



## ABBOTSHOLME SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Joanna Simpson  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Paul Jones

Specialists supporting on the team:

James Diamond – Digital

Kristy Hankin – Preparatory School including EYFS

**All members of the safeguarding team can be contacted on [safeguarding@abbotsholme.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@abbotsholme.co.uk) or by mobile phone out of normal school hours, on 07823788201. In the school holidays the above applies; however, if a reply is not received within a reasonable amount of time contact should be made with Derbyshire 'First Response' or the police on 999.**

This policy is in accordance with the locally agreed inter-agency procedures. The Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) is Derbyshire. This policy is available to parents on the website and in reception on request. The full Derbyshire procedures are available on the Derbyshire Website: <http://www.derbyshirescb.org.uk/>

**This policy is applicable to all pupils in the school including Early Years Foundation Stage.**

## **Safeguarding**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in this school is:

Mrs J. Simpson

E: [safeguarding@abbotsholme.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@abbotsholme.co.uk)

T: 07823788201

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for Senior School is:

Mr P. Jones (Head of Art)

E: [safeguarding@abbotsholme.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@abbotsholme.co.uk)

The Nominated Proprietor for Safeguarding is:

Mrs Tong Zhou (Director)

E: [tong@chasegrammar.com](mailto:tong@chasegrammar.com)

Advised by Professor Pat Preedy

The Chair of the Advisory Committee is:

Professor Pat Preedy

E: [professorpreedy@gmail.com](mailto:professorpreedy@gmail.com)

The Head of School is: Mr R Barnes

E: [Robert.barnes@abbotsholme.co.uk](mailto:Robert.barnes@abbotsholme.co.uk)

T: 01889 590217

### **Local Support:**

Derbyshire Starting Point

Immediate child protection concerns: 01629 533190

All other referrals through electronic request: [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/startingpoint](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/startingpoint)

Urgent Care Team CAMHS - 07901330724

Derby city and South Derbyshire CAMHS/RISE - 0300 123 3124

Prevent: Derbyshire Channel - [dawn.robinson@derby.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.robinson@derby.gov.uk)

### **National Support:**

CEOP-[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

Childline -0800 1111

'For Me' – Childline App via smartphone

Internet watch foundation – [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)

Professionals online safety helpline – [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)

Abbotsholme School recognises that the welfare of the child (throughout this document, 'child' refers to a young person under the age of 18) is paramount. We take seriously our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (2018), HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

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

The Board of Directors (Proprietors) will act in accordance with Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (which applies to Independent Schools) and the supporting statutory guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (September 2018) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school. The Board of Directors (Proprietors) is responsible for ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and that all policies and procedures are in place and effective. It is a requirement of the Independent Schools' Standards Requirements (ISSRs) that the Board of Directors (Proprietors) will receive a report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) /Nominated Proprietor in order to help monitor compliance with statutory responsibilities.

All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their age, health or disability, gender or sexual orientation, race, religion, belief or first language, political or immigration status.

Governors, staff and regular volunteers understand the importance of taking appropriate action and working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies in order to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The purpose of this policy is to: afford protection for all pupils, enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and promote a culture which makes the school a safer place to learn and live. The policy applies to the Head, all staff (including supply and peripatetic staff), regular volunteers (ie those who come into school once a week or more or 4 times in a 30 day period), Governors or anyone working on behalf of the school.

Our approach is child-centred, with consideration being given at all times to what is in the best interests of the child. Our aim is to know everyone as an individual and to provide

a secure and caring environment so that every pupil can develop, learn, and live in safety. The School recognises that pupils require high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends, and clear lines of communication with supportive and trusted adults, if they are to thrive.

Everyone in the school shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by:

- creating and maintaining a safe learning environment, promoting safe practice and eliminating unsafe practice
- preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young people
- identifying where there are child welfare concerns, taking action to address these in partnership with other agencies if appropriate
- contributing to effective partnership between all those involved with providing services for children
- developing children's understanding, awareness, and resilience.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- always acting in their best interests
- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- involving them in decisions which affect them
- never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other forms of discrimination, including through use of technology
- ensuring the curriculum affords a range of opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe, particularly when using technology and, where appropriate, in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- exercising our duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 by ensuring staff attend 'Prevent' training in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour and by assessing the risk of our pupils being drawn into terrorism
- supporting attendance and taking action if a child is missing school regularly
- appointing a senior member of staff from our leadership team as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensuring this person has the time, funding, support, training and resources to perform the role effectively
- appointing Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Paul Jones) to ensure there is always someone available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- ensuring that there is always cover for this role
- The practitioner designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding children in EYFS is Mrs Kristy Hankin (Head of Preparatory School).

- appointing a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after/in care (Amy Thornton).
- ensuring that staff working with Looked-After Children have information appropriate to their role regarding, for example, the child's care arrangements, legal status and contact with birth parents
- making sure all staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures and also understand their individual responsibility to take action
- ensuring that all those named above (i.e. DSLs and Deputy DSLs; the Head, all staff and regular volunteers) have training appropriate to their roles as set out in statutory guidance.
- identifying any concerns early and providing appropriate help to prevent them from escalating (Housemasters/Housemistresses and Tutors and a range of: Matrons, the Health Centre and including working with parents/carers and other agencies as appropriate
- sharing information about child safeguarding concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately
- acknowledging and actively promoting that multi-agency working is the best way to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm
- taking the right action, in accordance with Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board inter- agency safeguarding procedures, if a child discloses or there are indicators of abuse
- keeping clear, accurate and contemporaneous safeguarding and child protection records
- recruiting staff and volunteers (including host families) safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements and also making sure that at least one appointment panel member has undertaken safer recruitment training
- providing effective management for the above through induction, support and regular training appropriate to role
- adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- ensuring our online safety process includes appropriate filters and monitoring systems
- ensuring staff and volunteers understand about 'whistleblowing' and how to escalate concerns about pupils or staff if they think the right action has not been taken to safeguard children
- promoting a culture in which staff feel able to report to senior leaders what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour or breaches of the school Code of Conduct by their colleagues, having faith that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken

- dealing appropriately with any allegations/concerns about the behaviour of staff or volunteers in accordance with the process set out in statutory guidance

The implementation and effectiveness of the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures are reviewed and endorsed annually by the governing body. It applies to all staff and volunteers. Parents are informed of the policy and procedures through the website. The Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures are reviewed at regular intervals by the DSL, and the Senior Management Team (SMT).

The school is committed to the Safe Recruitment, including the selection and vetting, of all staff and volunteers. The school takes all possible steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children through its recruitment practices, Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS] checks and Induction procedures. This adheres to the 2009, 2012, 2013 and March 2015 legislation regarding referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS] [formally the Independent Safeguarding Authority]. Safe Recruitment practice also includes the requirement to check that all those employed as teachers from April 2012 are not subject to any prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State. These documents are a vetting process and complete part of the schools Single Central Register.

The School does not use corporal punishment. Any form of physical punishment of pupils is unlawful as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a pupil physically to prevent them from inflicting injury to others, self-injury, damaging property, or causing disruption. In such cases only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be to restrain the pupil. If a member of staff takes action physically to restrain a pupil a written report is made, as soon as practical and sent to the Head or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Safeguarding children and young people and promoting their well-being is more than just child protection. In order to safeguard children and young people and ensure their personal development, we will have safeguarding at the heart of our purpose. We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and for some, a sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

The school supports its pupils through:

- Provision of a curriculum that assists pupils to make good choices about safe and healthy lifestyles and informs them who to approach if their health or safety is threatened.
- Through the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment. It seeks to give pupils a sense of being valued and helps all to fulfil potential, regardless of their background or circumstances.
- A safe learning environment where pupils are listened to, they feel safe and secure, they do not experience bullying, racism, homophobia or other types of discrimination, and where medical needs are met.
- The early identification of pupils with additional needs, liaison and intervention with other agencies such as Social Services and Child and Adult Mental Health Services. The school behaviour policy which provides appropriate guidelines and which supports all pupils.
- Ensuring that when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan leaves, their details are transferred to the new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed.
- The school's pastoral care system ensures pupils' self-awareness of safeguarding and welfare matters are developed at levels appropriate to their maturity, through curricular and extra-curricular events. These may include, for example, PSHE lessons, tutorials, house assemblies and year group meetings, where a trusting climate is established and pupils may talk and share their thoughts and feelings.
- Provision of guidance on the safe use of electronic equipment, including access to the internet.
- Encouraging amongst all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Developing positive partnerships and nurturing a commitment to open and honest relationships with parents and carers at all stages of a pupil's education.

## ABBOTSHOLME SCHOOL - CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Child protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies (Children's Social Care and Police).

These procedures explain what action should be taken if there are concerns that a child is or might be suffering harm. A 'child' is a person under 18 years but the principles of these procedures apply to all pupils at this school, including those over 18.

All adults in the school have an individual responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by taking appropriate action. This includes taking action where there are child protection concerns.

The Board of Directors (Proprietors) is accountable for ensuring that the school has an effective Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy. This policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Directors (Proprietors), following scrutiny by the Advisory Committee, and is made available publicly, including being placed upon the school's website. The Governing Body has nominated an individual Governor to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and to work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, thereby providing a link between the school and the Governing Body to monitor whether mandatory policies, procedures and training are in place and effective.

The nominated Safeguarding Governor at Abbotsholme is Helen Wainwright.

The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is the person who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding. Any concerns about children should be discussed with/reported to the DSL who will decide what action to take including referring to Children's Social Care or Police as appropriate.

All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- DfE guidance– "*Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018*"
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)* – published by HM Government
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance (2015)

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on references in '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (2018).

1. Physical abuse

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission (doing something), can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect. 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.

2. Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional mistreatment of a child such as to cause severe and

persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including 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 mistreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### 3. Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

### 4. Neglect

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

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

## Recognising child abuse – signs and symptoms

1. Child abuse can and does occur both within a child's family and in institutional or community settings. School staff are in contact with children all day and are in a strong position to detect possible abuse. They must not think that by voicing concern they are necessarily starting procedures. The criteria should be that they have '*reasonable suspicion*' and under the Children Act 1989, this definition has been extended to include '*or may suffer in future*'.
2. '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' is clear: 'All school and college staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection'.
3. Recognising child abuse is not always easy, and it is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether or not child abuse has definitely taken place or if a child is at significant risk. They do, however, have a clear responsibility to act if they have a concern about a child's welfare or safety or if a child talks about (discloses) abuse. They should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and always act in the best interests of the child.

## Pupils engaging in underage sexual activity

1. Sexual activity where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of children who are consenting partners of a similar age is not usual. DSLs will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether to refer to social workers, taking into account such things as imbalance of power, wide difference in ages or developmental stages etc.
2. However, where a child is under the age of 13 penetrative sex is classified as rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 so must be reported to social workers in every case.
3. The inter-agency safeguarding procedures, on the DSCB website, have more information about underage sexual activity.

## Allegations made by children about other children, including peer on peer abuse

1. If one pupil causes harm to another, it is not always necessary for it to be dealt with through a referral to Children's Social Care: sexual experimentation within 'normal parameters', bullying and fighting, for example, are not generally seen as child protection issues. All incidents will, however, be taken seriously and appropriate action taken to support both victim and perpetrator.
2. The nature and severity of the allegation or concern will determine whether staff will implement the school's anti-bullying or other school procedures or whether a referral needs to be made to social workers or the Police. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted if there is any doubt about the right course of action.

3. A referral to Children's Social Care will be made in all cases of domestic abuse relating to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and/or financial abuse, or coercive control, in their intimate relationships.
4. A referral to Children's Social Care will be considered if a child or young person displays sexually harmful behaviour. This involves one or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are *inappropriate for their age or stage of development*. It is also considered harmful if it involves coercion or threats of violence or if one of the children is much older than the other.
5. The process for managing sexually harmful behaviour can be found in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures website. In brief, a multi-agency meeting should be convened by the Children's Social Care following a referral and an action plan agreed, including considering a school Risk Assessment.
6. Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as 'normal' between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
7. Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
8. Issues relating to sexting will be presented to pupils in PSHE lessons, school assemblies and house assemblies. Incidents of sexting will be dealt with making reference to the UKCCIS *'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people August 2016 guidance'*.
9. Issues relating to peer on peer abuse will be addressed through the PSHE curriculum. In addition, Housemasters/ Housemistresses will address these issues through House Team meetings, House assemblies, year group assemblies and they will use appropriate school policies such as the Abbotsholme School Behaviour Policy. This will also involve close liaison with the Health Centre. Regular discussions will also take place with the School Prefects.

### Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, mobile phones, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse. It can also occur through the use of technology, e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones.

Recognition of child sexual exploitation is part of staff training. We note that any child or young person may be at risk of this form of abuse, regardless of family background or other circumstances, and can experience significant harm to physical and mental health.

Due to the grooming methods used by abusers, it is common for young people not to recognise they are being abused and may feel they are 'in a relationship' and acting voluntarily.

Any concerns about child sexual exploitation will be discussed with the DSL who will take appropriate action which might include completing a risk assessment form.

Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief

All staff at Abbotshome will promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Some forms of abuse are linked to these and staff should strive to suspend professional disbelief (i.e. that they 'could not happen here') and to report promptly any concerns to the DSL who will seek further advice from statutory agencies, prior to contacting parents/carers.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal and involves intentionally altering or injuring female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It can have serious and long lasting implications for physical health and emotional well-being. Possible indicators include taking a girl out of school/country for a prolonged period or talk of a 'special procedure' or celebration. In addition to reporting any concerns to the DSL, teachers (along with regulated health and social care professionals) have a statutory duty to report personally to the Police if they discover that female genital mutilation has or appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

The mandatory reporting duty commenced in October 2015. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care, as appropriate.

Forced Marriage is illegal and occurs where one or both people do not or, in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is not the same as arranged marriage. Young people at risk of forced marriage might have their freedom unreasonably restricted or being 'monitored' by siblings. There might be a request for extended absence from school or might not return from a holiday abroad. We recognise that school staff can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

So called 'honour-based' violence is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It can exist in all communities and cultures and occurs when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Females are predominantly, but not exclusively, the victims and the violence is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family or community members. All forms of so called honour-based violence are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and should be referred accordingly.

#### Radicalisation and extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism is defined by HM Government 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; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to share their views and to understand that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

We recognise that children with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our pupils with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

Children are taught about how to stay safe when using the Internet and are encouraged to recognise that people are not always who they say they are online. They are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the Internet.

Any concerns about pupils becoming radicalised or being drawn into extremism will be reported to the DSL who will *not* speak to parents/carers or other family members at this stage but will take prompt advice from the Police.

The school understands its responsibilities under the 'Prevent' Strategy and staff have been told of the effects of social media in relation to recruitment or extremist/radicalised causes. The school is also aware of the need to set out clear protocols in ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or the pupils themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised.

It is important that staff in all schools are aware of all above forms of abuse and report concerns to the DSL who will seek further advice from statutory agencies.

### Children Missing from Education

We recognise that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including the specific types of abuse detailed above and/or travelling to conflict zones.

Therefore, all staff will follow the school's procedure for dealing with unauthorised absence, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify vulnerable pupils and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Actions could include involving other professionals and, if any of the criteria are met, informing the local authority where a pupil's name has been removed from the school roll.

DfE statutory guidance: Children Missing Education September 2016 underpins actions in relation to these matters.

Responding to the child who discloses (i.e. talks about) abuse

Staff/volunteers are asked to:

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Avoid showing shock or disbelief if at all possible
- Observe the child's demeanour
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others, i.e. do not promise to keep the matter confidential or a 'secret'
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace and do not interrupt if the child is freely recalling events. There is no need to find a 'witness', as this could inhibit the child from saying more
- Ask questions for the purposes of clarification only, and avoid asking leading questions or pressing for more information. Questions should be asked in an open manner (remember TED: Tell me, Explain, Describe).
- Reassure the child, if necessary, that she/he has done the right thing in telling
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his/her fault.
- Explain what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared
- Ask the child not to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school – including the DSL - or ask him/her or any other children who were present to write a written account or 'statement'

- When recording what was said, use the child's own words – noting the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
  - Record any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
  - Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.
  - If appropriate, draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or injury.
  - Where physical injuries have been observed, these will be carefully noted but not photographed. The staff member will not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the child's body.
  - Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
  - Any disclosure or indicators of abuse will be reported verbally to the DSL or Deputy straight away or, where they are not available and concerns are immediate, ensure a referral is made without delay to the Family Support (Social Care) team which covers the area in which the child and family live. Staff at schools with boarding provision can seek advice in the first instance from local Family Support teams.
  - Where the child already has an allocated social worker, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team will be contacted promptly.
  - If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their view will be taken into account, the school has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and that of other children.
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- All records should be passed to the DSL immediately – NO copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer. This includes the original notes as these constitute prima facie evidence and may be needed by a court. Records should be kept by the DSL in a secure, designated file separate from the child's academic records.
  - The advice of the LADO will be sought by the DSL about when communication with the individual involved and the parents/carers involved should take place and by whom. The DSL will decide whether to contact parents at this stage, judging whether do so is likely to place the child at risk of harm from their actions or reactions - for example in circumstances where there are concerns that a serious crime such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or induced illness has taken place. The reason for the decision not to contact parents first will be recorded in the child's school child protection file.
  - A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.
  - Where there is no disclosure by a child but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together and that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

- It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the DSL and Child Protection Agencies, following a referral from the DSL.
- A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL should expect some feedback, although confidentiality might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome s/he can press for reconsideration and if following this, s/he still believes the correct action has not been taken, can refer the concerns directly to social workers.
- Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL.

### Taking action

Where physical injuries have been observed, these will be carefully noted but not photographed. The staff member will not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the child's body.

Any disclosure or indicators of abuse will be reported verbally to the DSL or Deputy straight way or, where they are not available and concerns are immediate, ensure a referral is made without delay to the Children's Social Care.

Where the child already has an allocated social worker, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team will be contacted promptly

A written record will then be made of what was said, including the child's own words, as soon as possible and given to the DSL.

If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their views will be taken into account, the school has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and that of other children.

The DSL will decide whether to contact parents at this stage, judging whether to do so is likely to place the child at risk of harm from their actions or reactions - for example in circumstances where there are concerns that a serious crime such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or induced illness has taken place. If in any doubt, the DSL or staff member will call the duty worker first and agree with him/her when parents/carers should be contacted and by whom. The reason for the decision not to contact parents first will be recorded in the child's school child protection file.

A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.

Where there is no disclosure by a child but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together and that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL should expect some feedback, although confidentiality might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome s/he can press for reconsideration and if following this, s/he still believes the correct action has not been taken, will refer the concerns directly to social workers.

Responding to concerns reported by parents or others in the community

Occasionally parents or other people in the local community tell school staff about an incident in or accumulation of concerns they have about the family life of a child who is also a pupil at the school.

If the incident or concern relates to *child protection*, the information cannot be ignored, even if there are suspicions about the motives for making the report. Members of staff will therefore pass the information to the DSL in the usual way.

It is preferable if the parent / community member who witnessed or knows about the concerns or incident makes a call to Family Support (Social Care) themselves as they will be better able to answer any questions. They can ask for their name not to be divulged if a visit is made to the family. The DSL will advise accordingly and later confirm that this referral has been made.

If the parent / community member refuses to make the referral, the DSL will clarify that s/he has a responsibility to do so and will also need to pass on to social workers how s/he is aware of the information.

This process also applies to parents / community members who are also school staff. As professionals who work with children they cannot be anonymous when making the referral but can ask for the situation to be managed sensitively and, if necessary, for their identity to be withheld from the family if it will cause difficulties in their private life.

Remember

Any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, **MUST** be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option. Any suspicion or concerns will be reported without delay to the DSL or Deputy. During term time the DSL and/or a Deputy should always be available (during school hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. However, if for whatever reason they are not available the staff member will discuss their concerns as soon as possible with either

- another senior member of staff or
- the duty worker in the Help and Protection Team - single point of contact (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub from Spring 2017).

Anyone can make a referral to Social Care, not just the DSLs.

It is important that everyone in the school is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for making a judgement about whether or not abuse has occurred and should not conduct an 'investigation' to establish whether the child is telling the truth. That is a task for social workers and the Police following a referral to them of concern about a child. The role of school staff is to act promptly on the information received.

This applies regardless of the alleged 'perpetrator': whether the child talks about a family member or someone outside school, a member of staff or another child/pupil.

A careful record will be made of what has been seen/heard that has led to the concerns and the date, time, location and people who were present. As far as possible, staff should record verbatim what was said and by whom. The record will be passed to the DSL.

The DSL will keep a record of the conversation with the duty worker and other social workers, noting what actions will be taken and by whom, giving the date and time of the referral. The referral will be confirmed in writing on the inter-agency referral form as soon as possible and at least within 48 hours. Any pre-existing assessments such as through the Common Assessment Framework should be attached.

A school child protection file will be started in the child's name, where the child is not already known to social workers. If a file already exists, the new information will be added to the chronology.

Response from Children's Social Care to a school referral

- Referral  
Once a referral is received by the relevant team, a manager will decide on the next course of action within one working day. When there is concern that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, this will be decided more quickly and a strategy discussion held with the Police and Health professionals and other agencies as appropriate (section 47 Children Act 1989).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be told within three working days of the outcome of the referral. If this does not happen s/he will contact the duty worker again.

- **Assessment**  
All assessments should be planned and co-ordinated by qualified social worker. They should be holistic, involving other professionals, parents/carers and the children themselves as far as practicable. Assessments should show analysis, be focused on outcomes and usually take no longer than 45 working days from the point of referral. School staff have a responsibility to contribute fully to the assessment.
- **Section 47 Enquiries (regarding significant harm)**  
The process of the investigation is determined by the needs of the case, but the child/young person will always be seen as part of that process and sometimes without parents' knowledge or permission. On occasions, this will mean the child/young person is jointly interviewed by the Police and social workers, sometimes at a special suite where a video- recording of the interview is made.
- **The Child Protection Conference**  
If, following the Section 47 enquiries, the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference (CPC) will normally be convened. The CPC must be held within 15 days of the first strategy discussion and school staff will be invited to attend - normally the Head or DSL. This person will produce a written report in the correct format. This will be shared with the child/young person and his/her family before the conference is held. A copy will also be sent to the person chairing the initial CPC at least 24 hours in advance.

If the DSL disagrees with the decisions made by social workers regarding the outcome of the referral, the conclusions of the assessment or any actions taken, the matter should be discussed and if necessary escalated to more senior managers *particularly* if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Responding to allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers

All children and adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

Abbotsholme School has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and create and maintain a safe learning environment (section 157 of the Education Act 2002). Schools should identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate, and in accordance with local inter-agency procedures.

Rigorous recruitment and selection procedures and adhering to the school's code of conduct and safer practice guidance will mean that there are relatively few allegations against or concerns about staff or volunteers in schools and colleges. However, if a member of staff, or any other person, has any reason to believe that another adult in school has acted inappropriately or abused a child or young person, they will take action by reporting to the Head (NB not the DSL). Even though it may

seem difficult to believe that a colleague may be unsuitable to work with children, the risk is far too serious for any member of staff to dismiss such a suspicion without taking action.

If the allegation/concern is about the Head, the person with concerns will contact the Nominated Proprietor for Safeguarding or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Local Authority Safeguarding and Standards Team.

1. In all cases of allegations against staff or volunteers, the Head and Chair of Governors will contact the LADO without delay and follow the correct procedures as set out in the separate school policy. This must comply with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2018.
2. The procedure aims to ensure that all allegations are dealt with fairly, consistently and quickly and in a way that provides protection for the child, whilst supporting the person who is the subject of the allegation.
3. In the event that a member of staff does not wish to report an allegation directly, or s/he has a general concern about malpractice within the school, reference can also be made to the school's Whistleblowing policy.
4. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct for Abbotsholme School Staff.

Children with special educational needs and who are disabled

1. Research shows that children with special educational needs and who are disabled are especially vulnerable to abuse and adults who work with them need to be vigilant and take extra care when interpreting apparent signs of abuse or neglect.
2. Additional barriers can exist for adults who work with such children, in respect of recognising abuse and neglect. These can include:
  - Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
  - Children with SEN and who are disabled can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs; and
  - Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
3. These child protection procedures will be followed if a child with special educational needs and who is disabled discloses abuse or there are indicators of abuse or neglect. There are no different or separate procedures for such children.
4. Staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and in accordance with the school's intimate care policy.

## Safer Working Practice

1. All adults who come into contact with children at this school will behave at all times in a professional manner which secures the best outcomes for children and also prevents allegations being made in relation to sports provision as well as performing arts.
2. We promote a culture whereby members of the school community should feel able to raise with the Head, or any other member of the leadership team, any concerns about staff conduct. If the reporter feels that the issue has not been addressed they should contact someone outside the school, such as the Chair of Governors or the LADO.

## Training

Child protection will be part of induction for all staff and volunteers new to the school; they will also be given a copy of this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, details about the role of the DSL and part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: information for all school and college staff' plus Annex A if they work directly with children. The school has a duty of care to its employees. The school hopes to create a caring environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in doing so. If staff should experience a situation that is an emergency or extremely urgent they may make a direct referral to external agencies.

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tells the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- All staff, both teaching and support, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies when appropriate.

This will be followed up by basic child protection training that equips individuals to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns about pupils. The depth and detail of the training will vary according to the nature of the role and the extent of involvement with children.

A proportional risk based approach will be taken regarding the level of information provided to all temporary staff and volunteers.

Staff who do not have designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including the Head and qualified teachers, will undertake suitable refresher training at appropriate intervals. The DSCB recommends this is at least every three years.

In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates from the DSL as required, but at least annually. This will include learning from local and national serious cases when the learning becomes available.

When DSLs and Deputies take up the role they will work towards ensuring they attend enhanced (Level 3) training –These are updated at 2 yearly intervals after that.

In addition, their knowledge and skills will be updated regularly - at least annually. These individuals are expected to take responsibility for their own learning about safeguarding and child protection by, for example: taking time to read and digest newsletters and relevant research articles; attending training offered on matters such as domestic abuse, attachment and child sexual exploitation and FGM and also attending local DSL forums etc.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children will undertake appropriate training where required.

The Head and a number of senior staff have completed safer recruitment training.

It is recommended that members of the Governing Body attend training, briefings or other input which equips them to understand fully and comply with their safeguarding duties *as governors* as set out in 'Keeping Children safe in Education' 2018. Attendance includes those who also work with children and have attended child protection training in that role.

Raising concerns about safeguarding practice at Abbotsholme

We promote a culture where any staff or volunteers feel able to raise with the Head any concerns about safeguarding or child protection practice.

Any issues which they have not been able to resolve with the Head should be reported to the *governors* in the first instance. If they are still not satisfied they should approach the Director for Children's Services or, if the issue relates to the conduct of or allegation against a member of staff, should contact the designated officer (also known as the LADO).

Staff should refer to the school's Whistleblowing policy for more information or can use the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: 0800 0280285.

## Information for parents and carers

1. The school's DSL will ensure that parents or carers of pupils have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children. This will generally be carried out through publication of information on the school's website.
2. We are committed to keeping pupils safe. Our first priority is our pupils' welfare and we will usually discuss with parents any concerns we have about their child. There might be rare occasions, however, when we have to provide information to or consult other agencies such as Children's Services Social Care before we contact parents. This will include situations where we judge that to tell parents first will or might put the child at risk of significant harm.

Where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the DSL or Head will not contact parents until all agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed. Parental consent is not required for a referral where the DSL believes a pupil is at risk of significant harm.

Parents or carers will be informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.

Our responsibilities are set out in this policy, and are in conjunction with the following policies:

- Procedures for allegations against staff
- Confidentiality Policy (Staff)
- Physical contact, Use of force and restraint policy
- Use of cameras, mobile phones and personal electronic devices in school including EYFS by staff and visitors policy
- Staff behavior policy
- Acceptable Pupils Use of Mobile Phones and E Devices Policy
- Missing Pupil Procedure

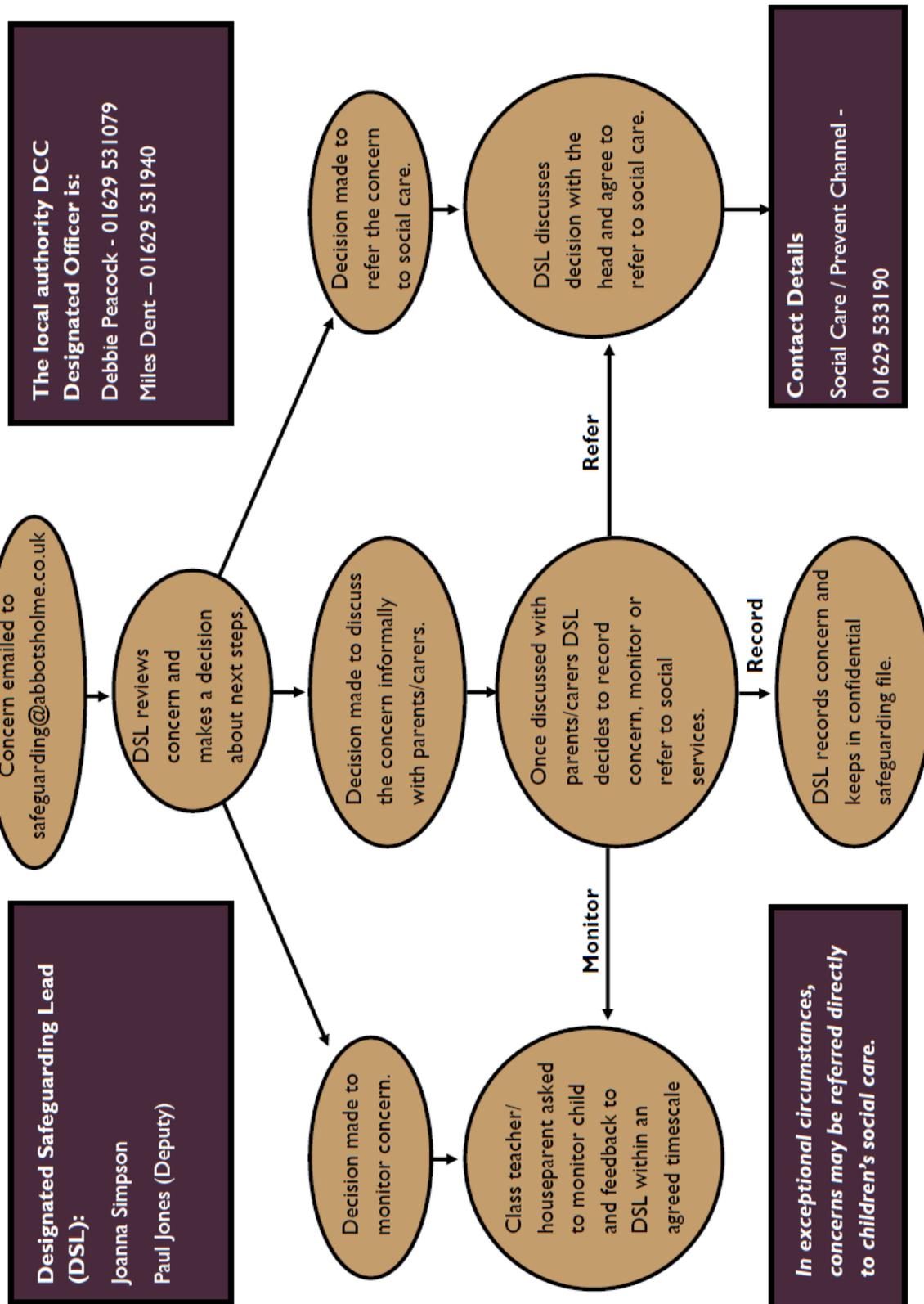
The following flow diagrams in Appendix 1 and 2 are used in support of the above policy:

Safeguarding Raising Concerns and Safeguarding Flow Chart.

Reviewed: September 2018

Next Review: September 2019

# FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



Appendix 2



**Abbotsholme School**

AN EDUCATION FOR LIFE

