

**Safeguarding and Child Protection
Policy Information for Families
2023-2024**



**Northern Counties School
Tankerville Terrace
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE2 3BA**

Date full policy was reviewed: 07/09/2023.....

Date full policy was ratified by the Governing Board: 08/11/2023.....

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Policy: Parent Friendly Safeguarding & Child Protection	Issue Date: 08/01/24	Version No: 1
Status: N/A	Review Date: 30/09/2024 Person Accountable: Simon Adams	

KEY SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

Headteacher	Name: Martin Lonergan Telephone: 0191 281 5821 Email: martin.lonergan@percyhedley.org.uk
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy designated safeguarding leads	Designated safeguarding lead Name: Simon Adams Telephone: 0191 281 5821 Email: simon.adams@percyhedley.org.uk
	Assistant Headteacher / Deputy DSL Name: Ros Field Telephone: 0191 281 5821 Email: r.field@percyhedley.org.uk
	Senior Admin Officer / Deputy DSL Name: Lauren Stephenson Telephone: 0191 281 5821 Email: l.stephenson@percyhedley.org.uk
	Wellbeing and Engagement Officer / Deputy DSL

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	<p>Name: Lorna Wilson</p> <p>Telephone: 0191 281 5821</p> <p>Email: lorna.wilson@percyhedley.org.uk</p>
	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Name: Martin Lonergan</p> <p>Telephone: 0191 281 5821</p> <p>Email: martin.lonergan@percyhedley.org.uk</p>
	<p>School Nurse / Deputy DSL</p> <p>Name: Mandy Wood</p> <p>Telephone: 0191 281 5821</p> <p>Email: Amanda.wood@percyhedley.org.uk</p>
	<p>Learning and Care Manager / Deputy DSL</p> <p>Name: Charlotte Booth</p> <p>Telephone: 0191 281 5821</p> <p>Email: c.booth@percyhedley.org.uk</p>
Governors – for safeguarding	<p>Chair of governors</p> <p>Name: Jeff Lough</p> <p>Telephone: 0191 281 5821</p> <p>Email: jeffrey.lough@percyhedley.org.uk</p>
	<p>Link safeguarding governor</p> <p>Name: Anthony Olsen</p> <p>Telephone: 0191 281 5821</p> <p>Email: Anthony.olsen@percyhedley.org.uk</p>

KEY EXTERNAL CONTACT DETAILS

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Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Melanie Scott 0191 277 4636 melanie.scott@newcastle.gov.uk
Children's social care	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership https://www.newcastlesafeguarding.org.uk/
Multi-agency safeguarding hub	Initial Response Service – 0191 277 2500 Emergency Duty Team – 0191 278 7878
Police / law and order	Emergency: 999 Non-emergency: 101 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent - Prevent@newcastle.gov.uk • Prevent coordinator Joe Hogan • Prevent education officer Gail Forbes • Prevent engagement officer Sally Hamilton Anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321
NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm)	Address: Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH Helpline: 0800 028 0285
Disclosure and barring service (DBS)	Address: PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF customerservices@db.gov Tel: 03000 200190
Teacher regulation agency (TRA)	Address: Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Rd, Coventry CV1 2WT misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk Tel. Teacher misconduct: 0207 593 5393
OFSTED	whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

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	Whistleblowing hotline: 0300 1233 155 (8am -6pm Mon-Fri)
Independent Schools Inspectorate	concerns@isi.net Tel: 0207 6000 100

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This is not the full policy; this is an abridged version with key information in a more accessible length, for parents and carers to be able to access and refer to. For full procedures and information, please refer to the main Safeguarding Policy on the website, or a copy can be supplied on request.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education. (DfE 2023) (**Statutory** guidance)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (HM Government 2018: updated July 2022 to include Integrated Care Boards, Public Health England, Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and UK GDPR)
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (HM Government July 2020) (**Statutory** guidance)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE September 2020) (**Statutory** guidance)
- Children missing education (DfE September 2016) (**Advice** for schools)
- Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (DfE 2021) (**Statutory** guidance)
- Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales (HM Government April 2021) (**Statutory** guidance)
- The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (DfE June 2015) (**Advice** for schools)
- Guidance (**non-statutory**) for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings. (Safer Recruitment Consortium February 2022)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HM Government March 2015)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government July 2018)
- Local authority / safeguarding partnership advice and guidance
- Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities

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POLICY STATEMENT

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is of paramount importance and is everyone's responsibility.

It is the responsibility of *every* member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our school to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the pupils at this school. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

We recognise that staff at our school play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child.

Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know that an adult will have to share and follow procedures with any information they have chosen to disclose.

Throughout our curriculum we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills.

At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and local safeguarding partners' procedures.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on the school website or from the school office.

This policy applies to all staff, children, parents, Governors, Trustees, volunteers and visitors.

Safeguarding Adults

In relation to learners 18 and over, as classed as an adult in law, the school has a statutory safeguarding duty, as set out in the Care Act 2014, which must be seen in conjunction with Mental

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Capacity Act 2005 and the Human Rights Act 1998. The school has regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State at all times.

The adult safeguarding duties under the Care Act 2014 apply to an adult, aged 18 or over, who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs) and
- Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support, needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect.

The Care Act statutory guidance defines safeguarding as “protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse or neglect.” The above duties apply in relation to any person who is aged 18 or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of the needs for care and support. Such concerns will be referred to Adult Social Care and the Police if appropriate.

While these duties have to be met for a referral to Adult Social Care and/or the Police, School policy is to safeguard all learners. While a concern may not meet the threshold of such a referral and/or support of these external agencies, the school is committed to the safeguarding and supporting all learners as appropriate.

The adult with care and support needs, in need of safeguarding, will hereafter be referred to as the *child* throughout this policy.

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DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(KCSIE 2023)

ABUSE

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. 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.

Abuse and neglect

All staff will be made aware of indicators of abuse and neglect. Knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy.

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of this environment. All staff, but especially the DSL should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of 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 do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL.

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Further information about the different kinds of abuse can be found in the appendices.

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PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

What staff should do if they have a concern about a child

All staff **must** report **any** concerns they have about a child and not see these as insignificant. Staff should **not** assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share the concern. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity.

A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

Staff **must** immediately report **any**:

- Suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play / everyday, normal activities
- Explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
- Behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings, play, actions)
- Concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment or emotional maltreatment
- Concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
- Significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance
- Hint or disclosure of abuse from any person
- Concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present)

Children can sometimes show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. All staff should be aware of this and remain vigilant.

What staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm

If staff are concerned that a child could be at risk of harm they must report to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) **immediately**.

If this is not possible, they should make a direct referral to children's social care.

What staff should do if they have a concern about honour based abuse (HBA), including FGM and forced marriage

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the DSL. As appropriate, the DSL will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Where FGM has taken place, there has been a **mandatory reporting duty** placed on teachers since 31st October 2015. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to

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report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

Further information can be found in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) and the [FGM resource pack](#) particularly section 13.

Responding to disclosure

Disclosures or information may be received from children, parents or other members of the public. School recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL.

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

The DSL should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the deputy. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

Following receipt of any information that raises concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from children's social care as required. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in writing.

It is **not** the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with these procedures.

All referrals will be made in line with local children's social care procedures.

The school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the local safeguarding partners. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with local threshold guidance.

If, at any point, there is a **risk of immediate serious harm** to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care **immediately** and **if a criminal offence has been committed contact the police**. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, then the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

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Early help assessment

Early help assessment is organised early intervention to provide support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment and, in some cases, where education is the fundamental factor, act as the lead practitioner.

Early help assessments should be kept under review and referred to children's social care for assessment if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Statutory children's social care assessments and services

Concerns about a child's welfare will be referred to the local authority children's social care by the DSL. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) will be made immediately.**

Referrals will follow the local authority referral process.

Where a child in school has a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection plan, the school will liaise with children's social care, attend meetings and provide comprehensive and detailed reports.

All reports for Child in Need / Child Protection conferences will be prepared in advance, using the guidance and report template. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents before the conference as appropriate. In order to complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the child in school. All staff should be prepared to contribute to the report writing process.

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Children can abuse other children and this can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school. There may also be reports where the children concerned attend two or more different schools.

Child on child abuse will not be tolerated. All staff will take a zero tolerance approach to any abusive behaviours and will stop and challenge inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which may be sexual in nature. We recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse that such abuse may still be taking place and all staff should be vigilant.

A difficult feature of child on child abuse is that the perpetrators could be victims themselves and possibly are being abused by other family members, other adults and children.

In cases where child on child abuse is identified we will follow our procedures for dealing with concerns, recognising that both the victim and perpetrator will require support.

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CONSENSUAL AND NON-CONSENSUAL SHARING OF NUDE AND SEMI-NUDE IMAGES AND/OR VIDEOS

The term 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' is used to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by children under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline.

The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by children and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents.

Incidents may also occur where:

- Children find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from another child
- Children digitally manipulate an image of a child into an existing nude online
- Images created or shared are used to abuse other children e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame

Initial response

When an incident involving nudes and semi-nudes comes to the attention of any member of staff:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible.
- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns.
- There will be subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).
- Parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process in order to best support the child unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm.
- A referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately if there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process.

Informing parents and carers

Parents or carers will be informed and involved in the process at an early stage unless informing them will put a child or young person at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform the parents or carers will be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.

Supporting parents and carers

Children and young people can be involved in an incident in several different ways. They may lose control of their own image, receive an image of someone else or share an image of another person. In any of these situations, parents and carers may find it difficult to know how to deal with

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the knowledge that their child has been involved in an incident and may display differing emotions.

Whatever their feelings, it is important that we listen to their concerns and take them seriously. We will also help to reassure parents and carers by explaining that it is normal for young people to be curious about sex.

In all situations, parents or carers will be:

- Given information about the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, what they can expect to happen next, and who will be their link person within the school.
- Given support to deal with their own feelings of upset and concern including signposting to further resources that can help them to understand the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes or support services they can contact, where appropriate.
- Given support on how to speak to their child about the incident.
- Advised on the law around the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- Kept updated about any actions that have been taken or any support that their child is accessing, unless the child involved has specifically asked for this not to happen and is judged to be old enough to make that informed decision.
- Informed about sources of support for their child, in case they are feeling anxious or depressed about what has happened. This could include speaking to a Childline counsellor [online](#) or on 0800 11 11, in house counselling services where available, or a GP. If they are concerned that their child is suicidal, they should contact 999.
- Directed to [NCA-CEOP](#) if the child discloses any further details to them that may suggest they are being groomed or sexually exploited.

RECORDING, RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION SHARING

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on CPOMS system

Each record should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of each action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Information from a child written verbatim
- Date and signature / record of who completed the record

If there is any doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL

All concerns should be passed to the DSL **without delay**, either written or verbal (followed as soon as possible by a written report)

Child Protection information will be kept in a separate Child Protection file for each child, stored in CPOMS. Hard copy information will be scanned and uploaded to CPOMS and the hard copies destroyed. CPOMS settings will ensure that Child Protection information is secure and can only be accessed and viewed by those permitted to. Only Child Protection information will be kept in this

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category and this file will be kept up to date. Records of concern, copies of referrals, invitations to Child Protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored here.

Child Protection files will be the responsibility of the DSL. Child Protection information will only be shared with relevant staff / agencies on a 'need to know' basis, in the child's interests and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

When a child leaves our school, the DSL will make contact with the DSL at the new school and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving school in an agreed secure manner. This should be as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days at the start of a new term to allow a school or college to have support in place for when a child arrives. We will retain evidence to demonstrate we have acted accordingly when dealing with safeguarding matters and how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of electronic records via CPOMS audit features or a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving school and/or evidence of recorded delivery. Where a parent elects to remove their child from the school roll to home educate, the school will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the Local Authority.

The school is GDPR compliant and its practise is defined by Percy Hedley Foundation Policies in Data Protection and GDPR and through liaison with the Foundation's Data Protection Officer.

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

When new pupils join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to children's social care.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to children's social care in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives

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- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- Emergency contact details (if different from above); wherever possible school will hold more than one emergency contact for each child
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above)

The school will retain this information on the children’s file. The school will only share information about children with adults who have parental responsibility for a child or where a parent has given permission and the school has been supplied with the adult’s full details in writing.

If in any doubt about information sharing, staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy). 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.

- We will build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware of and alert to the potential online benefits and risks for children by:
 - providing information on our school website and through existing communication channels (such as official social media, newsletters etc.), offering specific online safety events for parents/carers or highlighting online safety at existing events.
 - Share which filtering and monitoring systems are in place with parents/carers and children.
 - Share what you are asking children to do online including which sites they might access.
 - Informing who from the school or college will be interacting with their child online

RELEVANT POLICIES

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- Staff code of conduct
- Managing behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Positive handling / Physical Intervention
- Recruitment and selection
- Whistle-blowing
- Low level concerns
- Attendance
- On-line safety / Acceptable use – including remote teaching and learning
- Health and safety including site security
- Equality duty
- Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- Intimate care
- First aid

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- Educational visits including overnight stays
- Procedures for managing allegations against staff
- Relationship Education / Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education
- Data protection
- GDPR related policies

DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS CAN BE FOUND IN THE MAIN SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
Abuse and neglect
Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation
County lines
Serious violence
So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)
Preventing radicalisation
Private fostering
Children missing from education
Sexual violence and harassment between children in schools
Modern slavery, trafficking and child abduction/community safety incidents
Domestic abuse
Homelessness
Online safety

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