharing is consistent.

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

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

Where there are concerns about forced marriage or honour-based violence parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk. In some circumstances it would be appropriate to contact the police.

11. Students with special educational needs and disabilities

We recognise that all our students have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and can therefore face additional safeguarding challenges and are three times more likely to be abused by their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Students being more prone to peer group isolation than other students
- The potential for students with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

As trauma-informed settings, Phoenix Bay School offer extra pastoral support tailored to each individual student. These include:

- One to one Key Worker time at the beginning and end of each day
- SEMH
- Motional
- ELSA Interventions
- PACE

Any abuse involving student with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and relevant Local Authority SEND Team.

12. Students with a social worker

Students may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect our vulnerable children. Where we are aware that a student has a social worker,

the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

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

13. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

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

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- Work closely to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children

At Phoenix Bay School we have appointed an appropriately trained Designated Teacher, Laura Secker, to take the lead on promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

As part of their Designated Teacher role, they will:

- Work closely with the DSL (deputy) to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children

The school is aware of its obligation to inform the relevant Local Authority if they become aware of any private fostering arrangements in place for any student on its admissions register.

14. Mobile phones and cameras

Phoenix Bay School is a mobile-free environment by default. Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when students are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or secured in cupboards during contact time with students.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of students on their personal phones or cameras.

We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

15. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

15.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

15.2 Other complaints

Staff will record safeguarding complaints or concerns on CPOMS which goes directly to the DSL and deputies.

15.3 Whistleblowing

All staff are inducted with the whistleblowing policy and actively encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated and that their confidentiality will be respected. Refer to the Whistleblowing policy for further information and guidance.

16. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded on CPOMS. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

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

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, a rationale for decisions made and any outcomes

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main student file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

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

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

All our safeguarding concerns are held on CPOMS and is password protected.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre- employment checks
- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

17. Training

We aim to ensure that all staff across Phoenix Bay School are trained to Level 3 in safeguarding and child protection.

Staff will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from safeguarding partners
- Include online safety, including the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
    - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
    - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff have annual training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

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

The Chair of the Advisory Board (governor) is Level 3 Safeguarding trained.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

17.2 The DSL and DDSL(s)

The DSL and DDSL(s) will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

17.3 Directors/Advisory Board

All Directors and members of the Advisory Board receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge. Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

As the Designated Director/or Chair of the Advisory Board may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Principal, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

17.4 Recruitment – interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with Devon, Torbay, Plymouth and any other relevant linked local authority safeguarding procedures.

18. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the Directors.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

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

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver 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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children 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, causing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include non- contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online as well as offline, and

technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the schools child-on-child abuse policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

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

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both fact-to-face and online and offline and can occur simultaneously between the two.

Phoenix Bay School have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment even if there are there no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos

- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

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

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

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

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

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

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

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

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

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

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend

- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the relevant local authority children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Domestic Abuse

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

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

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

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

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

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass.

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

Appendix 2: Safer Recruitment

To make sure Phoenix Bay School recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school is commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
    - If they have a criminal history
    - Whether they are included on the barred list
    - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
    - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
    - Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.
- We will also let the candidate know that online searches will be done as part of due diligence checks ahead of the interview.

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

References

We will obtain references before interview, including internal candidates. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made Pre-Appointment Vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment Checks.

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to
- Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

As part of our ongoing vigilance, we will create the right culture, so staff feel comfortable discussing safeguarding matters in and outside of school.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was new member of staff.

These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will check that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry

out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Directors/Advisory Board

All Directors and Advisory Board will have an enhanced DBS check. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity. The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state. All proprietors, trustees, local Directors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008).
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a student with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise students on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a student under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Students staying with host families

It is unlikely that the school would make arrangements for students to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit). However, in the unlikely event that such arrangement is made we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements oversees and host families cannot be checked in the same way, Phoenix Bay School will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher or volunteer, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children-this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of the school.

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult out local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Chair of the Advisory Board, Jill Bainton, where the Principal is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Organisations or Individuals using our school premises

If a Phoenix Bay School receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation using us premises for running an activity for children, we will follow our safeguarding procedures and policies and inform the local authority designated officer (LADO) as we would with any safeguarding allegation.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
- redeploying the individual to another role in a different location.

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
  Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded**: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the Principal (or Chair of the Advisory Board) where the Principal is the subject of the allegation) – the 'case manager' – will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are

involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies

- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate, i.e. trade union representatives, counselling or medical advice
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, (Only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member) where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child
- We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or

abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the proprietor will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

If a concern is raised about the school's Proprietor / Chair of Directors, the correct course of action is to refer the matter directly to the local authority designated officer.

Additional considerations for supply staff and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as supply staff provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our local authority designated officer to determine a suitable outcome
- The Directors will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, were reasonably practicable

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will intended to be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will intend to institute appropriate action within 3 working days

- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days.

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's HR representative will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. If they think that the individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or if they think the person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child, they must make a referral to the DBS.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

Phoenix Bay School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individuals personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file)

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file and provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

We will include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the authority designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school 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 designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly 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
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing concerns

Phoenix Bay School recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the principal will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The Principal will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's Code of Conduct. The Principal will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Keeping Children Safe in Education also links to this report for more information Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with children

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves' employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Children absent from education

Children can be absent from education for a variety of reasons; however, it is important to closely monitor absence. Unexplainable and/or persistent absence could be an indication of safeguarding concerns. It could also indicate mental health concerns.

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

The department's statutory guidance on school attendance sets out how schools must work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

Early intervention can be vital, and parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity. The school will hold more than one emergency contact number for pupils and students when reasonably possible.

The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK
Children missing education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Child Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines12, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children who are criminally exploited should have their vulnerabilities recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children) and should be treated as victims. It is not possible for a child to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked, and they may not recognise that it is happening to them. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Indicators/ signs of CCE can include a child:

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

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the relevant local authority children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child sexual exploitation

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE 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. This can be

committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

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

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- appear with unexplained gifts
- money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs and alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the rev local authority children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

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

Phoenix Bay School has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

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

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

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

Domestic abuse

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Homelessness

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

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

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

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

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

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

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

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

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a student is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A student confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/student already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
    - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
    - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
    - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
    - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
    - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
    - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
    - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
    - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
    - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"

- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her child health record, and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse, and a serious abuse of human rights. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage which is common in several cultures. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with MASH/police.

Since 27 February 2023, it is an offence to carry out any conduct for the purpose of causing a child to enter into a marriage before the child's eighteenth birthday (whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats, any other form of coercion or deception).

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an all site approach to online safety in the use of technology and mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be 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; and
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your students, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

We will ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement. (Refer to our E-Safety policy)

Filtering and monitoring

Phoenix Bay School has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place as outlined in this policy. The school will ensure that a review of their effectiveness is carried out at least once every academic year. Reviews are carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, the DSL. These checks ensure that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record is kept of these checks. They ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

Radicalisation/ Extremism

Children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of abuse, protecting children from this risk is a part of Phoenix Bay School safeguarding approach.

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Extremism** is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: *Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.*

- **Extremism** is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:
  The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:
    - Encourage, justify, or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs.
    - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts.
    - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
    - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": Those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become vulnerable to radicalisation through a range of social, personal, and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of susceptibility include:

- Identity Challenges – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Challenges – the student / pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the student / pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration.
- Special Educational Need – students / pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour.
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

The Prevent Duty ensures schools and colleges have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being draw into terrorism.

Channel is the voluntary, confidential support programmes which focuses on providing support at an early stage to individuals that have been identified as being susceptible to radicalisation. Prevent referrals may be passed to the multi-agency Channel panel to determine whether individuals require support.

- Revised Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (school specific paras 57-76)
- The Prevent Duty, for Further Education Institutions
- Guidance on Channel https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance
- Further information can be obtained from the Home Office website.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

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

When supporting victims, staff will:

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in committing serious violence. These may include:

- increased absence from school or college,
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups,
- a significant decline in educational performance,
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries, and

- unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male,
- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanentlyexcluded from school,
- having experienced child maltreatment,
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery,
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence, and
- having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

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

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

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

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

Visitors are expected to sign in the 'Signing in App' and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the sites who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out

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

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

- Contact parents/carers

- The incident will be recorded on CPOMS
- Ensure the student is safe and with a member of staff at all times

Missing students

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will refer to our missing student procedure:

If a student is missing for more than 10 minutes the following procedure must be followed:-

- Search the building, grounds and immediate vicinity thoroughly.
- Inform the reception immediately, who will inform the Principal
- Principal mobile number 07934 857 011

If the Principal is not found they, must notify Police on 101

- A photograph of the individual can be found in their EHCP.

If, after a suitable period of time the individual still cannot be found, their next of kin and/or social worker must be informed – by one of the above only.

In all circumstances a full and detailed report of the incident.

The report must include:

- Date the individual went missing.
- Time the individual was last seen
- Time the individual was discovered to be missing.
- Circumstances in which the individual was last seen.
- Details (stating date/time) of all action taken and any persons contacted.
- The report must be signed and dated by the person completing the report

Appendix 5: Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) – Code C

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) are aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult when in contact with Police officers who suspect them of an offence.

PACE states that anyone who appears to be under 18, shall, in the absence of clear evidence that they are older, be treated as a child for the purposes of this Code and any other Code.

PACE also states that If at any time an officer has any reason to suspect that a person of any age may be vulnerable, then that person is entitled to be accompanied by an appropriate adult at any point.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies) will communicate any vulnerabilities known by the school to any police officer who wishes to speak to a pupil about an offence they may suspect. This communication will be recorded on CPOMS.

If having been informed of the vulnerabilities, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies) does not feel that the officer is acting in accordance with PACE, they should ask to speak with a supervisor or contact 101 to escalate their concerns.

A person whom there are grounds to suspect of an offence must be cautioned before questioned about an offence or asked further questions if the answers they provide the grounds for suspicion, or when put to them the suspect's answers or silence, (i.e. failure or refusal to answer or answer satisfactorily) may be given in evidence to a court in a prosecution.

A Police Officer must not caution a juvenile or a vulnerable person unless the appropriate adult is present. If a child or a vulnerable person is cautioned in the absence of the appropriate adult, the caution must be repeated in the appropriate adult's presence.

The 'appropriate adult' means, in the case of a child:

I. the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.

II. a social worker of a local authority

Failing these, some other responsible adult aged 18 or over who is not:

I. a police officer

II. employed by the police

III. under the direction or control of the chief officer of a police force; or

IV. a person who provides services under contractual arrangements (but without being employed by the chief officer of a police force), to assist that force in relation to the discharge of its chief officer's functions.

Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.

Appendix 6: Resources

Further advice on child protection is available from:

- NSPCC: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/
- Childline: http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx
- SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Service): https://sarchelp.co.uk/paediatric-service/
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/
- Gender Questioning Children - non-statutory guidance (education.gov.uk)
- Childnet International: http://www.childnet.com/
- Safer Internet Centre: http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/
- Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools
- Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Cyber security standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Plan technology for your school - GOV.UK
- Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK
- Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism
- CEOP Education
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation's 'Shore Space'. which offers a confidential chat service supporting young people concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviours. Home - Shore
- Resources to help education professionals to identify and respond when they have concerns of child sexual abuse or behaviour. Resources for education settings | CSA Centre
- Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation | The Children's Society
- Preventing child sexual exploitation – https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/preventing-child-sexual-exploitation