'Working together, we enable everyone to flourish through high quality education'

Safeguarding And Child Protection Policy And Procedures 2026 - 2027

Changes – KCSIE WTSgCh Other School to complete

Approved by:	Board of Trustees	**Date:**	9th July 2026
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Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Steve Smith	01782 235238
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jo Somogy	01782 235238
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen Dodd	01782 235238
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Katie Hawthorne	01782 235238
Early Help Champion	Nicola Hill	01782 235238
Lead Person for Online Safety	Steve Smith	01782 235238
Lead Person for Looked After Children (LAC)	Katie Hawthorne	01782 235238
Lead Person for CSE	Jo Somogy	01782 235238
Lead Person for PREVENT	Katie Hawthorne	01782 235238
Senior Manager responsible for allegations made against staff	Steve Smith	01782 235238
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	John Hanlon	01782 235100
Supporting Families Team	Integrated Front Door	01782 235100
Senior Social Workers for Child Sexual/Criminal Exploitation	Clare Goodwin Iesha Martin	01782 233319 01782 235175
Childrens Advice and Duty Team (Integrated Front Door)	IFD Emergency Duty Team- after hours, weekends, Bank Holidays	01782 235100 01782 237460
Family Support Worker	Jackie Jones; Central Locality Thomas Boughey Children's Centre	01782 231539 07385080425
Stoke-on-Trent Children's Social Care – for referrals	Integrated Front Door (IFD)	01782 235100
	Emergency Duty Team – after hours, weekends and public holidays	01782 234234
Staffordshire Children Social Care – for referrals	Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support Service (SCASS)	0300 111 8007
Police	Non-emergency – 101	Emergency - 999
Prevent	Iftikhar Ahmed	iftikhar.ahmed@stoke.gov.uk
Stoke on Trent Co-operative Working Access	Advice and Access Team	01782 232200
Education Lead - Safeguarding	Samantha Plews	Samantha.Plews@stoke.gov.uk

Head Teacher for the Virtual School	Head Teacher – Hannah Johnson	01782 233038 Hannah.johnson@stoke.gov.uk

Terminology and Acronyms	
Child or young person	Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, including children in Kinship Care, Adopted children and unborn children (where concern exists)
Parent	Birth parents or adoptive parents i.e. those with parental responsibility. It is recognised, however, that other adults may be in a parenting role, for example step parents and foster carers.
Staff	All those working for or on behalf of the school, including paid and unpaid staff, full time or part time staff, temporary, casual, agency staff, self-employed people and contractors
Abuse	A form of maltreatment which includes physical, sexual and emotional harm or neglect. A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely by a stranger.
Multiple Harms	Children may experience more that one form of abuse or risk simultaneously, requiring co-ordinated multi-agency responses.
Early Help	Providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years to teenage years.
Initial Early Help Assessment	A means of providing families with the help and support they need to prevent issues from escalating (and avoid involvement from Children's Social Care.)
Early Help Assessment (EHA)	A way of identifying the strengths and needs within a family in order to provide the right help and support at the right time.
Safeguarding	The action we take to promote the welfare of all children and prevent them from coming to any harm.
Child protection	The activity undertaken to protect specific children who are identified as suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Child protection is one element of safeguarding.
Harm	The ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.
Significant harm	The threshold that requires compulsory intervention in the family for the best interests of the child.
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Deputy DSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LSCP	Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
CIN / CIN Plan	Child in Need / Child in Need Plan (under s.17 Children Act 1989)
Integrated Family Help model	A co-ordinated multi-agency approach combining targeted early help and support under Section 17 to provide consistent, joined-up support for families.
CP / CP Plan	Child Protection / Child Protection Plan (under s.47 Children Act 1989)
LAC	Looked After Child
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation

CET	Child Exploitation Team (within Staffordshire Police)
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
CME	Children Missing from Education
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
CSC	Children's Social Care
IFD	Integrated Front Door
WRAP	Workshop to raise awareness of 'Prevent' which is part of the Government's counter terrorism strategy.
Low Level Concern	Any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school (including trainee teachers) may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise considered not serious enough to require referral to LADO.
Child on Child Abuse	Abuse that can happen between children, including but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour.
Online Safety	The protection of children from risks associated with the internet, including generative AI, exploitation, grooming, exposure to harmful content and inappropriate contact.
Filtering and Monitoring	Systems and processes used to restrict access to harmful online content and track usage to identify safeguarding concerns.

Headteacher: Steve Smith
Chair of Local Governing Board: Jason Toft

1. Introduction

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

Our school is a community and all those directly connected with it - staff members, volunteers, governors, parents, families and pupils; have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure.

The Orchard Community Trust Board and Oakhill Primary School Local Governing Body will ensure that Oakhill Primary School has arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and will work together with other agencies to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm.

This policy applies to all children (i.e. those who have not yet reached their 18th birthday) who are pupils at this school or who visit /come into contact with our school community.

This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

This policy applies throughout periods of closure/reduced school provision due to local or national emergency eg Covid-19 and throughout holiday, breakfast club and after school provision.

Abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Staff are comfortable discussing safeguarding incidents that arise both in school and outside of school, including online safety.

2. Purpose And Aim Of This Policy

To promote and prioritise the safety and welfare needs of pupils.

To provide help and support to meet the needs of pupils as soon as problems emerge.

To protect pupils from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online, and prevent the impairment of their mental and physical health and development.

To prevent the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

Making sure that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Ensuring that the child's voice is central to all safeguarding decisions and actions.

To support pupils' social and emotional development in ways that will foster high self-esteem, security, confidence, resilience and independence.

To provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure, valued, respected, listened to, and confident to approach trusted adults if they are in difficulties.

To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff, governors and volunteers of their responsibilities to safeguard children.

To ensure that all members of the school community exercise professional curiosity and respond to cases of suspected abuse or neglect consistently, sensitively, professionally and in ways which best support the needs of the child.

3. Our Ethos

Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern and we will always act in the best interests of the child.

We accept that where safeguarding and child protection are concerned – *'it could happen here.'*

We recognise the importance of providing a school environment where pupils feel safe and respected, and staff feel comfortable discussing safeguarding matters in and outside of work, including online.

We encourage pupils to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to.

We recognise that all adults within the school have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and as such they will always exercise 'professional curiosity.'

We understand the importance of building trusted relationships with children and know that some children may find it difficult to tell somebody they have been abused.

We recognise the impact on children of witnessing the ill treatment or abuse of others, for example seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse or domestic violence at home and understand the need to support siblings.

We work closely with parents and carers to ensure their understanding of the school's responsibilities to safeguarding and promote the welfare of their children, which may include the need to make referrals to other agencies in some situations.

We work closely with other agencies to meet the needs of our pupils.

All concerns, including low level concerns, are reported using the school safeguarding reporting system. This ensures that nothing is missed and that important pieces of information are gathered to build a bigger picture.

4. Legal Framework

This policy and the accompanying procedures have been developed in accordance with the following legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions (including sixth-form colleges) to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Section 157 of the same Act places the same duty on non-maintained and independent schools, including free schools and academies.

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 applies to children who have highly complex needs (for example a child with a disability;) or a child who may be experiencing compromised parenting and require Children's Social Care involvement to ensure their needs are met through a Child in Need Plan.

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 applies to children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and require Children's Social Care involvement in order to ensure that they are protected from harm. A Child Protection plan is required which will be coordinated by a social worker.

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires all maintained schools, further education colleges and independent schools, including free schools and academies, to cooperate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*:* A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges

Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)

What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused – Please refer to Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures

DfE advice - Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges.

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

Domestic Abuse Act 2021: Raise awareness and understanding about the devastating impact of domestic abuse on victims and their families. Further improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims of domestic abuse and bringing perpetrators to justice.

5. Roles And Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – This is the lead person with overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in our school. The DSL's responsibilities are described in **Appendix 1.**

The DSL is on our school's leadership team and their role as DSL is explicit in their job description. This person has the appropriate authority and is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so; and to contribute to the assessment of children.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads - We have three Deputy DSLs to ensure there is appropriate cover for the DSL at all times.

Early Help Champion - Our Early Help Champion is responsible for leading on, and supporting other staff to lead on, early help assessments and early help plans for children and their families requiring help and support that does not meet the threshold for involvement with Children's Social Care or Supporting Families. We recognise the 'Family Help' approach set out in working Together 2026, which brings together early help and targeted support through co-ordinated multi agency planning.

Safeguarding Governor – We have a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding who champions good practice, liaises with the Headteacher to provide support and challenge, ensures that safeguarding arrangements are audited and quality assured and provides information regarding safeguarding to the governing body.

Senior Manager for Dealing with Allegations – The Headteacher is the person responsible for dealing with allegations of abuse made against school staff. The managers for dealing with allegations against the Headteacher are the Trust members/ Chair of Local Governing Body. The procedure for managing allegations is detailed in **Appendix 14.**

The Headteacher- will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.

The Trust Board/ Local Governing Body are collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are robust, are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day practice and have the training and expertise to provide strategic challenge. Governors ensure that the DSL takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes as part of their role. Boards should also make sure that all staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding.

All staff members, Trust Board members, governors, volunteers and external providers are trained at induction and receive regular safeguarding updates to ensure they understand their responsibility to safeguard and protect children; they know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect, CSE, CCE and child on child abuse both on and off line so that they can be identified early; know how to respond to pupils who make a disclosure and what to do if they are concerned about a child.

6. Supporting Children And Young People

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and have some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives. All staff have an awareness of mental health problems as an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation. They understand the lasting impact of witnessing or experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation and ACEs and the impact on mental health, behaviour & education. Where there is a safeguarding concern staff know to follow the child protection procedure, to listen to the child and are trained to be able to support and reassure the child. If staff are unsure, they always speak to the DSL or deputy.

In these circumstances, a pupil's behaviour may range from that which is perceived to be 'normal' to behaviour which may be aggressive or withdrawn.

Adults at our school are aware of a range of factors which may make a child more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation. These include a child who is disabled, or has certain health conditions or additional needs; has special educational needs, whether or not they have an Education Health Care Plan; has a mental health need; is a young carer; is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines; is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT); is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home; has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending; is in a family circumstance which present challenges, for example drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse; is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves; has returned home to their family from care; is a privately fostered child; is persistently absent from education, including persistent absence for part of the school day.

Our school will support all pupils by:-

- having the children's welfare at the heart of all policies, practices and procedures;
- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning;
- ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to e-safety, enabling pupils and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and how to use these responsibly;
- ensuring that child safeguarding/protection, including on line safety, is included in the curriculum to teach pupils how to stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe, identify who they can talk to and where they can get help from;
- ensuring access to a number of trusted adults to approach if they are in difficulties;
- building confidence, resilience and independence;
- encouraging development of self-esteem and assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying;
- ensuring repeated hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic, gender, discriminatory, prejudice or disability-based bullying, are considered under child protection procedures;
- being committed to anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice and challenging discrimination in all its forms;
- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children;
- monitoring children who have been identified as having welfare, mental health or protection concerns and providing appropriate support;
- ensuring that the DSL and mental health lead work closely together;
- ensuring that the designated safeguarding lead shares information about welfare, safeguarding and Child Protection issues with teachers and leaders;

- ensuring there is a particular focus on children with social workers, that staff understand these pupils' academic progress & attainment, that there is a culture of high aspirations for this cohort and that teaching staff are supported to identify challenges they may face and the academic support and adjustments that need to be made.
- ensuring that the school is following the new statutory guidance for Sex and Relationships Education from June 2021 and has an up to date Sex and Relationships Education Policy in place.
- ensuring whole school preventative measures are in place through the behaviour policy, pastoral system, PSHE and RSHE curricula, to prepare children for life in modern Britain and to make sure the school has zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobic, biphobic and sexual violence or harassment.
- demonstrate understanding of the difference between 'unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education' and 'children absent from education' by ensuring that pupils who are absent from education receive the appropriate support to help prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing in education in the future.

7. Child Protection And Safeguarding Procedure

We have developed a structured procedure in line with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse. This is detailed in **Appendix 8**.

The name of the DSL is clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

We will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by publishing the policy and procedures on our website and by referring to them in our introductory school materials.

In line with the procedures, the IFD (Integrated Front Door) will be notified as soon as there is a significant concern (or the relevant Children's Social Care Team if there is already a social worker involved).

8. Record Keeping

All child protection and welfare concerns will be recorded and kept in line with the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance.

We will continue to support any pupil leaving the school about whom there have been concerns, by ensuring that all appropriate information, including child protection and welfare concerns, are forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's destination school as a matter of priority, within 5 days for in-year transfers or within 5 days of the start of a new school term. These records will be sent separately to the main file, we will ensure a secure transit and will obtain a confirmation of receipt.

9. Safer Workforce And Managing Allegations Against Staff And Volunteers

We prevent people who pose risks to children from working in our school by ensuring that we undertake safeguarding checks in line with the statutory guidance - *Keeping Children Safe in Education:2026.*

We ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our school. Any allegations against supply staff, volunteers and contractors are dealt with according to the usual LADO procedures and the supply agency/company informed.

Every job description and person specification has a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder.

We ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed 'Safer Recruitment' training.

We have a procedure in place to address allegations against members of staff, supply or agency staff and volunteers in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2026 and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedure:* ***Managing Allegations against Adults Working with Children and Young People*****.** This procedure is detailed in **Appendix 13**.

We have a procedure in place to address 'low level' concerns which do not meet the LADO threshold in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

10. Staff Induction, Training And Development

All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers, teaching assistants, supply staff, governors, students and volunteers, will be given induction that includes basic child protection training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedure (including child on child abuse), staff handbook and code of conduct, Behaviour Management Policy, Anti- Bullying Policy and Part 1 and Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2026.

The induction will be proportionate to staff members' roles and responsibilities.

The DSL will undergo updated relevant safeguarding training every two years (**not** L1 or L2 safeguarding training every 2 years, but a relevant course to expand the knowledge and understanding of various safeguarding issues locally and nationally. This is in line with SCB guidance.)

All staff members of the school (including volunteers and governors) will undergo Level 1 face to face safeguarding and child protection training (whole-school training) every three years.

In addition to Level 1 safeguarding training every 3 years, all staff and governors will also receive annual safeguarding, child protection and e-safety updates (for example via e-mail, e-bulletins, staff meetings, briefing sessions or training) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard pupils effectively. This may be provided by the DSL, other members of the senior leadership team or by external providers.

Staff members who miss the whole-school training will be required to join another school's whole-school training or attend an 'open session.'

The nominated governor for safeguarding will undergo face to face 'Introduction to Safeguarding for Governors' training, (as provided by the governor support unit and which includes Level 1 training ;) prior to or soon after appointment to the role. Level 1 safeguarding training should be updated every 3 years.

We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate child protection training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole-school training if it takes place during their period of work for the school.

The school will maintain accurate records of staff induction, training and annual updates.

11. Confidentiality, Consent And Information Sharing

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

The Headteacher or Deputy DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only and will inform them if any children in their class have a social worker.

Staff members cannot promise a pupil to keep 'secrets' which might compromise their safety or well-being, or the safety and well-being of others.

All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping

children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Governors, trustees and staff should use the DfE's data protection guidance for schools to help us to comply with data protection law, develop data policies and processes, know what data to keep and to follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

All our staff members who come into contact with pupils will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent. This is covered in greater detail in **Appendix 10.**

12. Inter-Agency Working

We will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services, as well as the Police, Health and Children's Social Care.

We will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings, including early help meetings, child in need meetings, child protection conferences and core groups.

We will participate in serious case reviews, other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits, embedding recommendations into practice and completing required actions within agreed timescales.

13. Contractors, Service / Activity Providers And Work Placement Providers

We will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. We require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.

We will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working alongside our pupils have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2026.* If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our school premises will be refused.

When we commission services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement, along with the requirement for them to have undertaken safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Students on work placements receive an induction, including advising them of our safeguarding procedures and the Code of Conduct.

14. Whistle-Blowing And Complaints

We cannot expect pupils to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so.

Therefore we will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding and child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the Headteacher, the Chair of the Local Governing Body or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

We have a Whistle Blowing Policy which is given to all staff on induction and is displayed in the staff room.

We have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice.

We will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our child protection arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

15. Site Security

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting any issues or concerns that may come to light.

We check the identity of all visitors coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out of the school and to display a visitor's badge while on the school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, (parent, professional, volunteer or anyone else) that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse that person access to the school site.

16. Quality Assurance

We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures. This will include periodic audits of child protection files and records by the DSL as well as Single Central Record checks by the Trust designated person and by the link safeguarding governor.

We will complete a safeguarding audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements annually, using the audit tool provided by the Local Authority for this purpose.

The school's senior leadership team and the Local Governing Body will ensure that action is taken to remedy without delay any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements.

17. Policy Review

This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle.

The DSL will ensure that staff members and governors are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures.

18. Associated Policies And Procedures

The following policies and procedures are relevant to the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedure**.**

- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing from Education Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Drug and Alcohol Education Policy
- Equalities Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and other linked policies and risk assessments

- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns: Guidance for Early Years Settings, Schools and Colleges
- Offsite Activities and Educational Visits Policy and risk assessments
- Online Safety Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Personal Care Policy
- Physical Education and Sports Guidance
- Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy and Guidance
- Premises Inspection Checklist
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and procedures
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy (named 'Growing Up and Getting On')
- Social Networking Protocol
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Staff handbook
- Whistleblowing Policy.

19. Appendix 1 - The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

19.1 Managing Referrals – The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Has a good understanding of Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership's Thresholds of Intervention (June 2025) Thresholds for intervention to ensure that children and families get the right support and intervention at the right time.

Refers all cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation to the Stoke-on-Trent's Children's Advice and Duty service (IFD) and to the Police if a crime may have been committed.

Liaises with the Deputy DSLs about safeguarding issues relating to individual children, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Acts as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of child protection and safeguarding.

Liaises with agencies providing early intervention services and coordinates referrals from the school to early help services for children and families in need of support.

Refers cases to the Channel Panel where there is a concern regarding radicalisation/extremism.

The DSL promotes anti-discriminatory practice an ensures safeguarding responses recognise and address inequality, bias and disproportionality.

The DSL ensures that the child is seen, heard and their lived experience informs all safeguarding decisions.

Liaises with the school mental health lead.

On a need to know basis, informs class teachers of any safeguarding issues, and if the child has a social worker.

Monitors the educational achievements of children with a social worker.

Makes the leadership team, governors and staff aware of the IT filter and monitoring systems which are in place and monitors that they are effective, escalating concerns if necessary.

Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and barring Service.

19.2 Record Keeping – The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Keeps written records of child protection and welfare concerns in line with Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026 and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance.

Creates a stand-alone file for pupils with safeguarding concerns.

Maintains a chronology of significant incidents for each pupil with safeguarding concerns.

Ensures such records are kept confidentially and securely and separate from the pupil's educational record.

Ensures arrangements to hand over the child protection file of a pupil transferring to another school are made without delay. The DSL will verbally advise the DSL of the destination school of the concerns and make arrangements to securely and confidentially hand over the file, within 5 working days in the case of an in year transfer and within 5 working days of the start of the new term in other cases.

Where the destination school is too far for the DSL to do a personal handover, the file will be sent separately from the pupil's education file and by secure courier. The DSL will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred and will require a receipt from the destination school.

Where a parent elects to remove their child from the school roll to home educate, the educational establishment will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the local authority and will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

19.3 Multi-Agency Working And Information Sharing – The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Cooperates with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 17 and section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Attends, or ensures other relevant staff members' attendance at early help meetings, child protection conferences, core group meetings, child in need meetings and other multi agency meetings as required.

Liaises with other agencies working with the child, shares information as appropriate and contributes to assessments.

Ensures each member of staff, governor, volunteer and student has access to and understands, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, including providing induction on these matters to new staff members, governors, volunteers and students.

Makes the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures available publicly.

Raises awareness of parents and carers of the existence of the safeguarding and child protection policy, in particular that information may be shared with other agencies, cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation will be referred to Children's Social Care, and the role of the school in any investigations that ensue.

19.4 Training – The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Undertakes appropriate safeguarding training every two years, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2026 and guidance from the SOTSCP, in order to:-

- be able to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to them, including special circumstances such as child sexual exploitation, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, wider harmful sexual behaviour, coercion, exploitation, misogyny, online abuse, honour based violence, child criminal exploitation (including County Lines), female genital mutilation, challenging extremism etc
- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, e.g. Stoke-on-Trent's Thresholds of Intervention – Multi-agency guidance on the access criteria to help support children, young people and families in Stoke-on-Trent
- have a working knowledge of how the local authority conducts initial and review child protection conferences and contribute effectively to these;
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need (as specified in section 17 of the Children Act 1989), those with special educational needs, pregnant teenagers and young carers.

Ensures each member of staff has access to and understands the educational establishment's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, including providing induction on these matters to new staff members, governors, volunteers and students.

Organises whole-school SCP Level 1 safeguarding training for all staff members at least every three years.

Ensures staff members who miss the training receive it by other means, e.g. by joining an open session or another school's training.

Provides briefings / updates / training at least annually to the whole school on any changes to child protection legislation and procedures (internally, locally or nationally) relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews or awareness raising regarding any safeguarding issues or themes emerging locally or nationally.

Links with the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership to identify appropriate training opportunities for relevant staff members.

Ensures the school allocates time and resources every year for relevant staff members and governors to attend training.

Encourages a culture of developing trusting and respectful relationships with children, making sure they are listened to and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any action the school takes to protect them.

Maintains accurate records of staff induction, staff training and staff briefings.

19.4.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead is required to undertake the following training

Training will be inline with KCSIE requirements and local safeguarding partnership expectations, and may include a range of appropriate formats.

Level of training	Course title	Frequency	Notes
Level 1	Safeguarding Children Face to face session delivered by SOTSCP approved trainer	Every 3 years as part of whole school update	This must be completed irrespective of any other training undertaken. If you commission a Level 1 course that is NOT APPROVED by SOTSCP, it may not be sufficiently in depth for Ofsted.
Level 2	Level 2 Working Together to Safeguard Children – multi agency (full 2 days)	No requirement to renew providing some safeguarding training is undertaken every 2 years.	This course can only be delivered face to face in a multi-agency setting to be compliant. DSLs who wish to refresh this course need undertake day 1 only. (NB Level 2 training to be compliant, it cannot be done online or as a whole school.)
Level 3	Subject specific courses relevant to needs of school community. Suggested :- ● Child sexual exploitation ● Female genital mutilation ● Prevent/challenging extremism ● E-safety ● Forced marriage	No requirement to renew level 3 courses providing some safeguarding training is undertaken every 2 years.	See SCP Training Prospectus for additional relevant courses

Level 4	• Designated Safeguarding Lead training • Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers training	No requirement to renew level 4 courses providing some safeguarding training is undertaken every 2 years.	
ANNUAL UPDATES	DSLs must update their knowledge and skills regularly and at least annually (via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs or taking time to read and update themselves) on safeguarding developments relevant to their role. - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.		
IMPORTANT	DSLs are **NOT** required to undertake level 1 or level 2 safeguarding training every 2 years. They are required to undertake the comprehensive SCP Level 1 course every 3 years, and **SOME RELEVANT** safeguarding training every 2 years, in order to expand and diversify their safeguarding knowledge.		

19.5 Awareness Raising

Review the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures annually and liaise with the Trust and Local Governing Body to update and implement them.

Make the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures available publicly and raise awareness of parents that referrals about suspected abuse may be made and the role of the school in any investigations that ensue.

Provide updates to the school on any changes to child protection legislation and procedures and relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews, at least annually.

19.6 Quality Assurance – The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Reviews the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures annually and liaises with the Trust and Local Governing Body to update and implement them.

Monitors the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of child protection and welfare concern files (at least once a year).

Completes an audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements annually.

Remedies any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements.

Provides regular reports to the Local Governing Body detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and the number of children with child protection plans and other relevant data.

20. Appendix 2 - Guide to Levels of Need

Stoke-on-Trent's Safeguarding Children Partnership Thresholds of Intervention – Multi-agency guidance on the access criteria to help support children, young people and families in Stoke-on-Trent (June 2025).

Oakhill Primary School recognises the importance of identifying issues early and providing early help children and families in order to prevent issues from escalating.

Most parents can look after their children without needing help from anyone other than their family or friends. However, some parents may need additional help from our school or from other services such as the NHS. Providing help early is more effective in promoting the welfare of children, than reacting later.

As such, we are committed to working collaboratively with other agencies and with the Supporting Families Teams to provide a coordinated offer of early help, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and local guidance.

We use Stoke-on-Trent's Safeguarding Children Partnership Thresholds of Intervention to support us in our discussions with colleagues from other agencies, and to make decisions about the right level of support/assessment required for the child and family. And when this should be 'stepped up' or 'stepped down'. Please see SCB website.

The Thresholds for Intervention document, underpinned by the i-THRIVE Framework, has four levels and every child living in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire will fit into one of these four levels:



Thriving: those who may need support to maintain high levels of wellbeing through effective prevention and promotion strategies. Around 80% of children at any one time are experiencing the normal ups and downs of life but do not need individualised advice or support. They are considered to be in the Thriving group. They may however benefit from prevention and promotion activities and strategies.

Getting Advice: those who need advice and signposting. Within this group are children, young people and families adjusting to life circumstances with mild or temporary difficulties. The best intervention is within the community with the possible addition of self-support.

Getting Help: those who need focused goals-based input. Within this group are children, young people and families who would benefit from focused, evidence-based help and support, with clear aims and criteria for assessing whether these aims have been achieved.

Getting More Help: those who need more extensive, specialised goals -based input. Within this group are children, young people and families who would benefit from extensive intervention. This group might include children with a range of overlapping needs which means they may require greater input.

Getting Risk Support: those who have not benefitted from or are unable to use help but are of such risk that they are still in contact with services. Within this group are children, young people and families who are currently unable to benefit from early help support but remain a significant concern and risk, This group might include children and young people who routinely go into crisis but are not able to make use of help offered, or where help offered has not been able to make a difference.

21. Appendix 3 - Categories of abuse

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms of maltreatment. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, by failing to act to prevent harm or by failing to meet a child's basic needs. Children may be abused within the family, in an intimate relationship of their own or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or by strangers; and increasingly, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. Witnessing the ill treatment or abuse of others, such as seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse or domestic violence at home has an impact on children. Abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

21.1 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, although it may also occur alone.

Abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Emotional abuse may involve:-

- seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. domestic abuse
- making a child feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another
- inappropriate age or developmental expectations
- forcing the child into criminality, such as County Lines
- overprotection and limitation of exploration, learning and social interaction
- high criticism and low warmth
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- exploitation or corruption.
- abuse can occur online and technology may be used to facilitate it.

21.2 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

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

Once a child is born, it 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)
- provide access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- not meeting the child's mental health needs.

21.3 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child, causing physical harm and injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

21.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including online, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Activities may involve physical contact, including penetration of any part of the body, or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images including on the internet, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Child Sexual Exploitation is also sexual abuse. It involves children receiving something, for example accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It could take the form of grooming of children, e.g. to take part in sexual activities or to post sexual images of themselves on the internet – see **appendix 4** (specific safeguarding issues.)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, or child on child abuse.

22. Appendix 4 – Signs and indicators of abuse

The most important sign/indicator of abuse or neglect is a disclosure from a pupil, and this will always be taken seriously.

Signs and indicators can often appear in a cluster. Serious case reviews have found that parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and parental mental health problems (known collectively as the 'toxic trio') coexisting in a family can increase the risks to children.

Pupils may show symptoms from one, all, or none of the categories, but staff will be vigilant to anything unusual displayed by the pupil. Many of the indicators below may be caused by other factors not connected to any form of abuse. However, if concerned, staff will always exercise professional curiosity and will share concerns with the DSL.

We are aware that in an abusive relationship, the child may:-

- Appear frightened of their parent/carer
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and stage of development (whilst taking into account the different patterns of development and different ethnic groups.

We are aware that in an abusive relationship, the parent or carer may:-

- persistently avoid child health services and treatment of the child's illnesses
- have unrealistic expectations of the child
- frequently complain about or to the child and fail to provide attention or praise
- be absent
- be misusing substances
- persistently refuse to allow access on home visits by professionals
- be involved in domestic violence and abuse
- be socially isolated.

Staff are constantly mindful that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. They can face additional safeguarding challenges including:-

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability or condition without further exploration
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so
- Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy and the SENCO or the maned person with oversight for SEND
- Schools should consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

The following table gives some examples of what staff may see or hear, but **this is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a checklist.**

Signs of potential PHYSICAL ABUSE	• Bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps • Undue fear of adults - fear of going home to parents or carers • Aggression towards others • Unexplained injuries or burns – particularly if they are recurrent • (and especially in non-mobile babies) • Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them • Injuries that occur on parts of the body which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games • Injuries to the side of the face, the ear, the neck • Black eyes, particularly bilateral • Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming • Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental/ satisfactory explanation • Cuts/scratches in areas that would be difficult to do accidentally • Injuries to the soft tissue area • Hitting (with the hand or implement) smacking, punching, kicking, slapping, twisting/pulling ear, hair or fingers, holding/squeezing with a tight grip, biting, and burning • Fabricated or induced illness • Mental health concerns
Signs of potential NEGLECT	• Exposure to danger • Lack of supervision • Under nourishment and subsequent failure to grow and thrive • Constant hunger • Stealing or gorging food • Untreated illnesses • Inadequate care • Injuries that have not received medical attention • Non-attendance for health appointments • Inadequate/inappropriate clothing • Poor standards of hygiene • Unsafe home environment • Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise • Mental health concerns
Signs of potential EMOTIONAL ABUSE	• Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. • Depression / aggression, extreme anxiety • Nervousness, frozen watchfulness • Obsessions or phobias • Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration • Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults • Attention-seeking behaviour • Persistent tiredness • Running away / stealing / lying • Parent humiliating, taunting or threatening child • Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise. • Shouting / yelling at a child • Copying or role playing abuse seen in the home (i.e. domestic violence) • Radicalisation – use of inappropriate language, violent extremist literature, the expression of extremist views, advocating violent action

	• Mental health concerns • •
Signs of potential SEXUAL ABUSE	• Use of language that is inappropriate for age / stage of development • Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age / stage of development • Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters • Regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play • Wariness on being approached • Soreness or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas • Pain on urination • Difficulty in walking or sitting • Stained or bloody underclothes • Recurrent tummy pains or headaches • Bruises on inner thigh or buttock • Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse • Sexual activity through words, play or drawing • Child displaying 'sexually inappropriate' behaviour towards adults • Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home • Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations • Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia • Telling you about being asked to 'keep a secret' • Dropping hints or clues about abuse. • Unaccounted sources of money or gifts, or multiple mobile phones • Mental health concerns • Refer also to Sexual Exploitation at **Appendix 5.**

23. Appendix 5 – Specific safeguarding issues

School staff members need to be aware of specific safeguarding issues and be alert to any risks. Equally there are specific groups of children whoa re at greater risk of harm. These include, but are not limited to, those with social workers, those in kinship care and young carers.

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures, has detailed information, policy and procedure on many of the specific issues identified below. We will follow the local procedures for responding to risks. Please see SCB website.

The government website, GOV.UK also has broad government guidance on a variety of issues. The following is **not** a comprehensive list and staff members should search the GOV.UK website and the *Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures* for advice on other issues:

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Children missing from home or care
- Children missing from education
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Contextual Safeguarding, such as extra-familial harm and the context outside the home.
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate crime
- 'Honour-based' violence
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Peer on Peer Abuse
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation and the Prevent duty
- Serious Violence and Weapons
- Sexual Harassment
- Sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (previously known as sexting)
- Self-harm and suicidal behaviour
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Voyeurism.

23.1 Children Missing From Education

Oakhill Primary School recognises the need to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and protect those who may go missing from education. The school will follow the policy and guidance issued by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council on Children Missing from Education (CME) which can be found on the SCB website.

Schools will follow 'Working together to improve school attendance' (Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK) – statutory guidance that is continually updated online via the DfE.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

We have an admission and attendance register and all pupils are placed on both registers.

We will work collaboratively with the local authority (and other agencies where appropriate) to share information about attendance.

If a registered pupil is continuously absent for two weeks without explanation, or fails to return from a holiday, the school will follow the normal procedures for investigating pupil absence (i.e. telephone calls, letters, invitations to meetings at the school etc.). If, after further enquiries, the child has not returned to school after a total of no more than two weeks, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority.

If a pupil suddenly ceases to attend without prior warning, and their whereabouts cannot be established, the school will immediately notify the Local Authority. If there are any reasons to be concerned for the child's safety, including any past history of concern, this will be raised immediately as a referral under Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.

23.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Oakhill Primary School recognises the need to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation. Education staff are more likely to see victims on a regular basis than almost any other professional. They will notice recurrent or prolonged absences and significant changes in behaviour. Therefore we are key to identifying children at risk and will raise concerns at an early stage, to potentially halt the grooming process before sexual exploitation has begun.

We will follow the Safeguarding Children Partnership procedure which can be found on the SCP website.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group may take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology, and through AI or deepfake sexual imagery.

Children cannot consent to being abused. Irrespective of the child's age and even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them, it is not uncommon for children not to realise that they are being exploited. CSE can affect 16 and 17 year olds who may believe they are in a romantic relationship but are, in fact, being exploited.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile phone
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- Sexual activity/underage sexual activity
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- Seen at known places of concern
- Involved in abusive relationships
- Intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers or known perpetrators
- 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 don't take part in education
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault
- Mental health concerns.

Where a member of staff sees one or more of these indictors, or otherwise has cause for concern, this information will be recorded and passed, without delay, to the DSL following usual safeguarding procedures.

We will use the Child Exploitation Risk Factor Matrix (RFM) to identify pupils at low, medium or high risk of sexual exploitation. The Matrix can be found on the SCP website.

Pupils will be referred to the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panel if deemed appropriate, following completion of the Risk Factor Matrix.

We will also share information with Staffordshire Police Child Exploitation Team to contribute to their intelligence gathering to prevent and detect cases of CSE; so even apparently minor or 'low level' pieces of information should be given to the DSL.

- Staffordshire Police CSE Information Report form can be found at **Appendix 15.**

Where we identify that a child under the age of 13 is involved in sexual activity, this will always be immediately reported to the police. Sexual intercourse with a child under the age of 13 is classed as rape.

23.3 Child On Child Abuse

Oakhill Primary School has zero tolerance with regards to child on child abuse. It is important that when staff have any concerns about child on child abuse they should speak to their DSL.

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child or peer on peer abuse), this can include sexual violence and sexual harassment between children. It can take place inside or out of school and online. Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)

- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, misogynism/misandry, remarks, jokes, 'banter' and online sexual harassment, harmful sexual attitudes
- voyeurism – up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

23.4 Sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (previously known as sexting)

- Sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos among children can be a common occurrence in which the police may need to become involved, depending upon the circumstances. It includes sharing nude and semi-nude images and videos
- The DSL will record all incidents of Sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos and include both the actions taken and the actions not taken, together with the justifications for the decisions made.

In applying judgement to the Sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos incident, the following will be considered:

- Significant age difference between the sender/receiver involved
- If there is any external coercion involved or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver
- If you recognise the child as more vulnerable than is usual
- If the image is of a severe or extreme nature
- If the situation is not isolated and the image has been more widely distributed
- If this is not the first time children have been involved in an act of this nature
- If other knowledge of either the sender or recipient may add cause for concern.

This is not an exhaustive list, but presence of the above will escalate concern. We will manage cases of sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos in line with the SCB policy – Responding to Sexting and Youth Produced Imagery, which is found on the SCB website.

23.5 Serious Violence

All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

- increased absence from school
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

A range of risk factors increase the likelihood of severe violence. These include:

- being male
- being persistently absent from school or permanently excluded
- having experienced child maltreatment
- being involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

All staff are aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence
Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and its 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

23.6 Domestic Violence

The definition of "domestic violence and abuse" was updated by the Home Office in 2013 and again in 2021 to include the reality that many young people are experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse and violence in relationships at a young age, including in relationships with peers or in their own intimate relationships. This also includes where they see, hear or experience its effects. They may therefore be Children in Need or likely to suffer significant harm. The latest definition from the Home Office is as follows:

Behaviour of a person ('A') towards another person ('B') is domestic abuse if:

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and
(b) The behaviour is abusive

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 / control
(d)economic abuse
(e)psychological, emotional or other abuse
(f)teen relationship abuse dynamics

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

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).

Staff should be aware that any disclosures made by children may have a background in domestic abuse and that this abuse may be part of an overall pattern of abuse or violence towards women and girls in the family. That said, domestic abuse can also be experienced by males and assumptions should not be made based on the gender of perpetrators of domestic abuse.

The domestic violence and abuse policy can be found on the SCP website.

23.7 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Oakhill Primary School recognises its duty to protect children and young people against the practice female genital mutilation and to immediately report to the police, under section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) where it is known that FGM has been carried out on a child.

We will follow the Safeguarding Children Partnership procedure which can be found on the SCP website.

Female Genital Mutilation 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 a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Girls who are threatened with, or who have undergone FGM may withdraw from education, restricting their educational and personal development. They may feel unable to go against the wishes of their parents and consequently may suffer emotionally; they may appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn; present a sudden decline in her performance, aspirations or motivation.

Signs that may indicate FGM is planned:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony, procedure or celebration either abroad or in the UK
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (examples include Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going to be 'cut'
- Child talks about preparing for marriage or preparing to become a woman.

(NB – families travelling abroad for long holidays is not in itself unusual, and not all families from the above named countries will practice FGM.)

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the peers
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Disclosure.

Where a member of staff sees one or more of these indictors, or otherwise has cause for concern, this information will be recorded and passed on without delay to the DSL following usual safeguarding procedures.

Staff should be aware of new mandatory reporting requirements with regards to *known* cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) which require teachers to personally report to the police (on the telephone number 101) cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Further details can be found in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026.

DFE multi agency practice guidelines for female-genital-mutilation (April 2016): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation.

NSPCC FGM helpline can be contacted on 0800 028 3550 or use the NSPCC email address to request support at: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

23.7 Forced Marriage

Oakhill Primary School recognises the need to protect children and young people against forced marriage.

We will follow the Safeguarding Children Partnership procedure which can be found on the SCP website.

A clear distinction must be made between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. A forced marriage is a marriage that is performed under duress and without the full and informed consent or free will of both parties (and is therefore very different to an arranged marriage). Since February 2023 it has been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. This applies to non-binding, 'unofficial' marriages as well as legal marriages.

A forced marriage may be between children, a child and an adult, or between adults, and both males and females can be forced to marry against their will.

In referring to children, we refer to both primary and secondary school age children.

A forced marriage is considered to be domestic violence.

One Chance Rule - Where there are concerns about forced marriage, we will not speak to the family as professionals may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and we therefore must ensure that the appropriate intervention, response and support is initiated.

Staff will pass any concerns immediately to the DSL and child protection procedures will be activated.

Further information on the role of educational establishments can be found in Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage. Pages 32-36.

The Forced Marriage Unit – Tel: 020 7008 0151 e-mail: fmu@fco.gov.uk for advice or information.

23.8 Preventing Radicalisation

Oakhill Primary School recognises the need to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including that linked to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist, Far Left, Incel, Al Qaeda / ISIS ideologies; Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and that linked to Animal Rights movements.

We also recognise the statutory duty placed upon us by s26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in having due regard to preventing people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism referred to as the "Prevent Duty".

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Extremism is defined as a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values of democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources – pupils, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals.

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

We actively explore the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils, and promote fundamental British Values through our curriculum and through our school values and behaviour policy.

Potential indicators of a child susceptible to being radicalised into terrorism or exposed to extreme views might include:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause
- Loss of interest in friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause
- Communications with others that suggests identification with an extremist group, cause or ideology
- Using insulting to derogatory names for another group
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person, which may include physical or verbal assault; provocative behaviour; derogatory name calling; prejudice related ridicule or name calling; refusal to co-operate; attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations; or condoning or supporting violence towards others.

If staff become aware that a child is vulnerable to being radicalised or exposed to extreme views, (including peer pressure, pressure from family members or other people, or from online) this will be reported directly to the DSL.

The DSL will liaise with other appropriate agencies, and make referrals directly to the Chanel Panel if deemed necessary, by using the online referral form Refer someone to the Prevent Team | Staffordshire Police or emailing prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk.

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into extremism or terrorism. Engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary, and requires consent, but we will encourage and support engagement at all stages.

23.9 Private Fostering

Oakhill Primary School recognises its duty to notify Children's Social Care if a child is living in a private fostering arrangement.

Private fostering refers to a situation where a child or young person under 16 years of age (under 18, if they are disabled) is being cared for by someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 days or more. (Close relatives are defined as grandparents, aunty, uncle or older sibling.) Carers may be members of the extended family (e.g. cousin, great aunt), friends of the family, or someone the child doesn't know.

This can include children sent from abroad to stay with family members, teenagers who may be living with the family of a friend, boyfriend or girlfriend and those living short term with host families while they take a course of study.

All staff are responsible for asking questions to clarify family arrangements if there is a change of living arrangements / person caring for the child; of if the relationship between the child and carer of the living arrangements are unclear, confusing or concerning.

Staff should also follow up any discussion with pupils about living arrangements which are unclear, confusing or concerning.

If a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be living in a Private Fostering arrangement, they will report this without delay to the DSL.

The DSL will encourage the parent/ carer to inform the Local Authority. Additionally we will report the private fostering arrangements to the Local Authority by contacting the IFD Team on 01782 235100.

23.10 Anti Bullying

Oakhill Primary School has zero tolerance with regards to bullying and we have an Anti-Bullying Policy which is set out in a separate document. This policy relates to all forms of bullying including cyber, racist, prejudice, discriminatory, homophobic and gender related bullying.

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, anti-bullying assemblies and in anti-bullying week, e-safety week and in e-safety lessons.

If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

Staff members will neither allow nor condone bullying. To do so may lead to consideration under child protection and disciplinary procedures.

23.11 Online Safety

Oakhill Primary School * recognises our responsibility for online safety. Online safety is a whole school safeguarding issue, and our filtering and monitoring systems are reviewed annually for effectiveness. We have an E-Safety Policy which is set out in a separate document and includes guidance for all pupils in relation to online safety and using the internet and social media. Staff are aware that abuse can take place online and that technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Staff will report their concerns to the DSL if they believe that children are using the internet, mobile technology or social media inappropriately (e.g. Sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos, cyber-bullying, exposure to harmful images). In these instances the DSL will be contacted for advice on how to proceed with regards to talking to parents carers about Online Safety.

Cyber-bullying by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

We have systems in place to prevent pupils being exposure to harm online. We have filters and monitoring systems in place which are regulated and risk assessed. Governors and staff are made aware of the systems in place. Information security is in place and is regularly reviewed. Having reviewed the DFE's filtering and monitoring standards the governing board will discuss with the schools IT staff and service provider what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards.

If we become aware that a pupil may be accessing materials inappropriate to their age, (including Facebook if under 13 years of age;) sending inappropriate e-mails, texts or images, or playing on games that are unsuitable (for example, games which have an 18 certificate) we will contact parents to discuss our concerns and to raise parents' awareness about the potential risk to their children and our duties to safeguard, which may involve referral to other agencies.

If staff become aware that a pupil is vulnerable to harm online, this will be reported immediately to the DSL and safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

In some extreme cases the police may become involved if a child is at risk of exploitation due to their use of the internet or social media.

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- Commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group apwg.org.

Schools should use the DfE's 'Plan Technology for Your School' service - Plan technology for your school - GOV.UK to help self-assess filtering and monitoring in line with the digital and technology standards.

Schools should refer to Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK. which sets out the capabilities and features that should be in place for users in education settings

23.12 Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. We understand the importance of providing as much information as possible as part of the referral process to allow assessments to consider all the available evidence and the full contact of any possible abuse.

All staff are aware that safeguarding responsibilities do not stop at the school gates and that abuse may happen in our school.

For further information see **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**

23.13 Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

N.B. This section remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published. 14.2 to 14.5 reflect the CASS review (https://cass.independent-review.uk/home/publications/final-report/)

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.
We have identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and that children may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, we encourage them to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

We take a cautious approach to support a gender questioning child and:

- Consider the broad range of the individual's needs
- Do this in partnership with their parents (except in rare circumstances where involving parents would bring a significant risk of harm to the child)
- Include any clinical advice that is available
- Consider how to address wider vulnerabilities, such as the risk of bullying.

We create a culture where pupils can speak out or share any concerns with staff.

23.14 School Emergency Opening/Closure Periods

Oakhill Primary School recognises risks to safeguarding pupils who are not able to attend school due to local or national lockdown periods (e.g. Covid-19). We will follow all DfE guidance on education for vulnerable children. Further safeguarding preventative and supportive activities will be employed by the DSL and other school staff to maintain contact with families at home, including teacher to parent texts, emails and telephone contact. We will share information with local safeguarding teams to protect vulnerable children at home, including those that are not already within the thresholds of social care support.

E safety information is available to parents/carers through the school website, through the NSPCC and by contacting school and speaking to a member of staff. This includes informing the parents/carers what school staff are asking children to do online eg which websites they are visiting for their homework.

23.15 Alternative provision

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we must:

- Obtain written information from AP providers that full safer recruitment steps have been taken on all staff and of arrangements 'that might put a child at risk' such as new staff joining so that checks can be made there too
- Know student whereabouts during school hours including the address of the AP
- Review AP placements at least half termly to ensure pupils are attending, their needs are met and the setting is safe.

24. Appendix 6 – Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

Oakhill Primary School believes that all pupils have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment, free from harm by adults or other pupils. Behaviour is managed to ensure a good and safe educational environment and staff have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy.

24.1 Child on Child abuse - Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding allegations may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, online abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. This may take place within a romantic relationship and can happen to any child, of any age and any gender. It is important that when staff have any concerns about child on child abuse they should speak to their DSL.

To be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, it is likely that some of the following features will be found:

The allegation:

- is made against a pupil in relation to their behaviour towards a more vulnerable pupil
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil and their actions
- indicates that children/young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil.

Examples of a safeguarding allegation against a pupil could include (but are not limited to):-

- Physical Abuse – for example, violence (particularly pre-planned;) or forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- Emotional Abuse – for example, blackmail or extortion, threats and intimidation
- Sexual Abuse – for example, indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assault, forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos.
- Sexual Exploitation – for example, encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties; encouraging, photographing or filming other children performing sexual or indecent acts.

Where pupils are involved in gang activity, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people.

We recognise that children who have harmed others may also have experienced harm and will require appropriate assessment and support.

24.2 Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns presented by a pupil

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum and a developmentally appropriate PSHE syllabus, in line with the statutory Relationships Education guidance, which both develop pupils' understanding of acceptable behaviour and how to keep themselves safe and aims to provide them with the skill set to do so. The statutory guidance can be found at: 'Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education'.

We have systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, believed and valued.

We deliver targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk.

24.3 What to do

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the DSL should be informed.

A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.

The DSL may contact the Integrated Front Door team or other relevant agency to discuss the case. It is possible that Children's Social Care are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person.

The DSL will follow through the actions from the discussion and make any referrals necessary, keeping a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome in the files of both pupils.

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police will be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim).

Where neither Children's Social Care nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation will take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be undertaken and an individual risk management plan will be put in place to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and that the pupil concerned does not become a target for malicious allegations.

The plan will be reviewed continuously and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

25. Appendix 7 – Dealing with disclosures made by a child

25.1 Advice For All Members Of Staff

Oakhill Primary School takes seriously any disclosures of abuse or neglect made by a pupil.

We understand that some children may find it difficult to talk about being abused and strive to ensure that we develop trusted relationships with all children to provide them with a person they feel safe to speak to.

When dealing with disclosures staff must not investigate or ask leading questions, but should clarify using open questions where necessary.

However, it may not always be clear from what a pupil first tells us, whether we are dealing with a safeguarding issue or not and therefore we may need to clarify what is being said.

TED QUESTIONS are open questions that we will use to clarify or get a little more information about what has happened, so that we can initiate the right response, intervention and support:

- **T**ell me what happened
- **E**xplain to me what happened
- **D**escribe what happened

When talking to pupils, we will take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, (which may not be English and therefore translation services might need to be sought) and consider how a child with a disability may need support in communicating.

The following guidance should be followed:-

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Avoid extensive note taking during the disclosure so that full attention can be given to the child. Make a written record as soon as possible afterwards.
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Accept what is being said
- Do not ask direct or leading questions – use only open questions, if necessary, to clarify what is being said or how something has happened (TED questions above)
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Do not make promises that you may not be able to keep
- Do not give your personal opinion
- Do not talk about your own personal experiences
- Do not promise confidentiality – it may be necessary to tell the DSL and to refer the child to Children's Social Care or inform the police
- Do not ask the child to write anything down (this may be seen as a statement, and we are not trained to take statements)
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told – see Appendix 8
- Inform the DSL without delay. All concerns, no matter how small, must be reported to the DSL. Staff should never assume someone else will take action.
- Appropriate ongoing support will be provided to the child following any disclosure.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL.

26. Appendix 8 – Action to be taken if you have a concern about a child

Action to be taken by:	What action to take if you have concerns
Any member of staff **(governor, volunteer, contractor, activity provider)**	1. Discuss your concerns with the DSL Steve Smith or in their absence, with the Deputy DSL Jo Somogy, Helen Dodd or Katie Hawthorne **as soon as possible, before the child leaves for the day.** It is important that the child is not sent at the end of the day without taking the right protective action. 2. Complete the record of concern and pass/send it to the DSL. 3. If the DSL or deputy is not available, you can speak to another senior member of staff. If they are unsure if this is a safeguarding concern, they will contact the IFD. If a referral to the Integrated Front Door (IFD) is required the referral will be made (see below) **4.** You can make a referral directly to IFD. You must then inform the DSL about your consultation with IFD and what actions you have taken. Ensure all actions and decisions are recorded.
Action to be taken by:	**If you are concerned that the child is at risk of significant harm (Level 4)**
DSL or Deputy DSL	**CHILD AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM – SECTION 47** **Use the Stoke-on-Trent's Safeguarding Children Partnership Thresholds of Intervention and if you are unsure** contact IFD or/and your Education Lead for advice. 1. If the child is at **risk of significant harm (Section 47**) 2. Contact IFD (235100 option 2) without delay. Ensure you have all the relevant details to hand and provide as much information as you can about your concerns. **Only inform the parents of the referral once the IFD Consultant Social Worker has confirmed it is appropriate to do so.** **2.** If you believe that the child is in immediate danger, or you suspect a crime has been committed, you must also contact the police immediately on 999. 3. If IFD have not informed you within 1 working day, whether or not your referral has been accepted, contact them to ascertain their decision. 4. IFD may decide, in consultation with you, that the child's needs are at Level 2 or 3 and that the school is best placed to provide support. **5.** Record all your discussions and decision-making onto CPOMS, including the reasons for decisions. 6. Update/start the chronology. Continue to update the child's file and chronology as the investigation and resulting work continues, including all concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for them.

Action to be taken by:	**You do not think there is a risk of significant harm, but the child has highly complex needs and may be experiencing compromised parenting. Section 17 Child in Need (Level 4)**
DSL or Deputy DSL	**<u>CHILD IN NEED – SECTION 17</u>** **Use the Thresholds of Intervention' and if you are unsure** contact the Children's Advice and Duty Team or/and your DSL for advice. 1. Inform the family of your intention to refer to Children's Social Care, (IFD) ****With regards to consent please refer to the S-o-TSCP Threshold Framework 'Consent and Confidentiality' **** 2. <u>If IFD have not informed you within 1 working day, whether or not your referral has been accepted, contact them to ascertain their decision.</u> 3. IFD may decide, in consultation with you, that the child's needs are at Level 2 or 3 and that the school is best placed to provide support. See Early Help below. 4. Record all your discussions and decision-making and the reasons for the decisions, on the child protection record or system. Add this to the child's child protection file. (If the child does not have a stand-alone child protection file, you will need to create one). 5. Update/start the chronology. Continue to update the child's file and chronology as the investigation and resulting work continues including all concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for them.
Action to be taken by:	**You do not think there is a need for children social care to be involved but multi-agency support is required (Level 3)**
Early help champion **DSL or Deputy DSL**	**1. You have used the Thresholds of Intervention, have completed an Initial Early Help Assessment but the family's needs are more complex and they would benefit from an early help assessment and multi-agency support. (Level 3)** 2. Gain consent from parents for a referral to Supporting Families.

Any staff member in conjunction with one of the above	3. Call IFD and make your request for a Supporting Families referral 4. If IFD have not informed you within 3 working days whether or not your referral has been accepted, contact them to ascertain their decision. 5. IFD may decide, in consultation with you, that the child's needs are at Level 2 and that the school is best placed to provide support. See Early Help below. 6. Record all your discussions and decision-making and the reasons for the decisions, on the child protection record or system. Add this to the child's child protection file. (If the child does not have a stand-alone child protection file, you will need to create one). 7. Update/start the chronology. Continue to update the child's file and chronology as the investigation and resulting work continues including all concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for them.
Action to be taken by:	**You do not think there is a need for children social care to be involved and we can meet the additional needs of the family (Level 2)**
Early help champion **DSL or Deputy DSL** **Any staff member in conjunction with one of the above**	**1. You have used the Thresholds of Intervention' and believe that we (the school) are able to meet the additional needs of the child /family through the use of an Initial Early Help Assessment. (Level 2)** 2. We will undertake an Initial Early Help Assessment as a means of providing families with the help and support they need to prevent issues from escalating (getting the right support at the right time) 3. Identify the most appropriate person to discuss the reasons for the assessment, how it will benefit the child and family, and gain consent. 4. Register the Initial Early Help with early.help@stoke.gov.uk Report it to the school's FSW, Nicola Hill. 5. Appoint a lead worker to complete the Early Help Assessment form with the parent/child. 6. The lead worker will provide support in the school and/or refer the child / their family to the appropriate agency.

	7. If the family refuses to consent, we will log this with the early.help@stoke.gov.uk, and we make a judgement about whether the needs of the child will escalate.

Role of the Lead Worker in Early Help

All staff have a responsibility to identify children who may benefit from early help and to shre their concerns with the DSL. The most appropriate professional to undertake the (Initial) Early Help Assessment is someone who has regular contact with the child/ren and has a relationship with them and their family. An Early Help Assessment is a holistic approach in identifying a family's needs and the support that is necessary to address their presenting needs. This reflects the Family Help approach outlined in the Working Together 2026, bringing together early help and targeted support into a coordinated multi-agency plan.

The Lead Worker will be responsible for:

- undertaking the (Initial) Early Help Assessment with the family
- ensuring that the (Initial) Early Help Assessment considers both the needs and strengths of all family members; engaging with other agencies and professionals to provide the support required that has been identified through the (Initial) Early Help Assessment; and
- co-ordinating the Early Help Plan with the family, ensuring there is no duplication and that the support is manageable for the family.

All agencies/professionals will be responsible for:

- identifying and supporting families indicating a need for Early Help support as detailed in Paragraph 18 of Section 1 of KCSIE 2026
- providing the support that it identified through the Early Help Assessment
- being flexible about the duration and intensity of support provided based on the needs of the family
- offering practical 'hands on' support
- ensuring that the child's wishes and feelings will be considered throughout the Early Help process
- challenging family members where necessary, so that things can improve for them in the long term
- not giving up on families easily and persisting, even when things are difficult.

27. Appendix 9 – Making a referral to Children's Social Care

It will almost always be the DSL, Deputy DSL or another member of the senior leadership team that makes referrals into Children Social Care. However, all staff know how to make a referral should they need to, in the absence of SLT.

Referrals to Children Social Care are made by telephone to the Integrated Front Door (IFD) on 235100 during office hours and outside of office hours Emergency Duty Team on 234234.

Before making the call, ensure that you have all of the information to hand so that you can provide detailed and accurate information and answer any questions.

Give as much information as you can about the child and family, including:

- Child's full name
- Parents' names
- Full address and contact telephone number for parents
- Date of birth for the child
- Family's ethnic origin;
- Does the child have a disability?
- Are there any additional support needs? (Learning difficulties; communication needs)
- Any information regarding the family composition; for example - other siblings in the household (how old and what school do they attend?) Who else lives at the house? Who usually looks after the child?

- Do you have details of the GP or any other agencies involved with the family?

Highlight the concerns with evidence:-

- What are your concerns?
- What is the trigger for this referral?
- What is your evidence?
- Use the Guide to Levels of Need document to evidence your referral/concerns.

Clarify that your information has been received and understood as intended.

Do the parents / carers have knowledge of this referral?

- What is their response likely to be if professionals undertake a home visit?
- Are there any risks to staff?
- Are there further risks to child if the parents are made aware of the referral?
- Have they refused to give consent?
- If in doubt about whether to get consent from parents or not, seek advice from the Children's Advice and Duty team.

Early Help Assessment Refusal?

- Has an Early Help Assessment been completed with the family? If so when?
- Have the family refused an Early Help Assessment?

Provide your details:

- Your full name, job title and relationship to the child
- Your contact details, including work mobile if you are unlikely to be in the office.

Follow up the referral if you have not heard anything back after 24 hours.

28. Appendix 10 – Information sharing and consent

(This can be found on the homepage of SCB website and is the same for Stoke and Staffordshire)

Oakhill Primary School is committed to working openly and honestly with parents, carers and other agencies in order to ensure that pupil's needs are met. It is essential that everyone working with children can confidently share information. This is necessary not only to safeguard and protect children from harm but also to work together to support families to improve outcomes for all.

We may share information about parents, carers or children for investigations undertaken by Children's Social Care.

We will exercise professional curiosity by proactively seeking out information as well as sharing it. This means checking with other professionals whether they have information, and speaking to pupils alone.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and are not a barrier to sharing information. It is there to ensure that personal information is managed in a sensible way and that a balance is struck between a person's privacy and public protection. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Further details on information sharing can be found at 'Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers.' The seven golden rules for sharing information are especially useful.

We will share any concerns we have with parents at an early stage, unless this would put a child at greater risk or compromise an investigation. Parents must be clear that our responsibilities are for safeguarding and protecting children and that this involves sharing information about them with other professionals.

It is expected that we will seek the consent of parents or carers to make a referral to Children's Social Care under s.17 Children's Act – **Child in Need**. If parents refuse to give consent but we decide to continue with the referral, we will make this clear to Children's Social Care when we contact them.

Any decision to refer the pupil without the parents' consent will be recorded in the pupil's child protection file with a full explanation for the decision.

We do not need parents' consent to make a referral if we consider the child is in need of protection, under s.47 Children's Act; although in most cases we will inform them of the child protection referral.

However we will not inform parents of referrals if we believe that:-

- This would place the child or someone else at increased risk of harm
- It would prejudice the prevention or detection of a crime, or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation
- It would lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries into allegations of significant harm.

Any decision not to discuss concerns with a pupil's parents or carers will be recorded in the pupil's child protection file with a full explanation for the decision.

Consent is not necessary in cases where Children's Social Care are making child protection enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and therefore when contacted by Children's Social Care, we can comply with their requests for information without seeking consent. Staff members must record what information has been shared and why.

If we are in any doubt about the need to seek consent, we will seek advice from the Children's Advice and Duty Team or the DSL.

Keep a record of your decision to share information, with or without consent, and the reasons for it. Remember also that it is just as important to keep a record of why you decided not to share information as why you did so.

28.1 Record Keeping

Good record keeping is an important part of the school's accountability to pupils and their families and will help us in meeting our key responsibility to respond appropriately to welfare concerns about children.

Records should be factual, accurate, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how it was followed up and resolved, include notes on any action taken and decisions reached and why, along with the eventual outcome. They should support monitoring, risk assessment and planning for children and enable informed and timely decisions about appropriate action to take.

The DSL will ensure that records are maintained appropriately for pupils with safeguarding concerns and stand-alone files with a clear chronology are created and maintained in line with requirements of the above guidance.

Information contained in the records is kept confidential, shared only on a need to know basis and records are stored securely.

28.2 Discussing Concerns With The Pupil, Parents Or Carers

Oakhill Primary School is committed to working openly and honestly with parents and carers in order to ensure that their child's needs are met.

This means that in most cases, any concerns the school may have about a pupil, will be discussed with parents or carers. This is because parents and carers need to know when we are worried about their child, so that we can work together to address any issues or concerns.

Professional curiosity will be exercised by staff, particularly where there is a concern about a pupil. This means that staff may ask questions of the pupil, parents or carers in order to clarify or ascertain the necessary facts to make a decision regarding what (if any) action to take.

We will abide by the principles set out above regarding information sharing and consent. When we make the referral, we will agree with Children's Social Care what the pupil and parents will be told, by whom and when.

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29. Appendix 11 – Working with parents and carers

Oakhill Primary School is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child/ren and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

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

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

We will abide by the principles of information sharing and consent as outlined in Appendix 11. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the Designated Safeguarding Lead making a referral to the Safeguarding Referral Team in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

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

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives
- The relationship between the child and the adults (as private fostering arrangements must be referred into Children's Social Care)
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- Where reasonably possible, a minimum of two emergency contact details for responsible people to contact in the event that parents/carers cannot be contacted
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above)
- Any legal or criminal changes which effects parental responsibility e.g. Bail condition, court orders, MARAC arrangements (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference).

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

The school will share information with statutory agencies as necessary.

30. Appendix 12 – Children's Social Care response

30.1 Children's Social Care Responses To Concerns About A Child

Once Children's Social Care has accepted our referral as needing a social-care-led response (Level 5 'Getting Risk Support' on the Thresholds of Intervention), a social work practitioner and their manager will evaluate the concerns to identify the sources and levels of risk and to agree what protective action may be necessary.

The evaluation of concerns and risks involve deciding whether:-

- the child needs immediate protection and urgent action is necessary; or
- the child is suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm and enquiries need to be made under section 47 of the Children Act 1989; or
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

We will co-operate with Children's Social Care and the police in any emergency action they take using their legal powers for immediate protection of the child.

We will participate in any multi-agency discussions (strategy discussions), if invited to do so, and share information about the child and their family to plan the response to concerns.

We will share information about the child and their family for section 47 enquiries and section 17 assessments undertaken by Children's Social Care.

We will ensure that a relevant staff member participates in all initial and review child protection conferences, that we are invited to attend. The staff member will work together with other agencies to discuss the need for and agree to an outcome-focused child protection plan and will ensure that the child's wishes and views are considered in their own right.

If we are members of the core group to implement a plan, we will ensure a relevant staff member participates in all core group meetings.

We will ensure that we complete all actions allocated to us as part of the outcome-focused plan, whether a child protection plan or a child in need plan, in a timely way.

We will continue to monitor pupils once their plans are ended to ensure that they are supported and kept safe.

30.2 Professional Challenge And Disagreements

Oakhill Primary School recognises that working with children and families, and in particular child protection work, can be stressful and complex, as well as involving uncertainty and strong feelings. To ensure that the best decisions are made for children, we need to be able to challenge one another's practice.

We will promote a culture within our school that enables all staff members to raise, without fear of repercussions, any concerns they may have about the management of child protection in the school. This may include raising concerns about decisions, actions and inactions by colleagues in respect of individual children.

If necessary, staff members can speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Headteacher and the Chair of the Local Governing Board or with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Co-operation across agencies is crucial; professionals need to work together, using their skills and experience, to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences and case management.

If there are any professional disagreements with practitioners from other agencies that the staff member involved has been unable to resolve informally, the DSL or the head teacher will raise concerns formally with the relevant agency's safeguarding lead in line with SCP escalation policy.

The escalation policy can be found on the **SCP** website.

31. Appendix 13 – Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

Oakhill Primary School aims to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for pupils at our school.

We do recognise however, that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

We aim to have a culture in which all concerns about an adult are shared with the right person and are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Oakhill Primary School follows the local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures which can be found at Managing Allegations (stoke.gov.uk)

If an allegation is made, or information is received about an adult who works or volunteers in our school (including trainee teachers) or is on supply or agency staff, which raises concerns, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher immediately.

Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Trust Board/Chair of the Local Governing Body.

In the event that neither the Headteacher nor the Trust Board/Chair of Governors is contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Headteacher or the Vice Chair of the Local Governing Body.

Any member of staff or volunteer (including trainee teachers) who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer directly.

We also have a Whistle Blowing Policy which is given to staff (and trainee teachers) in their induction meeting, is accessible to all staff and is on display in the staffroom.

When a concern is raised about an adult in our school, the Headteacher or other appropriate person (as above) will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the earliest opportunity (and certainly within 1 working day.) No one will undertake further investigations until they receive advice from the LADO.

The Local Authority Designated Officer will convene a strategy meeting when there are concerns that a person in a position of trust has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

We will work closely with Children's Social Care and the police, if they are involved, to support with any assessment or investigation as required.

The staff member who is the subject of the allegation will be advised to contact their union, professional association or a colleague for support, (depending on the outcome of the strategy discussion/meeting with the LADO). HR will ensure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support, if necessary, through occupational health or welfare arrangements.

If the LADO deems that the referral does not meet the criteria for their involvement, ie is 'low level', we may still undertake our own investigation into the alleged events and, if necessary, invoke disciplinary procedures. In making our decision we will make reference to the expected standards of behaviour for adults working in school, which is found in the Staff Handbook and the Code of Conduct, both of which are discussed and given to new members of staff during induction and are displayed in the staffroom. Any investigation is recorded in written form and is kept securely.

The school has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

In the case of dismissal for serious misconduct or if a member of staff leaves before they are dismissed, the Headteacher will consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State via the Teacher Registration Agency. Details can be found on GOV.UK.

If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and HR.

FOR INFORMATION - The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

- Telephone free: - 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday)
- Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

32. Appendix 14 – Safer Recruitment

Our school has robust recruitment and vetting procedures to help to deter, reject and prevent unsuitable people from working or volunteering within our school.

Our job advertisements and application packs make explicit reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding children, including clear statements in the job description and person specification about the staff member's safeguarding responsibilities.

We require evidence of original academic certificates, birth certificates and right to work in the UK.

We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. One referee needs to be a senior members of the candidate's current employer. References will be confirmed by telephone by the Headteacher/ School Business Manager. References should be received before interview so that any issues can be explored during the interview but, if this is not possible, will be confirmed and any issues explored with the candidate, prior to a firm offer being made.

We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them or if there are gaps in employment with the candidate and/or the referee.

All staff members who have contact with children, young people and families will have appropriate pre-employment checks (including Disclosure and Barring Service checks;) in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education; 2026.

Shortlisted candidates are asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records, further information can be found on GOV.UK .

Shortlisted candidates will be informed that the school might conduct an online search as part of due diligence checks in the recruitment process.

At least one member on every short listing and interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training.

We maintain a Single Central Register of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. Guest visitors will also be checked in line with statutory requirements and risk assessed robustly. The Local Governing Body will check the SCR on a termly basis and record accuracy and actions.

33. Appendix 15 – Staffordshire Police CSE Information Report

Staffordshire Police CSE Information Report

Gathering Intelligence about Child Sexual Exploitation

Staffordshire Police have devised a process by which agencies, parents, carers and young people can provide information about perpetrators. This is gathered and used in situations where there may be no evidence available or the victim is either unwilling or unable to provide a police statement. This occurs in the vast majority of cases of sexual exploitation. Therefore, the opportunity to provide intelligence means that the police can build a sufficient picture over a period of time and act upon it. This could potentially interrupt and disrupt criminal activity where young people are being exploited.

What to collect?

Information on child sexual exploitation includes details on:-

- Suspects – names, nicknames, addresses, dates if birth and descriptions of suspects of CSE
- Vehicles – registration numbers, partial registration numbers, make and model, colour and distinguishing features or marks of vehicles used by suspects
- Telephones – details of phone numbers and mobile phones used by suspects and details of any text messages of phone calls made by them or to them
- Locations – details of locations where offences have taken place or suspects/victims frequent
- Offences – details of criminal offences that have not been recorded by the police either because the victim has not been identified or the victim denies them or refuses to cooperate with the police
- Date and times – that incidents occurred or suspects or vehicles seen
- Links – between suspects, vehicles, locations and young people identified at risk of CSE.

The more detailed and precise the information is the better the quality of intelligence. The intelligence forms are not to be used for the following:

- To report a crime
- To pass information to the police about a crime that is already being investigated
- To raise a child protection concern.

Intelligence can be reported from 3 perspectives:

1. Disclosure by a Young Person at Risk
2. Incident Witnessed by a Professional
3. Information from another Person

Submit the completed intelligence form onto the Child Exploitation Team.

childexploitation@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

If you do not have a secure e-mail facility then please call CET on 101 ext. 3604 to discuss

Please note – this form is **NOT** a referral form.
Agencies should refer to the CSE Policy document Staffs Section 4Ha, S-o-T Section D14 and follow the process outlined. Referrals should be made to First Response (Staffordshire) or the Safeguarding Referral Team (Stoke-on-Trent) or to the Police. This form is to collect intelligence only and may then be used to assist police in building a case.

Staffordshire Police – Child Sexual Exploitation Information Report

Date/Time of report:
Details of Professional submitting:

Name					
Post / Job Title					
Agency					
Contact Details					
Witnessed Incident		**Professional**		**Member of the Public**	

Details of Child/Young Person (if known):

Name	
Age	
Address	

If the information is from a 3rd party are they be willing to engage with the Police? Yes / No

Please provide information: Include as much detail as possible re names /descriptions /nicknames/ vehicle details/addresses etc: