

Policy Statement

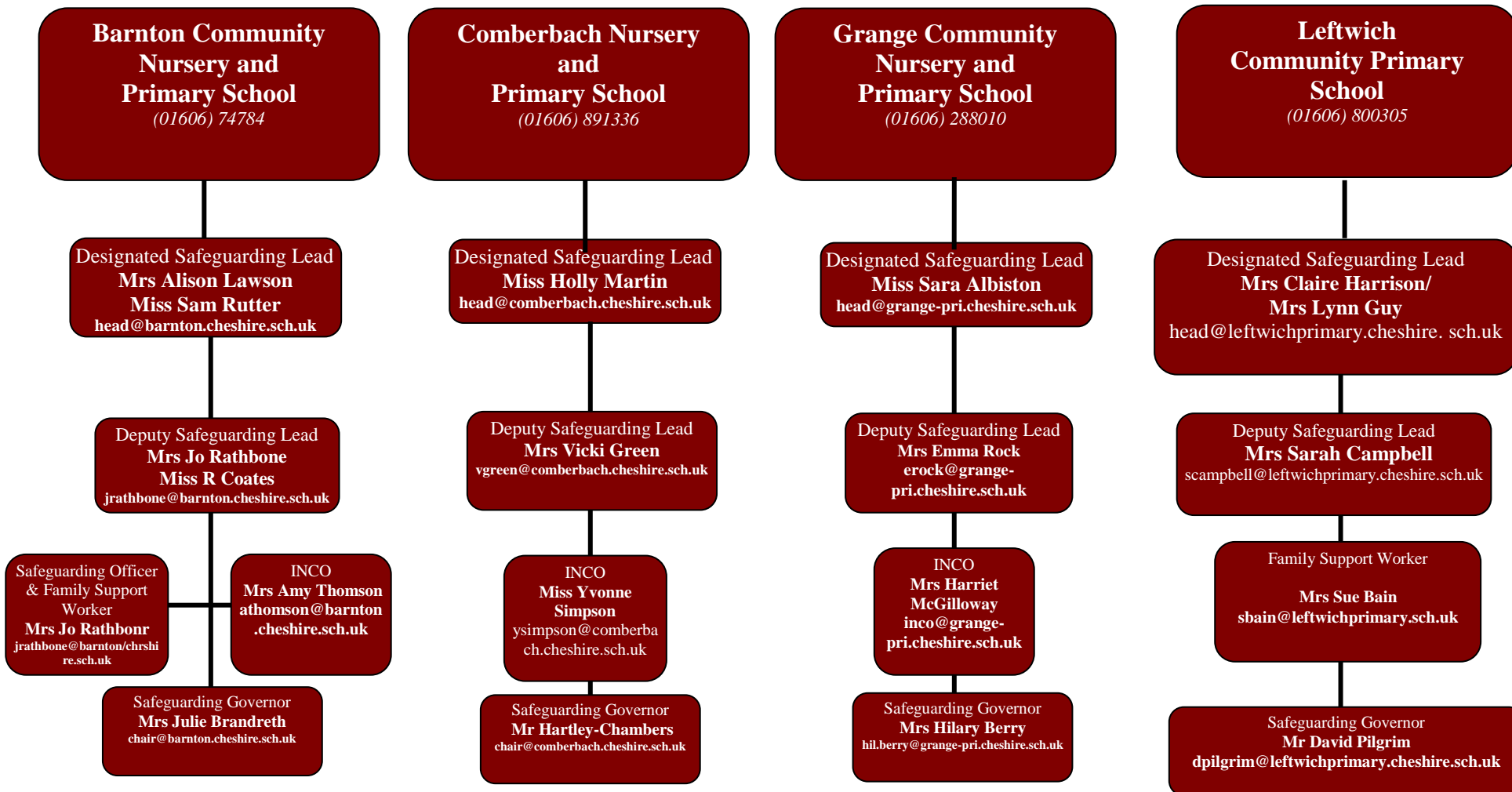
At Weaver Trust we are determined to ensure that every possible measure has been implemented and is effective in safeguarding and protecting the children in our care.

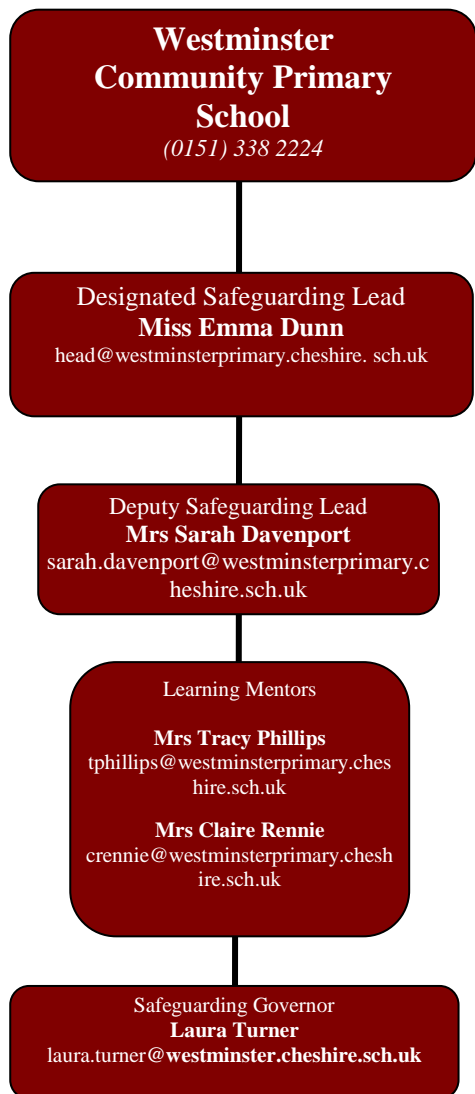
Child Protection is part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. **It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.** Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children, so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced. If you have a safeguarding concern about a pupil in our Trust, please contact schools using the information below.

Staff, Governors & Trustees with Key Safeguarding Protection Roles in Weaver Trust:

Designated Trust
Safeguarding Lead & Single Point
of Contact (SPOC)
Mrs Annette Williams
annette.williams@weavertrust.org
(01606) 288010

Safeguarding Trustee
Mr Matt Lord
matthew.lord@weavertrust.org





Essential Contacts:

Named Local Authority Designated Officer (DO)	Paul Jenkins https://www.cheshirewestlscb.org.uk/policy-and-procedures/allegations-management-lado/
Local Authority Safeguarding Children in Education Officer (SCiE)	Pam Beech (Northwich and Winsford) Pam.Beech@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Vicki Thomason (Ellesmere Port) Victoria.thomason@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Safeguarding Children in Education Manager (SCiE)	Kerry Gray Kerry.gray@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Integrated Access and Referral Team 8.30-5pm Mon-Thurs 8.30-4.30 Fri	0300 123 7047 (01606) 275099
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team 4.30pm-8am Mon-Thurs From 4pm Friday 24hours weekends and bank holidays	01244 977 277
TAF Advisor	Hayley Bennett hayley.bennett@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk 07823 551601 Jayne Ford jayne.ford@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk 07500 974999
Safeguarding Children Partnership	www.cheshirewestscp.org.uk 0151 356 6494
CAMHS	
Cheshire Police	0845 458 0000 or 101 for non-emergencies and 999 in case of emergency
Safer Schools Officer	Amy.fletcher@cheshire.pnn.police.uk 01606 364565
Neighbourhood Policing Officer	Di Wiggins Andy Wynne, Ellesmere Port, andrew.wynne@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

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1. Introduction

What is the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?

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 children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

There are six main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children and child protection;
- Equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse;
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

1.1 School Commitment

Weaver Trust is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning school environment for children and young people, identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them, in partnership with families and other agencies. This policy reflects the policies of Cheshire West’s Safeguarding Children Partnership, <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/> and is in line with “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2022) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Weaver Trust will also contribute through the curriculum by developing children’s understanding, awareness and promoting their resilience by providing a safe environment within schools.

To create this safe environment, Weaver Trust has certain statutory duties and responsibilities set out within:

- The Education Act, 2002, HM Guidance;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2022;

- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrassment between children in schools and colleges, 2021 (now contained within KCSiE 2023 statutory guidance)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Trust’s duties are listed below:

1.2 Trust’s Duties

To provide a safe environment, the CEO, LEC, Headteachers, the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees of Weaver Trust will:

- Ensure that everyone from the Designated Safeguarding Trustee to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and all members of Weaver Trust community, have appropriate safeguards and supports in place should they choose to raise safeguarding issues, however unusual or sensitive these issues may be;
- Cultivate an ethos within Weaver Trust community where all adults feel comfortable and supported to bring safeguarding issues to the attention of the Headteacher and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children;
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk without coercion and are listened to;
- Ensure children know that if they are worried they can talk to any adult in Weaver Trust;
- Ensure that staff are aware of the additional barriers that exist when recognising abuse of pupils in the early years and those pupils with specific additional needs;
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies and are fully committed to the provision of Early Help;
- Ensure all adults working with children are aware of the role of Cheshire West’s Safeguarding Children partnership.
- Include opportunities in the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) & Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to assess and manage risk (including E-safety) as is appropriate to their age, stage of development and level of understanding;
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure each risk of harm to any child’s welfare is minimised;
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with families and agencies as far as possible;
- Ensure robust and effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of Weaver Trust;
- Promote pupil health and safety;
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice in line with procedure;
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against staff, supply staff and volunteers: HM Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023, Part 4: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff (also set out within the Local Interagency Procedures)

- Put in place and promote robust anti-bullying, including cyber bullying, homophobic, transphobic and hate crime strategies;
- Meet the health needs of children with medical conditions;
- Provide first aid;
- Maximise school security.
- Tackle drugs and substance misuse;
- Provide support and planning for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community;
- Work with all agencies with regard to children ~~missing~~ 'absent' from education, anti-social behaviour/gang activity, child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, contextual safeguarding and violence/knife crime in the community.
- Tackle child on child abuse and sexual violence and sexual harassment through RSE/PSHE sessions, ensuring all pupils are aware of the school's zero tolerance position and how this will be managed through the school's behaviour and SVSH policy. (see also SVSH and behaviour policy). Additionally, all staff should be able to reassure victims 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 abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Ensure all staff are aware of contextual safeguarding (extra-familial harm) and the risks of abuse posed to children outside of the family context.

2. Trust Responsibilities

“Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.”

‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018

Weaver Trust will identify children who have been harmed and children at risk of harm and maintain safety by:

- Everybody having a duty to safeguard children inside and outside Weaver Trust environment including school trips, extended schools, activities and vocational placements;
- Involving parents and providing advice/guidance regarding safeguarding;
- Maintaining a child focus and listening carefully to children;
- Recognising signs of concern, especially with children who may be vulnerable;
- Documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguarding and by ensuring these records follow the child throughout their educational career;
- Taking appropriate actions to address concerns about a child’s welfare in partnership with other organisations and safeguarding agencies;
- Informing all staff and volunteers who the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for Weaver Trust at each school are;
- Providing PSHE/RSE that includes raising awareness with children in what are, and are not, acceptable behaviours.

PSHE/RSE input will provide opportunities for children and young people to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, by:

- The availability of advice and support in their local area and online;
- Recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet;
- Judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable;
- Recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being;
- Developing effective ways of resisting pressure;
- Developing healthy relationships, including awareness of unhealthy relationships where domestic violence, bullying and abuse occur;
- Providing a safe environment, where children feel secure and are given the time and encouragement to talk without coercion and are listened to.

Weaver Trust will ensure that all pupils are aware that support information can be found on displays around each school.

Weaver Trust’s arrangements for consulting with, and listening to, pupils are through school council, child mentor/buddy schemes and other pupil voice opportunities.

Weaver Trust ensures pupils are aware of these arrangements through PSHE lessons and assemblies.

2.1 The Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Appropriate members of Weaver Trust’s leadership team have been assigned to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead and have received appropriate training and are supported in their role:

Barnton Community Nursery and Primary School

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Alison Lawson/Sam Rutter**

Supervised by: **CEO**

Comberbach Nursery and Primary School

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Holly Martin**

Supervised by: **CEO**

Grange Community Nursery and Primary School

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Sara Albiston**

Supervised by: **CEO**

Leftwich Community Primary School

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Claire Harrison/Lynn Guy**

Supervised by: **CEO**

Westminster Community Primary School

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Emma Dunn**

Supervised by: **CEO**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads have been appointed at each school and provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for safeguarding children are fully embedded within Weaver Trust ethos and that specific duties are discharged. This will entail supporting the Designated Safeguarding Leads in dealing with referrals, attending case conferences and supporting the child/children. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads have received appropriate training and are supported in their role:

Barnton Community Nursery and Primary School

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Jo Rathbone/Becky Coates/Ruth Grocott** Supervised by: **Sam Rutter**

Comberbach Nursery and Primary School

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Vicki Green** Supervised by: **Holly Martin**

Grange Community Nursery and Primary School

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Emma Rock, Harriet McGilloway** Supervised by: **Sara Albiston**

Leftwich Community Primary School

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Sarah Campbell** Supervised by: **Claire Harrison and Lynn Guy**

Westminster Community Primary School

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Sarah Davenport/Tracy Phillips/Claire Rennie**
Supervised by: **Emma Dunn**

The Trust acknowledges the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils. Each Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the structured procedure within Weaver Trust is followed in each case of suspected abuse.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead are responsible for the following:

2.1.1 Referrals

What to do if concerns are identified about a child:

- Talk to the child about what you have observed or your concern. It's okay to ask questions, but avoid leading questions. Use open ended questions (TED: Can you tell me what happened? Can you explain what you mean? Can you describe what happened?).
- Listen carefully and gather as much information as possible.
- Remember it is not our job to investigate the concern, but to act on it.
- Explain to the child your responsibility to take action if what they tell you suggests they or another child is at risk of harm.
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, using CPOMS or in person in a timely manner.
- In circumstances where a member of staff is unable to report the risk of significant harm to the DSL, then they must contact I-ART on 0300 123 704
- Referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies;
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise within Weaver Trust when deciding on the most appropriate course of action by liaising with relevant agencies;
- Liaising with the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher (where the Designated Safeguarding Lead role is not carried out by the Headteacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure there is always cover for this role on each of Weaver Trust's school sites in the event of their absence;
- Ensuring that a systematic means of monitoring children known, or thought, to be at risk of harm is in place and that Weaver Trust contributes to assessments of need and actively supports multi-agency planning for

those children;

- Promotes educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers, school and leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that Weaver Trust and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- address any urgent medical needs of the child;
- ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of the child;
- discuss the matter with other agencies currently known to be involved with the child and family;
- support the child's wishes and feelings.

Then decide:

- wherever possible, to talk to parent/s (or carer), unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk;
- whether to make a child protection referral to Integrated Access Referral Team (I-ART) because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately;

OR

- not to make a referral at this stage;
- decide if further monitoring is necessary and if so follow up;
- if it would be appropriate to invite the parent/s (or carer) to engage with the Team Around the Family assessment;
- and/or make a referral to other services.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented on the child's safeguarding file. In an emergency the DSL or Safeguarding Officer will contact Cheshire Police on (0845) 458 0000.

The Designated Safeguarding Person is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher who will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO).

<https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/policy-and-procedures/allegations-management-lado/>

Low level concerns, reported to the Head teacher, should be shared with the safeguarding lead if the concern is deemed not to meet LADO threshold of harm. The DSL should then keep a record of these concerns in order to be able to identify a pattern of behaviour – these concerns should not be contained in the employee's file. (See separate Managing Allegations Against Adults Policy).

Action following a child protection referral:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff under direction from the DSL will:

- make regular contact with the allocated social worker or team manager in the event of absence;
- wherever possible, contribute to the strategy discussion;
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent child protection conference;
- if the child or children are made the subject of a child protection plan, contribute to the child protection plan and attend core group meetings and review conferences;
- endeavour to share all reports with parents prior to meetings;
- where in disagreement with a decision made by Children’s Social Care e.g. not to apply child protection procedures or not to convene a child protection conference, follow the formal Escalation Process in respect of resolving professional disagreements/escalation process <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/policy-and-procedures/escalation-and-resolution-policy/> ;
- where a child is subject to a child protection plan and moves from Weaver Trust or goes missing, immediately inform i-ART (0300 123 7047).

2.1.2 Raising Awareness

- Working with the LEC to ensure that Weaver Trust’s Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed annually;
- Ensuring that, in order to avoid conflict and mistrust, parents are aware that referrals may be made and the role of Weaver Trust in the referral process;
- Ensuring that when children leave Weaver Trust, their Safeguarding/Child Protection File is discussed as soon as possible with the Designated Safeguarding Person at the new school;
- Making sure that the Safeguarding/Child Protection File is transferred separately from the main pupil file within 5 days of transfer; It will be posted recorded delivery to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school, sent electronically via CPOMs, or delivered directly by hand and a signature received;
- Where the new school is not known, alerting the Education Welfare Service at Cheshire West and Chester Council so that the child’s name can be included on the database for missing pupils and appropriate action taken to ascertain the safety of the child;
- Cascading safeguarding advice and guidance issued by Cheshire West & Chester’s Safeguarding Children Partnership and government guidance and legislation;
- Raises pupil awareness through the PSHE/RSE/online safety curriculum and within school displays.

2.1.3 Training

Staff are kept informed about Safeguarding procedures by an annual safeguarding briefing, and by feedback at Staff Meetings and through training input from the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership & SCIE teams. Weaver Trust use a company called ‘Safeguarding in Schools’ to keep up to date with all changes in safeguarding legislation and procedures. All staff are aware of possible indicators for different forms of abuse and neglect. This is also referred to as part of the Safeguarding Briefing for all new staff, volunteers and students. Staff are signposted to relevant, up-to-

date Safeguarding & Child Protection documents which contain detailed information about these issues.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend the multi-agency 1-day “Working Together” Level 3 course in Safeguarding provided either the Local Authority, or a recognised organisation. This training is supplemented by attending a half day refresher course, every 2 years, unless the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead feels they require a repeat of the full 1-day course.

Staff attending additional courses in areas such as Child Exploitation, Neglect and Domestic Abuse is also supported.

The Level 3 training will enable the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral by using the Continuum of Need thresholds;
- Have a working knowledge of how to support the Team Around the Family, how Cheshire West & Chester’s Safeguarding Children Partnership operates, how a child protection case conference is conducted, and be able to attend and contribute effectively to all planning meetings when required to do so;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns.

In addition to their formal training, as set out above, staff knowledge and skills should be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up to date with any developments relevant to their safeguarding role.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure all staff, and all members of the LEC and Trust Board receive appropriate Safeguarding training.

All staff will be expected to undergo endorsed Basic Awareness in Safeguarding training within the first term of their employment/placement, which will be refreshed on a regular basis (at least every 3 years), to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety (for example: via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff and volunteers, especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational settings, will receive:

- a copy of a safeguarding summary document (appendix 4) prior to starting work;
- induction training to ensure that all staff:
 - have an overview of the Trust;
 - understand its purpose, values, services and structure;
 - are able to recognise/identify signs of abuse which may include:
 - significant changes in children's behaviour;
 - deterioration in children’s general well-being, including mental health;

- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
 - children’s comments which give cause for concern;
 - any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child’s home; inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of personal information (eg phone numbers, email, social networking) or images.
- know that they must report any concerns immediately they arise and to whom and are aware of the whistle-blowing policy and procedures;
 - understand confidentiality issues.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Headteacher/Head of School

The Headteacher/Head of School of each school will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the LEC are fully implemented and followed by all staff, so that everyone knows what to do if concerned about a child;
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including undertaking the Lead Professional role in the Team Around the Family, taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies;
- They personally, along with other senior leaders, undertake safer recruitment training in order to comply with the statutory requirement to have a trained person on every recruitment panel.
- Allegations against a member of staff are referred in a timely manner to the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) if appropriate.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of the LEC

Each LEC is collectively responsible for ensuring that Weaver Trust’s safeguarding arrangements and ensuring that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities at their school. The Designated Safeguarding Governor will undertake initial Safeguarding training to understand their Role and Responsibilities. Ideally, all governors will undertake the Basic Awareness Safeguarding training with their school.

Allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher/Head of School are reported to the Chair of LEC and the CEO and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO).

The LEC will ensure that:

- Safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within Weaver Trust’s ethos and reflected in Weaver Trust’s day to day safeguarding practices;
- Sufficient governors are trained in safer recruitment practices that appointments to the senior leadership team can be adequately supported;
- Weaver Trust has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this policy, and school’s compliance with them is monitored;
- There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints and/or allegations against staff, including the Headteacher and any subsequent staff disciplinary hearings;
- There is a Designated Safeguarding Governor to champion safeguarding issues within Weaver Trust, to liaise with the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead, and to provide information and reports to the LEC. The Designated Safeguarding Governor will be supported by the Chair of LEC;
- The Headteacher, and all staff who work with children, will undertake a full and endorsed Basic Awareness Safeguarding training regularly (at least every 3 years) and have access to regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to ensure that they have the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively;
- The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads attend at least a minimum Level 3 multi-agency course every two years;
- Temporary staff, volunteers and other regular visitors to Weaver Trust who work with children are made aware of Weaver Trust’s arrangements for safeguarding and their responsibilities.

5. Identifying Concerns

“Early identification and provision of help is in the child’s best interest and results – services which deliver and support families are vital in promoting children’s wellbeing.”

“All who come into contact with families have a part to play in identifying these children whose needs are not being adequately met.”

The Munro Review of Child Protection Part 1: A systems analysis Professor Eileen Munro.

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns. If concerns are identified, the child may be spoken to in order to ascertain whether abuse is occurring and may be done without prior consent from the child’s parent/s (or carer) because the member of staff has a duty of care under ‘loco parentis’. This would also be the case if the child is a witness to the abuse of another child or children e.g., bullying.

5.1 Definitions, Signs and Symptoms and Types of Abuse:

A child: The Children Act of 1989 and 2004 defines a child as anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18th birthday or in the case of a disabled child 25 years old;

Harm means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

Health includes physical and mental health;

Ill-treatment includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Abuse and Neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or 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 a stranger. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical Abuse may involve the hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when parent/s (or carer) fabricate the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

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

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Domestic Abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender and sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

The behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.

The behaviour is ‘abusive’ if it consists of any of the following:

- a) physical or sexual abuse;
- b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));
- e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

‘Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to:

- a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- b) obtain goods or services.

For the purposes of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of

different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (B&ME) communities such as so called 'honour based' violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and it is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Safeguarding Pupils who are Susceptible to Extremism

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise susceptible children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them susceptible to future radicalisation.

Weaver Trust values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our Society's values. Both pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the susceptible or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of susceptible people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people susceptible to future manipulation and exploitation. Weaver Trust is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation will be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of susceptibility to radicalisation are in Appendix 3

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

Weaver Trust individual LEC members, the Headteacher/Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk within Weaver Trust and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of Weaver Trust’s RE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of pupils by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to Weaver Trust ’s profile, community and philosophy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual s175 return that is monitored by the local authority and the Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Weaver Trust, like all other Trusts, will identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the Trust for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism (this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead). The SPOC for Weaver Trust is Annette Williams. The responsibilities of the SPOC are described in Appendix 3.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC and to the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the school.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Safeguarding pupils who are susceptible to exploitation, forced marriage, honour based violence, female genital mutilation, sharing of nudes or semi-nude images or videos, sexual violence and sexual harassment or trafficking and modern slavery is imperative.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;

- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late;
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Child Criminal Exploitation.

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Some of the following signs may be indicators of criminal exploitation:

- Persistently 'absent' from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones;
- Excessive receipt of texts / phone calls;
- Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups;
- Leaving home / care without explanation;
- Suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries;
- Parental concerns;
- Carrying weapons;
- Significant decline in school results / performance;
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks;
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

County Lines is a form of criminal exploitation whereby gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and susceptible adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

HBA/Forced Marriage or FGM - So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts staff will speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBA. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM

or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512906/Multi_Agency_Statutory_Guidance_on_FGM_-_FINAL.pdf (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA they 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, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see following section).

FGM mandatory reporting duty - FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

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 along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to 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. 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. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they will also still consider and discuss any such case with Weaver Trust’s designated safeguarding lead and involve the child’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf

Forced Marriage - Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have

learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf , with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges.

School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: fmufco.gov.uk.

It is now a crime to carry out any conduct, whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used.

Sharing of nudes or semi-nude images or videos - Whilst professionals refer to the issue as ‘sexting’ there is no clear definition of ‘sexting’. Many professionals consider sexting to be ‘sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.’ Yet when young people are asked ‘What does sexting mean to you?’ they are more likely to interpret sexting as ‘writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know’. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images. This policy only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

On this basis, current advice introduces the phrase ‘youth produced sexual imagery’ and uses this instead of ‘sexting.’ This is to ensure clarity about the issues current advice addresses.

‘Youth produced sexual imagery’ best describes the practice because:

- ‘Youth produced’ includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves.
- ‘Sexual’ is clearer than ‘indecent.’ A judgement of whether something is ‘decent’ is both a value judgement and dependent on context.
- ‘Imagery’ covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the document).

The types of incidents which this covers are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a child under the age of 18.
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a child under the age of 18 or an adult.
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

For the best way to respond to these issues, staff should read the following advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

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 or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

It is essential that all victims 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 sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk. 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;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and,
- 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.

What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers and other children in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (Schools

should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent, or touching someone’s bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent](#)

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Consent is specifically taught at an age appropriate level through the PSHE curriculum.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - o consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos. As set out in [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) (which provides detailed advice for schools and colleges) taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence;
 - o sharing of unwanted explicit content;
 - o upskirting (is a criminal offence¹⁴¹);
 - o sexualised online bullying;

- o unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
- o sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

The initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. Schools not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying of some behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can actually lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, 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.

It is essential that all victims 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 sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process within the school. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). For the best way to respond to these issues, staff should read the following advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>.

Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Child trafficking and modern slavery are forms of child abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking, forced labour in factories or agriculture and criminal activity such as: pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional violence are often used to control victims of trafficking. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected.

Children are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes. Traffickers use grooming techniques to gain the trust of the child, family or community. They may threaten families, but this isn't always the case, they may promise children education or persuade parents their child can have a better future in another place. Sometimes families will be asked for payment towards the 'service' a trafficker is providing e.g. sorting out travel documentation or transport. Traffickers make a profit from the money a child earns through exploitation, forced labour or crime. Often this is explained as a way for a child to pay off a debt they or their family 'owe' to the traffickers.

Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats do not need to be proven in cases of child trafficking – a child cannot legally consent, so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation.

Our safeguarding policy, through Weaver Trust's values, ethos and behaviour policies, provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other.

- Weaver Trust keeps itself up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation.
- All staff are supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues, include such issues in an age appropriate way in their curriculum.
- Our Family Support Workers are supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads know where to seek and get advice as necessary.
- Weaver Trust brings in experts and uses specialist material to support the work we do.

Safeguarding pupils/students who are victims of Child on Child abuse - There is no clear definition of what child on child abuse entails. However, it can be captured in a range of different definitions:

- **Domestic Abuse:** relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and / or financial abuse, and coercive control in their intimate relationships;
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** captures young people aged under-18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age - including another young person;
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who demonstrates behaviour outside of their normative parameters of development (this includes, but is not exclusive to abusive behaviours);
- **Serious Youth Crime / Violence:** refers to offences (as opposed to relationships / contexts) and captures all those of the most serious in nature including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18.

Child on child abuse can refer to any of the above individually or as a combination, therefore professionals working with children and young people who are experiencing abuse from their peers and other children must respond to the needs of each of the definitions to uncover the level of complexity and respond in the most effective manner. It is

possible that a young person may be sexually exploited in a gang related situation by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

Key Areas Where Child on Child Abuse Occurs include:

Bullying (including Cyberbullying) is defined as “behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”. Bullying often starts with trivial events and it is behaviour that hurts someone else - such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, threatening or undermining someone; mocking; making offensive comments; taking belongings; inappropriate touching; producing offensive graffiti; or always leaving someone out of a group. It can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It’s usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. A child that is being bullied can feel like there’s no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

There are many different forms of bullying including:

- **‘Cyberbullying’:** involves sending inappropriate or hurtful text messages, emails or instant messages, posting malicious material online (e.g. on social networking websites) or sending or posting offensive or degrading images and videos;
- **Racist and Religious Bullying:** A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
- **Sexual, Sexist and Transphobic Bullying:** includes any behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls;
- **Homophobic Bullying:** targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
- **Disablist Bullying:** targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way, or exploiting a certain aspect of the victim’s disability.

It is important to remember that bullying can also be a combination of the above. There has been much media attention surrounding children and young people who have committed suicide due to being bullied. Professionals must understand the damaging, and at times, fatal effects bullying can and does have on a child and young people and be able to respond to it effectively.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Many of the warning signs and indicators of CSE tend to refer to adult perpetrators, e.g. associations with older boyfriends / girlfriends, relationships or associations with risky adults and / or entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults. As per the revised definition of CSE it “occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity”. The key element of CSE is the imbalance of power and control within the exploitative relationship. Many children and young people are not aware of the exploitation as they have a genuine belief that they are loved by their boyfriend /

girlfriend, or are acting in accordance with their peers or other children. Children and young people are often recruited into exploitation by those who they trust, those of a similar age and with similar hobbies, often the nature of child on child exploitation encompasses a sense of child pressure and wanting to fit in. In child on child exploitation, schools and youth clubs are also locations where children and young people can be exploited.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Including Sharing of Nude or Semi-Nude Images or Videos

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people does not always occur with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse. This also includes sexting when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending ‘nude pics’, ‘rude pics’ or ‘nude selfies’. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture may occur in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be committing a criminal offence.

Gang Activity and Youth Violence

A child or young person can be exploited (sexually and / or physically) by a gang, but this is not necessarily the reason why gangs are formed. The Office of the Children’s Commissioner has defined Child Exploitation in gangs and groups as:

- **Gangs** - mainly comprising men and boys aged 13-25 years old, who take part in many forms of criminal activity (e.g. knife crime or robbery) who can engage in violence against other gangs, and who have identifiable markers, for example a territory, a name, or sometimes clothing.
- **Groups** - involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, co-ordinating and / or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organised or opportunistic way. Types of exploitation may include using sex as a weapon between rival gangs, as a form of punishment to fellow gang members and / or a means of gaining status within the hierarchy of the gang. Children and young people may be forced to gain entry into the gang by carrying out an initiation process which may be harmful to them and / or may inflict harm to others. Where abuse takes place in a gang environment, female members may perceive the abuse as normal, as well as accepting it as a way of achieving a respected status / title within the gang.

Domestic Violence

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and / or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and / or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in

order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

Weaver Trust recognises that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’, “just having a laugh”, or “part of growing up”. We also recognise that child on child abuse, although more likely to be reported by girls as victims and boys as perpetrators, can be experienced by all genders or identities. All reports of abuse will be taken seriously.

Weaver Trust records, investigates and deals with allegations of child on child abuse promptly recording details onto CPOMS. We aim to minimise child on child abuse by educating our children through our PSHE curriculum and regular assemblies. In the event of a child being affected by child on child abuse, either as a victim, or perpetrator, the Trust will seek advice from experts and will put measures of support in place such as relevant therapy e.g. ELSA and conduct TAFs where necessary.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one and to report it accordingly.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact through out childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how each child’s experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

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

Clear systems and processes are in place at the Trust for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. Schools can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support and this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) guidance.

5.2 Disclosure

“Staff across frontline services need appropriate support and training to ensure that as far as possible they put themselves in the place of the child or young person and consider first and foremost how that situation must feel for them. “

Lord Laming 2009

All members of staff, volunteers and LEC governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and they must comply with the procedures to be followed.

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel disloyal, ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Children are not always ready, or able to talk about their experiences of abuse, and/or, may not always recognise that they are being abused.

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

During your conversation with the pupil:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the pupil.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this. Use TED – **T**ell me about that, **E**xplain that to me, **D**escribe that...
- At an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Respect the child’s personal space. Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Explain to the pupil what will happen next.
- Report verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible using Weaver Trust’s recording process CPOMS.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.
- 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. Anybody can make a referral.

6. Confidentiality

While it is recognised that all matters relating to safeguarding individual children are confidential, a member of staff, LEC governor or volunteer, if confided in by a pupil, must never guarantee confidentiality to that pupil.

Where there is a Safeguarding or Child Protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will consider the most appropriate response, consulting with relevant partners if appropriate.

The parent/s of the child should be informed immediately unless it is felt that this would not be in the best interests of the child, or the staff member is unable to contact them at the time.

The Headteacher or Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a pupil, including the level of involvement of other agencies, to other members of staff only on a 'need to know' basis.

All staff are aware that they have a duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children as set out in 'Working together to Safeguard Children, 2022' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023'.

- Practitioners must have due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- To share information effectively all practitioners should be confident of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'. Where practitioners need to share special category personal data, they should be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information. This includes allowing 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.

7. Records and Monitoring

Child protection information will be stored and handled by the Trust fully consistent with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations to ensure that information is:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes (in this case to meet statutory safeguarding requirements as set out in government legislation).
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
- Accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date
- Kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed (Child protection files should be passed on to any new school the child attends and kept until they are 25 (this is 7 years after they reach school's leaving age) (IRMS, 2016).)
- Appropriate security measures are in place to protect the personal data held.

The Trust is responsible for the personal data and how it complies with the other principles and can demonstrate compliance through ensuring appropriate measures and records are in place.

Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means

that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. Access must be done through a Subject Access Request (SAR). This information belongs to the child, who has a right to deny their parent/s/ (or carer) access to the file if they wish to do so – further information regarding SARs can be accessed in ‘What about requests for information about children’? <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/right-of-access/> . If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent/s to see safeguarding/child protection records, they will refer the request to the Headteacher.

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

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records must provide a factual, evidence-based account. Accurate recording of actions will be made. Records will be signed, dated and where appropriate witnessed.

Hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding concerns will be kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored away from the main pupil file. Schools also hold electronic records, via CPOMS as well as, for example, a record of concern logs or the multi-agency referral form, or a central list of those pupils who have a child protection plan in place. Authorisation to access these paper, or electronic records will be controlled by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Weaver Trust will keep records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to action the matter immediately and upload details to CPOMS. These records will be kept within the separate, confidential file, or on CPOMS.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. Original notes will be retained as evidence in case of criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect or civil actions.

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there is any issue identified regarding a child. A record of each and every episode/incident/concern/activity regarding that child, including telephone calls to other professionals, will be recorded in chronological order and kept within the confidential file for that child. Support and advice will be sought from Children’s Social Care, the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) or other relevant agencies, whenever necessary and recorded.

If the child moves to another setting, the Safeguarding file will be sent electronically (and by registered post where necessary) immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new setting, making sure that the Safeguarding file is transferred separately from the main pupil file. There must be liaison between the two Designated Safeguarding Leads at each school in order to ensure a smooth and safe transition for the child.

Where the new school is not known, the Educational Welfare Service and pupil tracking officer at Cheshire West and Chester Council should be informed so that the child can be included on the data base for missing pupils and action taken to ascertain the safety and wellbeing of the child and that the child is receiving their right to education.

7.1 Filtering and Monitoring

To meet digital and technology standards, Weaver Trust has followed the Department for Education’s Filtering and Monitoring Standards (www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges).

Weaver Trust has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors will be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children’s exposure to the above risks from the school’s IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors ensure each Weaver Trust school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

The leadership team in each Weaver Trust School and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, manage them effectively, and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Governing bodies and proprietors consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

Weaver Trust;

- has identified and assigned roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- will review the filtering and monitoring provision monthly
- will block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- will have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs
- will follow established procedures to resolve any highlighted monitoring and filtering breaches

8. Supporting Children

“The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti bullying strategies.”

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2022

This Trust and each school endeavours to support pupils through:

- the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- support from our Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA);

- the implementation of school Behaviour Policy;
- a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays - vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families;
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parent/s (or carer), whenever it is in the child's interest to do so;
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately to Safeguarding and child protection situations.

Some children may have an increased risk of harm. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

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

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities or health issues. Staff must consider whether their behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability; be aware that they have a higher risk of child group isolation; there is a possibility of a disproportionate impact of bullying; and they may have difficulties with communication;
- Looked after children and previously looked after children;
- Children living in a domestic abuse situation; (now defined in law as 'victims')
- Children affected by parental substance misuse;
- Asylum seekers;
- Children living away from home;
- Those vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- Children living in temporary accommodation;
- Those who live transient lifestyles;
- Children living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;
- Children vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or gender identity disorder;
- involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation or child trafficking;
- do not have English as a first language
- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)
- Children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods.
- Children requiring mental health support
- Care leavers
- Children with family members in prison

(Special consideration includes: the provision of safeguarding information, resources in community languages and accessible formats and extra pastoral support.)

The Trust recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Weaver Trust may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of a child at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Weaver Trust will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum;
- A school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued;
- Implementation of Weaver Trust Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils. Weaver Trust will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are nonetheless valued and are not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil, such as Children’s Social Care, Youth Offending service and Education Psychology Service;
- Raising awareness to Weaver Trust community of Operation Encompass and Weaver Trust’s involvement with Cheshire Police.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil is subject to a child protection plan and leaves the Trust, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child’s social worker is informed.

9. Early Intervention and Prevention within Safeguarding

All school staff are aware of their responsibility to raise any concerns they have about a child as early as possible in order to prevent the situation worsening. This may present as a change in a child’s behaviour, appearance or from a conversation with the family about home conditions, financial difficulties, speech and language, toileting issues etc. Where this concern does not identify a safeguarding issue but could lead to more serious concerns if left, staff will follow the procedures set out in the Team around the Family (TAF) guidance to fulfil their duties at Universal Plus and Partnership Plus on the Continuum of Need. This may involve signposting to or involving more appropriate agencies for support and may involve Weaver Trust acting as Lead Person on a child’s TAF. In the event of complex needs, a referral to Integrated access and referral team (I-ART) for support from the Early Help and Prevention service should be made.

Young Carers

In many families, children contribute to family care and well-being as a part of normal family life. A young carer is a child who is responsible for caring on a regular basis for a relative (usually a parent, grandparent, sometimes a sibling or very occasionally a friend) who has an illness or disability. Many young carers may experience:

- Social isolation;
- A low level of school attendance;
- Some educational difficulties;
- Impaired development of their identity and potential;
- Low self-esteem;
- Emotional and physical neglect;

- Conflict between loyalty to their family and their wish to have their own needs met.

Where a young carer is identified, the child's needs will be considered using the Team around the Family process.

10. Recruitment

Weaver Trust pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in Weaver Trust who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking prohibition to teach, Disclosure and Barring checks and right to work in England checks.

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

- An enhanced DBS Check is obtained for all new appointments where an individual will 'regularly' have contact with our pupils, which will include a barred list/prohibition from teaching check for all new teaching staff.
- The Trust is committed to keeping an up to date single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on our staff.
- All new appointments to Weaver Trust workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate.
- Weaver Trust ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy.
- Identity checks will be carried out on all appointments to Weaver Trust workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the LA.
- All shortlisted candidates will be informed that they will have an online search of publicly available information carried out as part of the school's safer recruitment due diligence.

11. Volunteers

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children. For this reason, any volunteers in Weaver Trust, in whatever capacity, will follow the policies and procedures in the same way as paid staff.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with a child. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

We will ensure all volunteers receive guidance on their role and what to do if they have concerns before they start their work with Weaver Trust.

12. Safe Staff

Checks will be undertaken corresponding to Safer Recruitment procedures on all adults working in Weaver Trust to establish their suitability to work with children.

All school staff will take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted with or in view of other adults.

If an allegation is made against another member of staff, supply staff or volunteer, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher or the most senior teacher if the Headteacher is not present. The Headteacher or most senior teacher will then consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO).

Allegations against the Headteacher are reported to the LEC Chair and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) via the DO referral form <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/policy-and-procedures/allegations-management-lado/>

13. Conduct of Staff

"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"

“Sounding the Alarm” – Barnardos

Weaver Trust has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

Staff will have access to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 on appointment/induction and have read Part 1 as a minimum. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

All staff are aware of the dangers inherent in:

- Working alone with a child;
- Physical interventions;
- Cultural and gender stereotyping;
- Dealing with sensitive information;
- Giving to, and receiving gifts from, children and parents;
- Contacting a child through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites;
- Disclosing personal details inappropriately;
- Meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties;
- Making inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the normal requirements of the role; or inappropriate sharing of images.

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Cheshire West & Chester Council’s Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, this will be viewed as serious misconduct, and appropriate action will be taken.

13.1 Allegations (See separate Whistleblowing Policy and Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy)

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of Weaver Trust that he or she has:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- c. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children;
- d. behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Then the Trust will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and will always follow the Cheshire West & Chester’s Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures. Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely by the DSL.

Whilst we acknowledge some allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be made with foundation. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

Initial action to be taken:

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Headteacher and make a record;
- In the event that an allegation is made against the Headteacher the matter will be reported to the Chair of LEC who will proceed as the ‘Headteacher’;
- The Headteacher will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of the child and address any urgent medical needs;
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children;
- The Headteacher may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation, however no person will be interviewed at this stage;
- The Headteacher will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by the Trust or if there needs to be a referral to i-ART and/or the police for investigation;
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and staff;
- The Headteacher will inform the Chair of LEC of any allegation;
- If consideration needs to be given to an individual’s employment, advice will be sought from HR: Solicitor Luke Green luke.green@hilldickinson.com D: +44 (0)151 600 8791.

14. Supporting Staff

“It is important not to underestimate the difficulty for both staff and managers in confronting what appear to be poor professional standards or unacceptable conduct by a colleague in an environment, which of necessity is dependent on close working relationships. It must also be recognised that it is very rare for a teacher to commit offences in the manner of Teacher A. However, some of the allegations were of such a serious nature, particularly those from children themselves that they constituted matters that should have been investigated under the child protection procedures.”

North Somerset SCR – The Sexual Abuse of Children in a First School February 2012

We recognise that staff working in Weaver Trust who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or who appears likely to suffer harm, may find this situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher and to seek further support, if necessary.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher can seek personal support through the Safeguarding Children in Education team (SCiE: 0151 356 6614) for advice scie@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk, CWAPH Chair, or other appropriate services.

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings <https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Sept%202019.pdf> This guidance provides advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and the circumstances that should be avoided in order to limit any complaints against staff of abuse of trust or allegations of abuse.

15. Photographing Children

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We acknowledge, however, that some people abuse children through taking, using or circulating images.

Staff and Volunteers

- Parental consent will be sought via data collection and permissions noted.
- Staff and volunteers must seek the authorisation of the Headteacher prior to taking photographs/ videos of children and must only use school equipment unless given specific authorisation by the Headteacher.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones or the downloading of images onto any internet site is forbidden.
- Only the pupil’s first name will be used with an image.
- Pupils will be appropriately dressed before any images are taken.
- Pupils are encouraged to tell us if they are worried or unsure about any photograph that is taken of them.

The Guidance for Safer working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People provides detailed

guidance on the taking of photographs and storage of images.

Parents or Members of the Public

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in a Weaver Trust production, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.

However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this (e.g. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, causing an accident), we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow other people, including staff, to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without parental permission. This includes the use of cameras on mobile phones or any other device.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, including social networking sites, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

Weaver Trust cannot, however, be held accountable for any photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions that are put in the public domain.

16. Before and After School Activities and Contracted Services

Where the LEC transfers control or otherwise allows the use of school premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of school hours, the Trust will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. These providers must meet the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings and that there are arrangements in place to co-ordinate with Weaver Trust on such matters. The external bodies' compliance with the Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings guidance will be reviewed annually by Weaver Trust. If Weaver Trust receive allegations related to an incident that 'happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children' the Trust school should follow their [own] safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers.

Complaints and Compliments

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff e.g. the Headteacher and LEC Governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in the Trust's complaints procedure. https://weavertrust.co.uk/downloads/?cp_6=4 Please NOTE – The SCiE service is not part of Weaver Trust complaints procedure and, therefore, the service's details should not be given to parents under any circumstances as

this means we cannot remain independent).

Complaints from staff are dealt with under Weaver Trust’s Complaints, Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

Additional Information for Parents

Contact Arrangements and Parental Responsibility

We recognise that a relationship breakdown can be very distressing for all involved, however, any contact arrangements must be agreed outside of school and the Trust or school should not be put in a position where they are placed in the middle of contact disputes. We aim to make Weaver Trust’s environment a calm and safe place for all children, as well as the whole school community, and we would be unable to do this if we are placed at the centre of any dispute. Each school is also unable to prevent anyone with parental responsibility (PR) from picking up a child from school unless there is a court order in place stating that the person with PR is not allowed to do so, although Weaver Trust will attempt to seek permission from the primary carer before releasing the child.

Links to other School Policies

This Policy must be read in conjunction with other policies regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in each school in the Trust.

This policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, parents, LEC governors and Trustees, under the guidance of the ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ policy. Trustees will review this policy every year, in line with our Policy Review Cycle, unless there are significant changes and therefore a need to review it sooner.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school.

These are:

- Behaviour
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-Bullying
- Special Education Needs
- Health and Safety
- Inclusion
- Equal Opportunities
- Managing Allegations Against School Staff
- Looked After Children
- E-Safety
- ICT/Acceptable Use
- Attendance
- PSCHE (SRE)
- Intimate Care
- Children Missing in Education
- Positive Handling

Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Children – Key Points

All adults in charge of or in contact with children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused or neglected, or if someone tells them that this is happening. Ensure that you are familiar with the Safeguarding policy; copies of which are located on the school websites. On request, you will be provided with a printed copy.

In addition, the following key points give a guide on what to do and not to do.

1. Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. Make a note of what was said or observed as soon as possible and pass to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (as named on page one of this policy) at your earliest opportunity.
3. Never make a promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret. If you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it. You should explain that if you are going to be told something very important that needs to be sorted out, you will need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell the people who absolutely have to know.
4. Do not ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened, e.g. "did he do X to you?" Just ask, "what do you want to tell me?" or "Is there anything else you want to say?"
5. Immediately tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead unless they are the subject of the accusation. Don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told. If someone has made an accusation to you or you have concerns about the Headteacher, you should report your concerns to the LEC Chair of your school or Chair of Trustees.
6. Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse.
7. Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc. Children's Social Care and police officers are the people who have the authority to do this. You could cause more damage and endanger possible criminal proceedings. It is your duty to refer concerns on, not investigate.
8. As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the Designated Lead for safeguarding should refer the matter to the Integrated Access and referral team (I-ART) if a child is at risk of or suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Follow their instructions about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations. That is their statutory job. In the case of an allegation against an adult that works with children, the Headteacher, or the LEC Chair where the allegation is against the Headteacher, will refer the matter to The Local Authority Designated Officer (DO).
9. **Never** think abuse is impossible in Weaver Trust or assume that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
10. Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults about abuse. Therefore, you may hear an allegation from another child. This should be acted upon in exactly the same manner as outlined above.

Appendix 2 - INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Pupils may become susceptible 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 are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
 - Identity Crisis – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
 - Personal Crisis – 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.
7. 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.
8. 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;
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

APPENDIX 3 - Preventing Violent Extremism

Roles and Responsibilities of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The SPOC for Weaver Trust is **Annette Williams**, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of Weaver Trust are aware that you are the SPOC in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students/pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of Weaver Trust in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Monitoring the effect in practice of Weaver Trust's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;
- Raising awareness within Weaver Trust about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Acting as the first point of contact within Weaver Trust for case discussions relating to students / pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;
- Collating relevant information in relation to referrals of susceptible students / pupils into the Channel* process;
- Attending Channel* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed;
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel* Co-ordinator;
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority and the Cheshire Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify susceptible individuals;
- Safeguard individuals who might be susceptible to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity;
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

APPENDIX 4 - Staff/Student/Volunteer Safeguarding Briefing

- Explanation of their safeguarding responsibility. Check out their experience of safeguarding & child protection. Record on Safeguarding Declaration. Get copies of any safeguarding training certificates.
- Their responsibility is to read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education (Latest version) and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. They are signing to say that they will do this.
- Indicators of different types of abuse and neglect are covered in these documents. Staff can have hard copies, although it is recommended to read online as this gives access to more information.
- If you have a concern about a child (no matter how small) it is your responsibility to share this concern with key safeguarding staff and to make a record of the concern. Information is provided about how to do this and on the use of CPOMS. Students and volunteers do not have own CPOMS login so take their concern to child's class teacher in the first instance.
- If child makes a disclosure about possible physical or sexual abuse this must be taken to HT, DHT or FSW immediately.
- Discuss how to talk to a child appropriately i.e. using TED principles (Tell, Explain and Describe). Ask open questions. Do not ask a child to show you if they have a mark, but you can ask them if they can show you where it hurts or where it did hurt so that we can assess if first aid or medical assistance is needed.
- Emphasise that we NEVER use the language of secrecy. If a child asks you to keep a secret, be sensitive but clearly explain why you cannot do this because it is important that you can talk to others adults in order to keep the child safe. In addition, staff must not ask a child to keep a secret. It is important to understand that secrecy is often used coercively to groom a young child.
- Record conversations with child as soon as possible. Use the child's own words. Record accurately, sticking to facts, but if giving an opinion make this clear e.g. the child appeared upset, their face was puffy as if they had been crying. This information should be transferred to CPOMS by the person recording the incident. If reported by a parent helper, student, volunteer or ancillary staff this will be a paper record which will need to be put on the system by the child's class teacher. All teaching and support staff will use CPOMS to forward the concern to key safeguarding staff.
- Confidentiality: Discuss with examples and include information which staff share on social media. Explain that breaching this can impact on families being able to trust/work with the school and has possible legal and disciplinary implications
- Use of mobile phones: these may be used discretely in school but must not be used to take photos of children. Do not use personal mobiles to contact parent/child. Do not give parents personal mobile numbers. If you are having a personal conversation this should be away from children.
- Use of social media: discuss protecting their professional reputation, the Trust's reputation and that of the specific school. Think about who will see what you post, settings and the fact that once posted things can be shared widely and impact on your career.
- Appropriate touch: Refer to 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children' (May 2019) Need to use common sense and have regard to keeping themselves safe. Physical contact should not be adult initiated unless its age situation appropriate e.g. soothing a child who is upset or distressed. Try to avoid

front facing hugs.

- Toileting: staff should not go into the toilet with a school age child but offer assistance from the doorway; talking the child through what they need to do and providing resources and support. If a child does need assistance, then good practice is for two members of staff to assist. Children with Health Care or EHCPs who require assistance will have this written into their plans and key staff will be involved in providing this.
- E-Safety: Give some examples of e-safety incidents and how these would be dealt with. Use of RED e-safety reporting forms which go to HT, DHT or FSW. Issues commonly involved; children watching/playing inappropriate sites/games, asking staff to be friends on Facebook or follow them on Twitter. School contact parents and offer support so that parents can keep their children safe online.
- Refer to Staff Code of Conduct and explain that it is their responsibility to read and follow this.
- Whistleblowing: refer to policy and information displayed widely around school. If they have a concern about an adult's behaviour/conduct in school whether this is in relation to another adult, a pupil or any other concern, this needs to be reported to the Head teacher following the whistleblowing procedures.
- Prevent: Brief information about what our responsibilities are and how to report a possible concern. Initially, follow safeguarding procedures and alert key safeguarding staff. Key staff will then check out concerns and make a decision in relation to following Channel procedures. Give examples of possible scenarios.
- Administration of Medication: Clarify the procedures. Only Designated members of staff can give medication. If a child approaches you about this, you must tell them to take their planner down to the office and the staff there will help them.
- Individuals will sign a Safeguarding Declaration form which is filed and kept in the school records.

APPENDIX 5 – Safeguarding Training & Qualifications

Trust Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Lead & SPOC: Annette Williams

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2020)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2021)
- Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs (October 2021)
- Safer Recruitment in Education (October 2021)

Barnton Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Alison Lawson

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (June 2021)
- Safer Recruitment (January 2021)

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Samantha Rutter

- Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs (June 2020)
- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (May 2023)
- Safer Recruitment (July 2023)

Deputy Safeguarding/Family Support Worker/Safeguarding Officer: Jo Rathbone

- Level 3 Safeguarding Children (October 2021)

Inclusion Manager/Safeguarding Teacher: Amy Thomson

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)

Comberbach Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Holly Martin

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (October 2023)
- Safer Recruitment (August 2022)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Vicki Green

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (June 2021)
- Level 2 Safeguarding refresher (July 2021)

Inclusion Manager/Safeguarding Teacher: Yvonne Simpson

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)

Grange Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Lead & SPOC: Sara Albiston

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2020)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children One Day Refresher (June 2019)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead / Family Support Worker: Emma Rock

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (L3) (January 2023)
- Data Protection for schools (January 2023)
- Cyber Security training for Schools (December 2022)
- Prevent (October 2022)
- Safer recruitment (September 2022)
- Senior Mental Health Lead (March 2022)
- New Ways of Working, Leaders Course (June 2019)
- Domestic Abuse; Reducing Parental Conflict; Controlling and Coercing, Stalking and Harassing; Brook Traffic Light; Solihull Parenting (2021 – 2023)

Inclusion Manager/Safeguarding Teacher: Harriet McGilloway

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)

Leftwich Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Lynn Guy and Claire Harrison

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Level 3 Safeguarding (May 2021)
- Our Ways of Working (January 2020)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Campbell

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Level 3 Safeguarding (February 2020)
- Our Ways of Working (January 2020)

Family Support Worker/Safeguarding Officer: Sue Bain

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Level 3 Safeguarding (May 2021)
- Our ways of working (January 2020)

Westminster Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Emma Dunn

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (September 2022)
- Exclusions Training (May 2021)
- Safer Recruitment (September 2022)
- Prevent (May 2022)
- Our Way of Working

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Davenport

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (July 2023)
- Prevent (June 2022)
- Our Way of Working

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Tracy Phillips

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2022)

- Learning from Serious Case Reviews- Family X (March 2021)
- Female Genital Mutilation Level 2 and Level 3 (July 2020)
- Domestic Abuse (April 2020)
- Prevent (June 2020)
- Our Way of Working

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Claire Rennie

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (September 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, (September 2021)
- Personal Education Plans for Children in Care (April 2022)
- Domestic Abuse (April 2020)
- Prevent (June 2020)
- Our Way of Working

Approved by:

Chair of Trust

CEO

Date
