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# **SPORTING STARS ACADEMY SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**Current Version Valid From 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
To be Reviewed in January 2024  
Reviewed by The Directors**

*September 2023 to January 2024*

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### 1. Introduction

This policy is compliant with Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Policy and Procedures and has been reviewed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE September 2023). It MUST be read in collaboration with ALL other school policies.

## 2. Key Safeguarding Contacts

| Role in school                               | Name           | Date and Level of safeguarding training |
|--|----------------|---|
| Director Responsible for Safeguarding        | Emma Tench     | Level 3<br>09/09/2022                   |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)           | Dan Hill       | Level 3<br>27/06/2022                   |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)   | Ashley Miller  | Level 3<br>15/06/2022                   |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)   | Hannah Bennett | Level 3<br>20/09/2023                   |
| Designated teacher for Looked After Children | Dan Hill       | Level 3<br>27/06/2022                   |
| Mental Health Lead                           | Robin Hulbert  | Level 2<br>15/06/2022                   |

## 3. Purpose and Aims

The purpose of our Safeguarding policy at **Sporting Stars** is to ensure that we:

- **Are committed** to developing a robust safeguarding culture of vigilance and challenge
- **Build resilience** by raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children with the language and skills to keep themselves safe
- **Establish a safe environment** in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and where children are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and know that they will be listened to
- **Support vulnerable pupils** who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse
- **Prevent unsuitable people** from working with children by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of **all** school staff, supply staff and volunteers to work with our children and maintain an active, ongoing vigilance in line with the safeguarding culture

**Our aim** is to follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) by **knowing** and **understanding** that:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility and the **voice of the child** is evident
- **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play
- **Everyone** should ensure that their approach is **child-centred** considering, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child

- By establishing a safe environment, we enable our children to learn and develop within an ethos of openness
- **No single practitioner** can have the full picture of a child's needs and circumstances
- If children and families are to receive the **right help at the right time, everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action
- The importance of providing children with a balanced curriculum including PHSE, healthy relationship education, online safety, sexting, child-on-child abuse as well as 'abuse outside the home'
- County Lines, contextualised safeguarding issues, and Child Criminal Exploitation (including CSE - Child Sexual Exploitation). Also supporting this with online activities, enabling children to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks
- Undertaking the role to enable children and young people at our school to have the **best outcomes**
- Ensuring that as a school we have awareness of our staff's knowledge and understanding, as well as embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a **robust element** of our everyday school practice

At **Sporting Stars Academy** we strive to:

- **Protect** children from maltreatment
- **Prevent** impairment of our children's mental and physical health or development
- **Ensure** that our children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care
- **Take action** to enable **ALL** children to have the best outcomes

This policy provides guidance to **all** adults working within the school, whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by the school or a third party and should be read in conjunction with the documents [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

- This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We will also inform parents/carers about this policy when their children join our school
- This policy will be reviewed in full by the proprietor and directors on an annual basis or sooner should legislation/guidance change
- This policy sets out how the proprietor and directors discharge their statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at this school
- Our policy applies to **all** staff; paid and unpaid, working in the school
- The policy is provided to **all** staff (including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers) at the point of induction, alongside our Staff Code of Conduct policy
- Our proprietor and directors, working in collaboration with the senior leadership team and especially our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children will read at least Part 1 or Annex A (condensed version of Part 1) of the KCSiE 2023 guidance
- All staff who work directly with children, are provided with, and have read at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- The school follows the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board policies and procedures. [StaffsSCB](#) for children who access education at Sporting Stars Academy via Staffordshire's referring protocols

- For those children who reside in Stoke-on-Trent and who access education at Sporting Stars Academy via Stoke's referring protocols, we are guided by Stoke Safeguarding Children Partnership [Safeguarding Children Partnership | Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership | Stoke-on-Trent](#)
- For looked after children we are guided by Stoke Safeguarding Children Partnership but work collaboratively with the child's referring authority, including their social worker, the virtual school, including the virtual head teacher and other relevant professionals.
- The school will follow either the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children partnership [Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding](#) or Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board's procedures [StaffsSCB](#) and provide them with information as required.

#### 4. Our Ethos and Culture at Sporting Stars Academy

Sporting Stars Academy is an Ofsted registered independent school that caters for children aged 14-19 years. Situated in Stoke on Trent, we accept students from both Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent as well as students from other Local Authorities. The school offers alternative education provision for students where a mainstream setting has proved unsuccessful. The students on roll will, typically, be in receipt of an EHCP (72%) and/or have been permanently excluded from at least one other setting. At Sporting Stars Academy 14% of students are looked after and the majority live in care homes. The demographics of the school is mainly White British with English as a first language (86%)

Stoke on Trent is an industrial city and the challenges facing the students include anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse and risk of exploitation, both criminal and sexual. A number of students work with external agencies such as CAMHS, Youth Offending Teams and Catch 22.

Due to the nature of the cohort at Sporting Stars all staff are Level 2 trained and there is a high staff to student ratio. Five staff are trained to level 3 and have experience of working with children in care. At Sporting Stars Academy, our children's welfare is of paramount importance to us, and we are a child centred school. Our children are reassured that they have a voice, will be listened to and what they say will be taken seriously. They know that they will be supported and kept safe. They will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse.

Children are encouraged to talk freely with staff if they are worried or concerned about something and our staff understand that a victim of any type of abuse should never feel ashamed for making a report. Their views and wishes will inform any assessment and provision for them.

We make every effort to listen to and capture the voice of children to enable us to have a clear understanding of their daily lived experiences.

We are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers.

This does not prevent ALL staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child and our staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children to facilitate effective communication.

We understand our statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and we maintain a professional attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. We expect **ALL** staff, including our proprietor and directors and visitors to our school to share our commitment to maintaining a safe environment and a culture of vigilance.

Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours, that underpins this commitment. We work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable and/or in need.

We foster a culture of vigilance and staff are confident and competent in the timely challenge of unacceptable behaviours and these are dealt with appropriately and robustly. Staff do not accept these behaviours as 'banter' 'having a laugh' or 'just a part of growing up'.

**All** staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not to see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident, such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. However, concerns can accumulate over time and are evidenced by building a picture of harm, particularly true in cases of abuse or neglect.

We know that it is crucial that our staff record and pass on any concerns in a timely manner and in accordance with this policy, to allow the DSL/DDSL to build up a picture and access support at the earliest opportunity.

When dealing with safeguarding matters, we are conscious of the language and terminology that we use, especially in front of children. Sometimes reference is made to a child who has been subjected to abuse as a victim. However, not all children will consider themselves a victim nor will they want to be referred to in this way. We are conscious of this and when managing any incident, we will be prepared to use terminology that children are most comfortable with.

In guidance we will also at times use the term 'alleged perpetrator' and where appropriate 'perpetrator' and we know that these are widely used terms. However, we know that in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well and again we will be mindful of appropriate language and will decide appropriateness on a case-by-case basis.

We work closely and restoratively with our safeguarding partners with the confidence to challenge decisions and practice if deemed appropriate.

We are committed to working with parents in a positive, open, and transparent way. We ensure that all parents and carers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work and support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to signpost and seek further support as appropriate.

## **5. Legislation, Guidance and Links to Other School Policies**

This policy has been devised with due regard for the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 \(KCSiE\)](#) and this document is read alongside;

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures](#)
- [Safeguarding Children Partnership | Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership | Stoke-on-Trent](#)
- [What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#)
- [Behaviour in Schools - Advice for Headteachers and School Staff](#)
- [The Key | Whole School Support - Leadership, Safeguarding, CPD](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
- [Attendance Policy](#)

- [Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Cyber Bullying Policy](#)
- [Child on Child Abuse Policy Including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Children Missing Education Policy](#)
- [Exclusion Policy](#)
- [FGM Policy](#)
- [LAC and Previously LAC Policy](#)
- [Missing Child Policy](#)
- [Social Media & E-Safety Policy](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [Safer Recruitment Policy](#)
- [Safer Handling Policy](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

## 6. The Role of All Staff in Keeping Children Safe

**All** staff have read and have a good understanding of **at least part 1** of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) and are aware of the safeguarding link to other policies relating to their daily practice. Staff sign to say that they have read it and their understanding is checked via assessments. Staff are asked to read the Staff Code of Conduct, the Prevent Policy, the Behaviour Policy, Safer Handling and Children Missing Education and sign to say that they have read them.

**All** staff receive appropriate safeguarding training (including online safety) at induction and this training is regularly updated. In addition, **all** staff receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide our staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Staff complete safeguarding training each year on a variety of topics as well as KCSIE updates. Safeguarding is discussed each morning at staff briefing and sessions are scheduled through staff meetings including specific input from agencies working with the students. The weekly staff bulletins also have an update or reminder on key topics and a safeguarding quiz is completed at least once a year to check staff's knowledge.

**All** staff know who the DSL/DDSL is, and as well as being the expert in this field, are there to support staff and volunteers.

**All** staff are aware of their responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

**All** staff are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home and online. Staff are confident in exercising **professional curiosity** and understand that knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect to identify cases of children who may be in need of our help or protection. They are aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

**All** staff, but especially the DSL/DDSL consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

**All** staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. They know that in many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline.

Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

**All** staff know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality by only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL/DDSL and local authority children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

**All** staff know how to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

**All** staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it and are confident to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, effectively giving children and their families the right help at the right time.

**All** staff are aware of how to make a referral to children's social care, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with their potential role in such assessments.

**All** staff understand their responsibility to report concerns about the behaviour of any adult in our school and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

**All** staff understand their responsibility to escalate concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if they believe a child's needs remain unmet or if the child is failing to thrive and in need or if the child is at risk of harm.

In all cases, if our staff are unsure, they know that they should always speak to the DSL/DDSL.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DDSL)**

For full details of the DSL/DDSL roles and responsibilities please refer to Part 2 & Annex C of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

Our DSL/DDSL(s) have received the appropriate safeguarding training to provide them with an understanding of their role and the knowledge and skills to carry it out. Our DDSL(s) are trained to the same level as the DSL. Training received also supports their knowledge of the processes, procedures, and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#). This training is updated at least every 2 years and in addition to this they regularly (at least annually) refresh and update their knowledge and skills. The DSL is given **additional** time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively.

Our DSL and DDSLs attend the Safeguarding Lead Briefings with Staffordshire authority that are delivered throughout the school year and are registered with the authority's ESAS (Education Safeguarding Advisory Service) receive regular updates via email.

Our DSL takes the **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place), and this is explicit in



their job description. During term time, the DSL/DDSL is available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can delegate activities to the DDSL(s); however, the ultimate responsibility remains with them, and this lead responsibility is not delegated. In the absence of the DSL the DDSL(s) will take a lead on safeguarding with clear direction from other members the Senior Leadership Team, proprietor, and directors.

The DSL acts as a source of support, advice, and expertise for staff. Risk assessments/safety plans will be completed as required and should, where appropriate, involve other agencies, these are reviewed regularly and shared appropriately.

In active collaboration with our HR Manager, our DSL maintains robust systems to monitor and record training of **all** staff and update and refresher time scales are evident within the training record. Training is delivered in-line with Staffs SCB and KCSIE 2023. This will include bulletins, briefings, and INSET day training as well as external events attended.

At Sporting Stars Academy, we have a robust Safeguarding training schedule for all staff, which is monitored by the DSL and HR Manager. All staff receive Level 1 Safeguarding training as required in KCSIE 2023 but additionally access Level 2 Safeguarding training and receive regular updates through staff meetings, briefings, emails etc. to develop and support robust safeguarding practices amongst all staff.

The school has clear induction processes for all staff, and all required documents and policies are provided both at induction of new staff, and on a yearly refresh basis for current staff. These documents include Part 1, KCSIE 2023; Code of Conduct; school's behaviour policy; the school's response to children who go missing from education, the role of the DSL and this Safeguarding Policy.

Staff complete safeguarding training each year on a variety of topics, inclusive of online safety, exploitation, both criminal and sexual, forced marriage and female genital mutilation to name a few. In addition to this KCSIE updates are provided by the DSL and staff knowledge is checked through the use of assessments and quizzes.

Safeguarding is discussed each morning at staff briefing and sessions are scheduled through staff meetings and INSET days including specific input from agencies working with the students. The weekly staff bulletin also has an update or reminder on key topics.

The DSL ensures that **all** staff and regular visitors have appropriate safeguarding training to equip them for their role in school. This includes training on how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information accurately. The DSL ensures systems are in place to induct new staff are robust and monitored and any non-compliance shared with the Senior Leadership Team, proprietor, and directors.

The DSL monitors the electronic case management systems using CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) to record concerns about children, ensuring that the quality of information is accurate, proportionate, timely and assessment/referrals are made appropriately. The recording and storing of information are kept in-line with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and General Data Protection. The safeguarding and child protection records are kept in a secure location, away from academic records and there is a clear recording. A note is recorded on CPOMS if an additional paper safeguarding file is in place.

When a parent/carer chooses to remove their child/ren from school to receive EHE (Elective Home Education), the DSL will pass on any safeguarding concerns and the safeguarding file if there is one,

to the EHE Team within the referring council and inform other professionals who may be involved with that child.

The DSL/DDSL monitors the quality of safeguarding files through auditing case files regularly. Appropriate and regular supervision takes place with the DSL and may be extended to other members of staff if we deem this appropriate. The school has a senior mental health lead, a wellbeing ambassador and a HR manager who are available to support staff. The school signposts where support is available and will support counselling if needed.

The DSL/DDSL will refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care, as required, and support other staff to make these referrals. We understand the importance of attending case conferences and core group meetings as well as Child in Need meetings.

The DSL will liaise with all relevant staff (e.g., pastoral staff, the designated LAC lead teacher and mental health lead) on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

The DSL/DDSL will represent the school at child protection conferences and core group meetings and will be the expert within our setting to support staff in liaising with other agencies, making assessments and any referrals. Any staff member may be required to be part of strategy discussions with other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of child/ren. The DSL/DDSL will notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation.

The DSL/DDSL helps to promote educational outcomes by sharing appropriate information about the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that children (including children with or who have previously had a Social Worker) are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the schools and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

The DSL has a good understanding of the community the school serves, the risks and its resilience. The DSL and DDSLs work collaboratively with a range of services including, but not limited to, social care, Catch-22, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire CSE and Missing Service, Staffordshire Police Missing Persons, education and family support locality hubs, co-ordinated support and the family practitioner service.

Whilst a number of meetings do continue to take place virtually, the school does invite all services into the school and can facilitate meetings within the school environment. Additionally, staff are also able to attend meetings in person, including Early Help, Child in Need, Core, Conference and strategy meetings plus PEPs and EHCP reviews.

## **8. Our Proprietary Body**

At Sporting Stars Academy our proprietor and directors have a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements, and they **must** ensure that we comply with our duties under legislation. They **must** have regard to this guidance in ensuring policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times. See Part 2 [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).

The Headteacher ensures that the policies and procedures, adopted by the proprietor and directors (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood,

and followed by all staff. These policies are transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, children, and their parents/carers.

The proprietor and directors receive appropriate safeguarding (including online) training. This equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place here are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding and this training is regularly updated. They complete the training regularly and at least once a year as a minimum and their training is recorded on the training log.

The proprietor and directors are aware of their obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#), (including the [Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty](#)), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Further guidance is found in Pg 24-26 Para 82-93 [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) & [Equality Act 2010-Advice for Schools](#)

The proprietor and directors facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding involving everyone in school, ensuring that safeguarding is at the forefront and underpins all relevant aspects of process and policy development. These systems, processes and policies operate with the **best interests** of our children at their heart of what we do.

One of the proprietor and directors has been appointed the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This is explicit in her job description to ensure that as DSL she understands her responsibility in leading safeguarding across the school. As a proprietor this also ensures additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively is provided. See Annex C [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).

The proprietor and directors have also identified three Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL), who are trained to the same safeguarding standard as the DSL. In addition, the proprietor and directors used external agencies to audit and check safeguarding within school, at least annually.

The proprietor and directors ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online and ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks.

It is recognised that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities. There is an expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

The following is a resource [Teaching about Relationships, Sex and Health](#) and there are more listed in Annex B KCSiE including [Harmful Online Challenges and Online Hoaxes](#).

Our proprietor and directors, whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the online risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, our proprietor and directors ensure that our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. They ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Proprietor and directors consider the age range of our

children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

The proprietor and directors will ensure compliance with the completion of returns to the Local Authorities and that any areas of concern in safeguarding are identified and a safeguarding action plan is developed.

They also ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency practice in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

The proprietor and directors ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received safer recruitment training and are compliant with safer recruitment procedures. This includes the requirement for appropriate checks to be carried out in line with national guidance. See Part 3 Safer Recruitment [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).

Our Headteacher has ensured that there is a current whistleblowing policy and staff are aware of this policy and understand its content. We have a culture where staff can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed professionally and sensitively in accordance with agreed whistleblowing procedures [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

Further guidance on [whistleblowing](#) is available here and the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding safeguarding failures internally. Staff can call on 0800 028 0285 and the line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 6pm at the weekend. Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## **9. The Designated Teacher**

The proprietor and directors have appointed Daniel Hill as Designated Teacher (DT). Daniel works with the local authority to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils in our setting, who are looked after. Daniel, as our Designated Teacher, also works across the school to promote and improve educational outcomes for children in care using evidence-based interventions. Additionally, he accesses continued professional development through both local and national agencies linked to the authorities who place their children at the school. Daniel is adept at sharing this information with staff and does so regularly at both staff briefings and staff meetings.

Our Designated Teacher, Daniel also has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care, outside of England and Wales. Daniel is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience.

As Designated Teacher, Daniel works closely with the Virtual School to provide the most appropriate support, utilising Pupil Premium Plus funding, to ensure that they meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan (PEP). This includes working with the Virtual School Headteacher, to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children [Designated Teacher](#).

As Designated Teacher, Daniel has the details of the Local Authority Personal Advisor who has been appointed to guide and support the care leaver and liaises as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

At Sporting Stars, we are attachment aware and take a relational based approach to supporting our most vulnerable children and will work restoratively with children to improve their outcomes.

We are aware of the additional duties of the virtual school headteacher extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance,

attainment, and progress of children with a social worker. We understand the role that we play in improving outcomes for children with a social worker.

### [Virtual Headteacher Role-Children with a Social Worker](#)

#### **10. Working with Parents/Carers**

At Sporting Stars Academy, we are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of their children, and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

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

We respect parents'/carers' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or if it is necessary to do so to safeguard a child from harm.

We will seek to share with parents/carers any concerns we may have about their child before making a referral, unless to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL from making a referral to the local authority in those circumstances and where it is appropriate to do so.

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

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- Emergency contact details (if different from above) and **at least 2 contacts**
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to the child from school (if different from the above)
- Any legal or criminal changes which effects parental responsibility e.g., bail conditions, court orders, special guardianship orders, child arrangement orders etc.

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.

We recognise that we are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. We will use these communications to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents/carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems school use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents/carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and to be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

At Sporting Stars Academy, we update parents/carers about safeguarding through newsletters, our school website, and notices in our reception area. Where additional whole school information is required, this is managed via formal letters sent to parents/carers from the head teacher and via telephone conversation or in-person meeting with the DSL or other appropriate member of staff e.g., the Designated teacher for Looked After Children who is also a DDSL. For children who are

looked after, daily communication passports are shared with the care home and all other students receive a weekly telephone call home.

## 11. Early Help

Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

Every member of staff including volunteers working with children at our school are advised to maintain an attitude of 'professional curiosity and respectful uncertainty' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outline in this policy.

Early intervention is a key part of a wider continuum of services and will work alongside universal services. For early intervention to be successful each stage of the process must be carried out well and followed through by every person who works with children, young people and families and has an individual responsibility for early intervention.

Practitioners should complete the Early Help Assessment (EHA) when:

- Age-appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear, or
- The support of more than one additional agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs, or
- Children do not meet threshold, yet concerns are emerging e.g. attendance, behavioural, academic progress, change in behaviour/s

Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child. The school may need to escalate its concerns with Children's Services to ensure a referral is accepted or work with other agencies to ensure an Early Help Assessment is completed.

Any child may benefit from early help, but **all** staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from school, care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug or alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child and

- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day

The DSL ensures that **all** staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL/DDSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the **lead professional** in undertaking an early help assessment.

Guidance documents for Staffordshire pupils can be accessed at the following links:

[Early Help - SSCB](#)

[Threshold Document - StaffsSCB](#)

Guidance documents for Stoke-on-Trent pupils can be accessed at the following links:

[Early Help Services \(stoke.gov.uk\)](#)

[SOTSCP Threshold Document Aug 2022](#)

For students from other authorities, please see the DSL.

## **12. What Happens if a Referral is Deemed Necessary to Escalate Beyond Early Help**

### **Child in Need (Section 17)**

If the DSL considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a Child in Need referral is appropriate, they will speak with parents/child and obtain their consent for referral to Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support (SCAS), or the appropriate social care team if a different authority, to request an assessment. If parents refuse to give consent, but the child's needs are not being met, the DSL will discuss these issues with SCAS. Appropriate school staff will attend Child in Need (CIN) meetings convened by Children's Social Care when children are deemed to require Section 17 services.

### **Child Protection (Section 47)**

If the local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, they make enquires under Section 47 to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an emergency protection order (under S44 of the Children Act 1989) or in police protective custody (under S46 of the Children Act 1989)

Children's Services will convene an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) once a child protection enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been undertaken and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm. A review conference (RCPC) will take place once a child has been made the subject of a Child Protection Plan to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk. Between conferences regular meetings of a core group will take place to monitor the progress of the child protection plan.

The DSL/DDSL (sometimes other staff members) will attend the child protection conference on behalf of the school. The person attending will have as much relevant and up to date information about the child as possible. They will contribute to a recommendation on the risks/protective factors for the family from their information and a view on the need for a child protection plan. We understand the importance of our attendance and contribution at these conferences and whether we attend or not we know that there is a requirement to complete a report containing these contributions.

Child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved and will work in an open, honest, and transparent way with any parent whose child has been referred to SCAS or whose child is subject to

a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents/carers, wherever possible.

### **13. Escalation Process**

Stoke-on-Trent Child Protection Partnership and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board expects members of staff working directly with families to share information appropriately and work to plans agreed in all relevant forums. Good practice includes the expectation that constructive challenge amongst colleagues within agencies, and between agencies, provides a healthy approach to the work.

This process will be kept as simple as possible and the aim will be to resolve difficulties at a professional practitioner level, wherever possible and always in a restorative way. We recognise that differences in status and experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this course of action, and support should be sought from the DSL/DDSL.

If we believe that concerns regarding a child are not being addressed and outcomes are not improving, we understand the expectations that we will escalate our concerns in line with the [SSCB Escalation policy 2022](#) and [SOT Escalation Policy](#) until a satisfactory conclusion is reached. When we use professional challenge and/or the escalation process we will set out clearly what we want to achieve as a result of the challenge/escalation, what we expect to happen and the desired outcome.

### **14. A Safer School Culture**

#### **Safer Recruitment and Selection**

At Sporting Stars Academy we pay full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'. Our Safer Recruitment and selection practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, checking academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.

In addition to this, and as part of the shortlisting process, we carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help us to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, and provide us with an opportunity to explore with the applicant at interview. Our recruitment procedures include this information so that shortlisted candidates are aware that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

Our recruitment procedures also include undertaking interviews and appropriate checks including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks, prohibition checks whether they are known to the police and/or social care, if they have been disqualified from providing childcare and any relevant overseas information. Evidence of these checks is recorded on our Single Central Record. The HR manager checks the SCR weekly, and the system is set up to alert the HR manager and Head's PA of checks that need completing. In addition, the school has checks from both Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding teams.

Staff who have lived or worked outside the UK **will** undergo the same checks as all other staff, even if they have never been to the UK. We will ensure that any other appropriate checks are carried out so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include criminal records checks for overseas applicants and for teaching positions obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach.

Guidance:



[Application Process for Criminal Records Checks Overseas](#)  
[Regulated Professions Database](#)  
[UK Centre for Professional Qualifications](#)

Separate barred list checks are only be carried out in the following circumstances:

- For newly appointed staff who are engaging in regulated activity, pending the receipt of an Enhanced Certificate with Barred List information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (and where all other relevant checks as per paragraph 213 have been carried out); or,
- Where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation (and where all other relevant checks as above have been carried out).

All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils. Relevant staff have undertaken appropriate training in Safer Recruitment (see training schedule at the front of this document)

One of the trained safer recruitment staff will be involved in **all** staff and volunteer recruitment processes and sit on the recruitment panel. A member(s) of the Governing Body has received Safer Recruitment training.

### **Induction**

All staff will be made aware of the systems we have in place to support safeguarding. These are explained as part of staff induction including:

- The Safeguarding Policy
- The Behaviour Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- The Staff Code of Conduct
- The Safeguarding Response to Children Who Go Missing from Education; and
- The Role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies)
- At least part one of KCSIE 2023

If staff, supply staff, visitors, volunteers, or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors should have a clear glass panel in them and where possible be left open. No visitors, volunteers or parent helpers will be left unsupervised with children or out of sight of the teacher or member of staff in charge. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure this is the case.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

### **Use of Reasonable Force**

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in school to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

Departmental advice for schools is available [here](#).

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children including any with SEN or disabilities, or with medical conditions, staff should consider the risks carefully.

By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance by drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children and agreeing them with parents and carers, we will reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

Staff have completed Safer Handling training and there is a physical restraint policy [Safer Handling Policy](#).

### **15. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Specific Safeguarding Issues**

All staff have an awareness of the following safeguarding issues through regular training and briefings. Staff are aware that these behaviours can make children vulnerable and put them in danger and that often these issues overlap. At Sporting Stars Academy, specific areas of concern are CSE, CCE, sexualised behaviours, involvement in drugs and criminal activity and running away.

Please read and refer to Appendix 2 for Abuse (inc Physical/Emotional/Sexual/Neglect) Annex 1

- Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Child on child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment/sexting-sharing of nude/semi-nude images & upskirting)
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Domestic abuse
- 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)
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Prevent Duty and Channel
- Serious violence
- Trafficking

For further information, advice and guidance on these issues please see Annex 2 of this document.

## 16. Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

All children should be protected however our staff, and the proprietor and directors recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others. This list is not exhaustive but highlights some of these groups:

- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need & Child Protection)
- Children missing from education
- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Children requiring mental health support
- Looked after children and previously looked after children
- Children with special educational needs & disabilities/health issues
- Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT)

Paragraphs 170-205 of Keeping Children Safe 2023 explain in more detail about these groups. We support these groups by having:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- **Understanding and Action:** to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent, rather than not
- **Information and Engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments, decisions and how they have been reached, positive or negative
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy, to assist them in putting forward their views

### Alternative Provision

At Sporting Stars Academy we know that our cohort of pupils often have complex needs, our proprietor and directors are aware of this additional risk of harm and that our pupils may be vulnerable. At present we do not use alternative provision and if we were to do so we would only use registered provisions. We liaise with the health facilities and professionals who are caring for students unable to attend school due to health needs.

DfE Guidance:

[Alternative Provision](#)

[Education for Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School](#)

## 17. Educational Visitors to School

We will undertake risk assessment and use professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so we will consider:

- What we know about the individual/company, including formal and informal information offered by staff, parents, other establishments, or volunteers
- Whether the individual/company has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where references can be advised, and suitability recorded
- Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check

- We will clearly have decided the level of supervision required through risk assessment - the supervision will be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children” as stated in KCSIE 2023

We have clear visitor’s procedure that enables us to offer pupil experiences of meeting other professionals to extend knowledge and curriculum. This clearly states whether they are supervised or unsupervised within the school.

### **18. Allegations Made Against/Concerns Raised in Relation to Teachers, Including Supply Teachers, Other Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors**

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment securing wellbeing and best possible outcomes for the children at our school. We take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults who work at Sporting Stars are safe to work with children. However, we do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

The proprietor and directors ensure that there are procedures in place for dealing with the two sections covering two levels (see below) of concern and/or allegations against staff members, supply staff, volunteers, and contractors.

- Allegations that **may** meet the harms threshold
- Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold, referred to for the purposes of this guidance as ‘**low level concerns**’

#### **Allegations That May Meet the Harms Threshold**

We have an good understanding and give due regard to Part 4 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) guidance and [SSCB Allegations of Abuse Made Against a Person Working with Children](#) where it is alleged that anyone working in our education setting providing education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be
- suitable to work with children

This relates to members of staff, supply staff, volunteers, and contractors, who are currently working in any education setting, regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and/or historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We understand that if we are not the employer of an individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately. In no circumstances will we decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Our proprietor will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works at our school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher immediately. If it is about the sole proprietor of the independent school, then this needs to be raised with the Designated Officer. Should an allegation be made against the Head teacher, this will be reported to the proprietor and directors. If neither

the Headteacher nor a proprietor 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 HR Manager.

The Headteacher will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. No member of staff or the governing body will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

### **Allegations/Concerns that Do Not Meet the Harms Threshold - Referred to for the Purposes of This Guidance as ‘Low Level Concerns’**

At Sporting Stars Academy, we promote an open and transparent culture in which **all** concerns about adults are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic, or concerning behaviour early, minimising the risk of abuse and ensuring that adults who work in or on behalf of our school are clear about professional boundaries and act within them in accordance with our ethos and values.

What is a low-level concern?

Low level does not mean that it is insignificant. It is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or nagging doubt that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is

- inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO

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

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils

All staff have a good understanding of what constitutes a low-level concern, and our proprietor and directors ensure that these low-level concerns are included as part of our staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies as set out in Part two of KCSiE 2023.

### **Sharing Low-Level Concerns**

We understand how crucial it is that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working in or on behalf of our setting from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

If we are in any doubt as to whether information shared about a member of our staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harms threshold we will consult with the LADO.

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or proprietor knows to contact the LADO.

Stoke-on-Trent’s LADO can be contacted via the Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CHAD) (email: [CHAD.referrals@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:CHAD.referrals@stoke.gov.uk)) or on 01782 235100 (8:30am - 6:00pm). If LADO advice is required after 6:00pm then the Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on 01782 234234. As Sporting Stars

Academy are located within Stoke-on-Trent this would be the initial point of contact. It should be noted that Staffordshire's LADO is contactable on 0300 111 8007.

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. 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/or HR. The DSL has a responsibility to inform Barring service.

The DBS Contact Number is: 0300 0200 190.

### **19. Information Sharing**

We work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Working Together 2018](#) & [Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners](#).

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, our proprietor and directors recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This includes ensuring arrangements are in place to set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within our setting and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

We are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

Our proprietor and directors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. Our proprietor and directors ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR.

Where children leave our school/academy/college, the DSL will ensure that any relevant Safeguarding file is transferred to the new setting as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, with confirmation of receipt.

In addition to the safeguarding file, our DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school/college in advance of the child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new setting to continue supporting the victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR 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.

Guidance Documents:

[Data Protection: Toolkit for Schools](#)

## **20. Managing Complaints**

In line with our school ethos and culture, we encourage children and parents/carers to talk to us if they are unhappy with anything to do with school. We have a robust internal investigation process.

Our complaints policy states clearly the various stages of complaint and where to escalate concerns following completion and outcome of our complaints process. Our complaints policy is available on our school website for parents/carers and is also available on request.

Safeguarding concerns should be raised with school immediately. If a concern means a child is at immediate risk, then the individual needs to contact Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support Team on (0300 111 8007) or Stoke-on-Trent's Child Advice and Duty Service (CHAD) on 01782 235100.

All visitors are given safeguarding information which outlines how to share concerns and code of conduct expected by visitors/contractors.

## **21. Site Security**

At Sporting Stars Academy, we provide a secure site which is controlled by precise management directives, but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. All people on our site must adhere to the rules which govern it. Laxity can cause potential problems with safeguarding, therefore:

- Visitors gain access through the main entrance, which is locked and supervised
- Visitors, volunteers, and students must only enter through the main entrance, after signing in at reception the visitors will be issued with a visitor's pass. The school has a clear system of ensuring staff are accompanied supervised by regulated staff members. Any visitors on site who is not identifiable by a visitor's pass will be challenged by any staff member and this will be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Green passes will distinguish that the visitor has proved that they have a fully enhanced DBS whilst a red pass will determine that they have not proven they have a DBS, so will need to be supervised/accompanied by a regulated staff member
- Parents, carers, and grandparents attending functions have access only through the designated and supervised entrances, with tickets for visitors for appropriate school events
- Children will only be allowed home with adults with parental responsibility or confirmed permission
- Empty classrooms should have closed windows and doors
- Children should never be allowed to leave school alone during school hours unless collected by an adult such as a parent who is doing so for a valid reason. They should report to the office to do this
- A health and safety audit is monitored regularly with a tracker system in place with HR. This sits alongside annual risk
- Assessments, safety planning/inspections are discussed with Senior Leaders and Directors
- The fire evacuation plan is included within this. and Prevent risk assessment
- The risk management of site security is managed by senior leaders and there is a clear system of risk assessments and review timescales of these



## **Safeguarding Induction Sheet for New or Supply Staff and Regular Visitors or Volunteers**

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and at our school we take this responsibility seriously.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person in our school, you must share this information immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Lead Emma Tench or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Nicky Crookshank, Hannah Bennett, Ashley Miller and Daniel Hill.

Do not think that your worry is insignificant if it is about hygiene, appearance, or behaviour - we would rather you told us as we would rather know about something that appears small than miss a worrying situation.

If you think the matter is very serious and may be related to child protection, for example, physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, you must find one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and provide them with a written/electronic record of your concern. A copy of the form to complete is attached to this and others can be obtained from reception. Please ensure you complete all sections as described.

If you are unable to locate them, ask a member of the school office staff to find them and to ask them to speak with you immediately about a confidential and urgent matter.

Any allegation concerning a member of staff, a child's foster carer or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the Head teacher. If an allegation is made about the Head teacher, you should pass this information to the proprietor. Alternatively, you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer on 0300 111 8007.

The people you should talk to in school are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Emma Tench  
Contact Number: 01782 248248

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nicky Crookshank  
Contact Number: 01782 248248

Proprietor: Shane Tudor  
Contact Number: 01782 24824



## Safeguarding Induction Checklist

Name:

Date:

|  | Criteria   | Comments | Signature |
|--|--|----------|-----------|
| <b>DAY 1</b>   | Welcome  |          |           |
|  | Employment Checks Complete   |          |           |
|  | School Background Information: Pupils, Ofsted, Community/Special   |          |           |
|  | School Structure - Role of Proprietors   |          |           |
|  | Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 1 Issued and Explained with Assessment  |          |           |
|  | Safeguarding Level 1 Training  |          |           |
|  | Role & Responsibility: Reporting Structure, Safeguarding Role in School  |          |           |
|  | Name of DSL, Role Described and Contact Details  |          |           |
|  | CPOMS - Logins and Training  |          |           |
|  | Staff Conduct of Code Policy<br>Behaviour Policy<br>Children Missing from Education Process  |          |           |
|  | Confidentiality and Breaches   |          |           |
|  | General Data Protection Act  |          |           |
| Health & Safety: Fire Procedures and Fire Officers (Review Date) |  |          |           |
| <b>WEEK 1</b>  | Meet with Headteacher & DSL  |          |           |
|  | Physical Intervention Leads<br>Other leads: CSE/Prevent/LAC/SENCO/IT Lead  |          |           |
|  | Named Proprietors, Safeguarding, Chair   |          |           |
|  | Pastoral Support Officers/ Behaviour/<br>Attendance  |          |           |
|  | Alternatives to Reporting in School in an<br>Emergency   |          |           |
|  | Signs and Types of Abuse   |          |           |
|  | Where to Find Safeguarding Policy  |          |           |
|  | What to Do Regarding Disclosure - Reporting<br>Systems   |          |           |
|  | Policies to Read: Health & Safety, Complaints,<br>Safeguarding, Child on Child Abuse, Code of<br>Conduct, Whistle Blowing, KCSIE (Part 1 or 2),<br>Online Safety, Prevent, Behaviour |          |           |

|               |                           |  |  |
|---------------|---------------------------|--|--|
| <b>WEEK 2</b> | Training Needs Identified |  |  |
|               | Training Needs Scheduled  |  |  |
|               | Any Other Issues          |  |  |
|               | Review Date:              |  |  |

Date Induction Carried Out On:

By:

Signed by Employee:

Date of Completion:

Areas to Follow Up:

Training Needs Identified:

## Appendix 1 - Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

**1. 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 maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness
- Frequently dirty or unkempt
- Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather
- Poor school attendance or often late for school
- Poor concentration
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers
- Adolescent neglect
- Affluent neglect

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

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt
- Bite marks
- Round burn marks
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders, or buttocks
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred
- Bald patches
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted

- Fear of medical help
- Fear of changing for PE
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers

**3. Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness, or scratching
- Reluctance to go home
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness
- Refusal to communicate
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- Unusual compliance
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area

**4. Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes himself/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly
- Over-reaction to mistakes

- Delayed physical, mental, or emotional development
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches
- Self-harming, drug, or solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

N.B.: Some situations where children stop communicating suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment.

### **Parental Response**

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain, or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- Parents request removal of the child from home; or
- Violence between adults in the household
- Evidence of coercion and control

### **Disabled Children**

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that may not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, maybe of concern on a non-mobile child
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment
- Poor toileting arrangements
- Lack of stimulation
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food, or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child’s means of communication
- Ill-fitting equipment, for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting
- Misappropriation of a child’s finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures

## Appendix 2 - Specific Safeguarding Issues

### Behaviours Linked to Safeguarding Issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Presenting behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including the link to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

### Bullying Including Cyberbullying

[Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[Cyber Bullying Policy](#)

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to protect themselves. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- Physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (e.g., racist, or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)
- Emotional (e.g., isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group)
- Cyberbullying (including sexting)

Guidance Documents:

[Preventing & Tackling Bullying](#)

[Cyberbullying Advice](#)

### Child-on-Child Abuse (Including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment)

NB. Government guidance that predates September 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 still uses peer on peer abuse, a term that was replaced with child on child abuse in KCSIE 2022 and will be used in all legislation after 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

**All** staff have the knowledge and awareness that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). All staff are clear about this school's policy and procedure regarding child-on-child abuse. We have a separate Child-on-Child Abuse Policy in addition to Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies to guide, inform and support children, staff and parents/carers.

Guidance Documents:

[Child on Child Abuse Policy Including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#)

[Behaviour Policy](#)

[Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[Cyber Bullying Policy](#)

Child-on-child abuse can occur, both physically and verbally, either online or face to face, between two children of **any** age and sex, with a single child or group of children and can happen both inside and outside of our setting. Children who are victims of this abuse, will find the experience stressful and distressing and it is likely to have an adverse effect their educational attainment. This type of abuse can exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable.

**All** staff at Sporting Stars recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports of it. They understand the importance of the **timely** challenge of inappropriate behaviours between peers, many listed below, that are abusive in nature. They are aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment, is never acceptable and that that we have a zero-tolerance approach
- Not dismissing this abuse as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as physical and sexual assaults e.g. grabbing bottoms, breasts, and genitalia, flicking bras and the lifting up of skirts

**All** staff know that if we do not challenge and support our children that this will lead to a **culture** of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

We know that the initial response to a report from a child is vitally important. We do not want to miss that opportunity and so we reassure victims that their reports are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We never give victims the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. We reassure victims that they should not feel ashamed for making a report.

We have well promoted and easily understood systems in place so that our children feel confident to knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. On admission to the school all students have a one to one with a support member of staff to establish a relationship and a contact if they have any concerns. Due to the nature of the school and the high staff to student ratio, students always have a member of staff available to talk to, whether this is their tutor, teacher or TA. Students are met every morning when they arrive in school by a senior member of staff and a senior member of staff will also supervise their departure from the school site. This allows concerns to be identified raised quickly.

Staff are clear as to the school policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse as defined in the anti-bullying, school behaviour policy and broader child protection procedures.

Staff understand that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening. As such it is vital that if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their DSL (or Deputy DSL).

Child-on-child abuse will not be tolerated at Sporting Stars Academy or minimised in any way and is always taken seriously. Staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature.

All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded as per school system, [Child-on-Child Abuse Policy Including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) investigated and dealt with accordingly. Victims, perpetrators and other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported through school and multi-agency support mechanisms. We make it clear to children how and where they can confidently report abuse, knowing that it will always be taken seriously.

Downplaying some behaviours related to abuse can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

This guidance follows part 5 of KCSIE and must be read and understood by DSLs and is advised to be read by staff.

Staff will be supported to deal with incidents of child sexual violence/sexual harassment with appropriate training.

We clearly communicate with children how they can report abuse that they have experienced personally, witnessed or heard about.

### **Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence or Sexual Harassment**

Ultimately, any decisions need to be made on a case-by-case basis, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Guidance Document:

[Child on Child Abuse Policy Including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#)

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- Children may not find it easy to tell staff
- Looks for signs, pupils may show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice
- Act immediately
- Initial response from adults and school is vital - don't compromise confidence of future victims
- All victims reassured, taken seriously - supported and kept safe. Nothing downplayed or made to feel ashamed
- It should be explained that the law is in place to protect them rather than criminalise them and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them
- Report in line with safeguarding reporting procedures within this policy. Report to DSL immediately and then involve social care if required
- If possible manage reports with two staff members present, one preferably the DSL
- Where the report includes an online element be aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and the UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child
- Don't promise confidentiality - very likely report will need to be shared. Make sure the victim knows the next steps
- Be supportive and respectful. Listen carefully to the child, reflect back, use the child's language, do not ask leading questions and only prompt the child with open questions
- Consider support for any siblings that may be required following any incident
- Best practice is to wait until the end of the report to write up a thorough summary, although it is possible to make notes, particularly if a second staff member is present. Do not allow note making to get in the way of giving the child your full attention. Either way a written report is essential
- Only record facts and not staff members' personal opinions. Whether the reported incident has taken place on site or off site, or whether or whether it involves a child from another school or college, the safeguarding duty remains the same.

**All** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. We will ensure that children know that the law is in place to protect them rather than criminalise them, and we will be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.



Staff are aware of the groups that are potentially more at risk as evidence shows that girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk. The DfE states child on child abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

Victims of child-on-child abuse will be supported by the school's pastoral system and referred to specialist agencies if appropriate. Risk assessment and/or safety planning are an integral part of this support plan, particularly regarding the post incident management.

**All** staff understand, that even if there are no reports in our setting, this does not mean that it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important that if staff at Sporting Stars have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy (DDSL). Our staff will not develop high thresholds before acting.

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault and may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks about clothes and/or appearance, jokes, taunting and online sexual harassment. This also includes the telling of sexual stories, making lewd comments and calling someone sexual names and physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and online sexual harassment
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive - but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

All staff are aware of the importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.

**All** staff **are** clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the safeguarding referral process. As in any case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the DSL/DDSL. Our behaviour policy will support any sanctions.

The DfE states child on child abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

Guidance Documents:

[Staffsccb - Responding to Sexting Guidance](#)

[Disrespect NoBody Campaign](#)

[CEOP-Safety Centre](#)

[UKCIS Guidance: Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes](#)

[Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Searching, Screening and Confiscation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Undressed \(lgfl.net\)](#)

### **Children Missing Education**

**All** professionals working with children, as well as the wider community can help by remaining vigilant to children's safety. The law states every child should be receiving an education, and we stand a better chance of ensuring a child's safety if we know where and how they are receiving this. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area; we work closely to ensure we put appropriate safeguarding responses in place for children who go missing from education.

Guidance Documents:

[Children Missing Education Policy](#)

[Missing Child Policy](#)

[Attendance Policy](#)

A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

Our school holds **at least 2** emergency contact numbers for each pupil. If a child goes missing from our school and we are unable to locate them, we will inform parents/carers and we will also contact the Police to report them missing. This will ensure that the Police and other partners have a true picture of missing episodes, which are indicators of risk for some children.

Please ensure that your policies are clear regarding children going missing from the school site and that **ALL** staff are aware of the processes and the role that they **ALL** play in this. In particular the importance of the completing class registers at the earliest opportunities.

The school will notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. The school (regardless of designation) will also notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who is to be deleted from the admission register because s/he:

- Has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system (e.g. elective home education)

- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which s/he is registered (moved within the city, within the country or moved abroad but failed to notify the school of the change)
- Displaced because of a crisis e.g. domestic violence or homelessness
- Has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither s/he nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe that s/he will return to the school at the end of that period; or
- Has been permanently excluded

Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered [‘missing’](#)

### **Child Missing from Home or Care**

There are strong links between children involved in criminal and sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home, care or school, bullying, self-harm, teenage pregnancy, truancy, and substance misuse.

In addition, some children are particularly vulnerable, for example, children with special needs, those in residential or foster care, those leaving care, migrant children, particularly those who are unaccompanied, those forced into marriage, those involved in gangs and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Most children who go missing are not in care and go missing from their family home. However, children who are looked after are much more likely to run away than those who live at home, and over 50% of young people in care have run away at some point.

Guidance Document:

[Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

The Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panels are the forum for safeguarding children at risk of exploitation with a partnership arena. MACE panels contribute to the wider Staffordshire County Council Contextual Safeguarding Implementation and is explicitly linked to the ‘See Me, Hear Me’ Framework as published by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent MACE panels work together with Catch 22 to provide a joined-up approach to identifying the need of, then building relationships with children and young people and their families to disrupt links to exploitation, working restoratively in a child-centred approach.

If a child is suspected to be at risk of CSE or CCE then the DSL or DDSL will complete the RFM (Risk Factor Matrix) ideally in the presence of the child. Where a child joins the school and is already

known to services and has been identified as at risk of exploitation, the DSL will take a lead role in updating relevant professionals and ensuring attendance and contribution at MACE panels.

Guidance Documents:

[Multi Agency Child Exploitation \(MACE\) - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Stoke on Trent Child Exploitation](#)

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm, from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Guidance Documents:

[Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked Child Exploitation - StaffsSCB](#)

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

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

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

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

The above CCE indicators can also be signs of CSE, as can having older boyfriends or girlfriends and/or suffering from sexually transmitted infections/becoming pregnant.

Guidance Documents:

[Child Sexual Exploitation Definition & Guidance](#)

[Know About CSE](#)

### **County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and/or store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in several locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes, and care homes.

Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRF) should be considered. Further information can be found here [National Referral Mechanism](#)

If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- Can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults, and
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources

Guidance Documents:

[Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines](#)

[County Lines toolkit](#)

## **Domestic Abuse**

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

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse) Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people, can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. We will signpost and support our children/ young people.

We are an Operation Encompass school and act appropriately when we receive an alert to support the children in our school. Both the DSL, and the headteacher, are sufficiently trained to offer support.

Guidance Documents:

[Domestic Violence and Abuse](#)

[Domestic Abuse-Staffsccb](#)

[NSPCC-Domestic Abuse](#)

Operation Encompass helpline 0204 513 9990 (8am-1pm Mon-Fri)

## **Drugs**

There is evidence that children and young people are increasingly misusing alcohol and illegal drugs. Consequences range from non-attendance and poor attainment at school, poor health, committing crime to support 'habits' and increased risk of being a victim of violent crime and criminal exploitation, including sexual exploitation.

Guidance Documents:

[NSPCC-Parental Substance Misuse](#)

[SSCB-Working With Parents Who Misuse Substances](#)

[Drugs Advise for Schools](#)

## **Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)**

Fabricated or Induced Illness is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of their carer, and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

There may be several explanations for these circumstances, and each requires careful consideration and review. Concerns about a child's health should be discussed with a health professional who is involved with the child.

Guidance Documents:

[Safeguarding Children in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced](#)

[Fabricated or Induced Illness \(staffsccb.org.uk\)](#)

### **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL/DDSL are aware of local contact details and referral routes into local housing organisations, so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Indicators of risk include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this will **not** replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

We also recognise that in some cases 16/17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians and they will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the DSL will ensure that appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

### **Honour-Based Abuse**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors, when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM comprises of 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. It is known by several names including "cutting", "female circumcision" or "initiation". The term female circumcision suggests that the practice is like male circumcision, but it bears no resemblance to male circumcision, and it has serious health consequences with no medical benefits. FGM is also linked to domestic abuse, particularly in relation to "honour-based abuse".

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either via disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It is rare to see visual evidence, and children should not be examined but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Staff **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless there is good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where staff do not discover that FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, staff will follow local safeguarding procedures.

Guidance Documents:

[Multi Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)  
[Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one, entered, **without** the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter a marriage. The threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Some perpetrators use perceived culture practices, to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

There are some significant differences between the referral of a concern about a young person being forced into marriage and other child protection referrals. Professionals must be aware that sharing information with a young person's parents, extended family, or members of their community, could put the young person in a situation of significant risk.

Any disclosure that indicates a young person may be facing a forced marriage must be taken seriously by professionals who should also realise that this could be 'one chance to save a life'. A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. In cases of vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

Guidance Documents:

[Forced Marriage](#)  
[The Right to Choose: Government Guidance on Forced Marriage](#)

### **Mental Health**

**All** staff have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and **are** aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

A number of our students have mental health support from an external agency or have accessed support previously. Where support is ongoing, the school works alongside these professionals to ensure appropriate support.

We have a member of staff who is trained as a mental health first aider and all staff have completed training on mental health. We work closely with external agencies such as CAMHS to support students. Students who are causing a concern are discussed in our daily staff briefing and actions agreed. Students have at least a weekly telephone call home and for those looked after a daily communication log with their carers. We have a senior mental health lead and a mental health ambassador. A number of staff have extensive experience in supporting students with mental health issues, have worked with students in care, with behavioural difficulties and qualifications in mentoring and counselling.



Only appropriately trained professionals will attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to **observe** children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Guidance Documents:

[Addressing Trauma and Adversity](#)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance](#)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)

[Every Interaction Matters](#)

[MIND-Parenting Capacity and Mental Health](#)

[NSPCC-Mental Health and Parenting](#)

[SSCB-Children & Young People who Self Harm or Disclose an Intent to Die by Suicide](#)

Staffordshire County Council Resource Bank (sent out at least annually)

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

### **Online Safety**

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, radicalisation, sexual predation, and technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

At Sporting Stars Academy, we realise that it is essential for our children to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an effective whole school/college approach to online safety which empowers us to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms for us to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

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

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

We ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. We consider online safety in other relevant policies, when planning curriculum, teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement. We have filters and monitoring systems in place, and these are regulated, and risk assessed as part of the prevent duty.

We have an online safety policy [Social Media and E-Safety Policy](#) which identifies the usage and expected behaviour of children/students. As a school we appreciate the value of technology and that appropriate filters are in place, yet this does not lead to unreasonable restrictions which would limit online teaching and safeguarding.

### **Education at Home/Remote Learning**

Where children are being asked to learn online at home, our school will refer to and use the links and resources provided by the DfE; Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers and safeguarding in remote education.

1. The school has appropriate filters and monitoring in place as part of our obligation to comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) and the Prevent Duty. This is inclusive of both school devices and networks. The school and our partners are constantly reviewing industry trends to improve filtering and monitoring of internet use in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and any other Department for Education and online safety statutory guidance including SWGFL & the UK Home Office.

We recognise that no filter can guarantee to be 100% effective, however we are satisfied that the filtering system manages and blocks the following content categories (and websearch) content:

- Illegal Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)
- Unlawful Terrorist Content - promotes terrorism and terrorist ideologies, violence, or intolerance
- Discrimination - Promotes the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people with protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010
- Drugs / Substance abuse - displays or promotes the illegal use of drugs or substances
- Extremism - promotes terrorism and terrorist ideologies, violence, or intolerance
- Malware / Hacking - promotes the compromising of systems including anonymous browsing and other filter bypass tools as well as sites hosting malicious content
- Pornography - displays sexual acts or explicit images
- Piracy and copyright theft - includes illegal provision of copyrighted material
- Self-Harm - promotes or displays deliberate self-harm (including suicide and eating disorders)
- Violence - displays or promotes the use of physical force intended to hurt or kill.

**Please Note:** This list should not be considered an exhaustive list and other content may be restricted based on feedback or recognised online safety risks.

2. To ensure the safety of all users we regularly test the effectiveness of the filtering system using a range of online testing tools recommended by SWGFL [Test Filtering](#) & [Open DNS](#)
3. The school's web filtering and device monitoring services are provided by Cisco, Datto and Watchguard and managed by our IT services provider Hixon Group Limited (MSP)
4. The school has a comprehensive personal development programme that encompasses PRSHE, British Values and SMSC. The programme, which is delivered during form time, timetabled lessons and on whole school personal development days, aids students in their development of assertiveness, supporting them to build resilience to peer & other

influences that affect both how they think about themselves and their health and wellbeing. They explore ways to identify risk and manage personal safety in new social settings, workplaces, and environments, including online and strategies for identifying risky and emergency situations, including online; ways to manage these and get appropriate help and support for themselves and others, including where there may be legal consequences (e.g. drugs and alcohol, violent crime and gangs).

- [Social Media and E-Safety Policy](#)
  - [Behaviour Policy](#)
  - [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
  - [Safeguarding and Monitoring of I.T. Systems](#)
5. Discreet lessons of PRSHE are timetabled for all groups, in addition to this, we deliver personal development during form time and have a number of personal development days that are calendared throughout the year. We encourage active engagement from our parents and carers and provide information, support and guidance in person, via telephone calls and emails and via the school's website and newsletters.

Guidance Documents:

[Children's Commissioner-Online Safety Teaching Online Safety in Education Settings](#)  
[Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring](#)  
[CEOP-Safety Centre](#)  
[National Cyber Security Centre](#)  
[NSPCC-Undertaking Remote Teaching Safely](#)  
[360 Degree Safe - Online Safety Review Tool](#)  
[UKCCIS-UK Council for Child Internet Safety](#)

### **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more, it is categorised as private fostering.

Close relatives are defined as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a stepparent. People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- Children who need alternative care because of parental illness
- Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours
- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children
- Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents
- Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area

Our staff at **Sporting Stars** will notify the DSL/DDSL when they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. There is a mandatory duty on the school to inform the local authority and the local authority have a duty to check that the young person is being properly cared for and that the arrangement is satisfactory.

If the child concerned is residing in Staffordshire then Staffordshire Childrens Social Care can be notified of a private fostering arrangement by contacting them on: 0300 111 8007 select option 1,

then 5, then 2. For more information Heleen McInerney can be contacted via email:  
heleen.mcinerney@staffordshire.gov.uk

If the child concerned is residing in Stoke-on-Trent the school will refer that individual to Children's Advice and Duty Service (CHaD) on 01782 235100 for an assessment.

Guidance Documents:

[Children Act 1989 – Private Fostering](#)

[Private Fostering \(stoke.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces
- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause

At **Sporting Stars Academy** we value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Pupils/students and school staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. **Sporting Stars Academy** is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's safeguarding duty.

The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in

## **Prevent Duty and Channel**

### **Prevent**

The school's proprietor and directors, the Head Teacher and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in to place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, integration of students by gender and SEND, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

All schools are subject to a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism" (section 26, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015). This is known as The Prevent Duty and is part of our school's wider safeguarding obligations.

Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and covers childcare). We follow the guidance in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Our school has a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who is the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the DSL.

The SPOC for our school is Emma Tench.

Our School will monitor online activity within the school to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessed by students or staff. This is best done using specialist online monitoring software, the school's web filtering and device monitoring services are provided by Cisco, Datto and Watchguard and managed by our IT services provider Hixon Group Limited (MSP). To ensure the safety of all users we regularly test the effectiveness of the filtering system using a range of online testing tools recommended by SWGFL [Test Filtering](#) and [Open DNS](#).

### **Channel**

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

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals
- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability
- The Channel programme focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's participation in the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages
- Schools have a duty to cooperate with the Channel programme in the carrying out of its functions, and with the Police in providing information about an individual who is referred to Channel (Section 38, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015)

Guidance Documents:

[The Prevent Duty](#).

[Educate Against Hate](#)

[ACT Early | Prevent Radicalisation](#)

### **Serious Violence**

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal 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 and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Guidance Documents:

[Home Office Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement](#)

[Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines](#)

### Appendix 3 - Allegations about a Member of Staff (incl Supply), Governor or Volunteer

1. Inappropriate behaviour by staff/supply staff/volunteers could take the following forms:
  - Physical - For example, the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects, or rough physical handling.
  - Emotional - For example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability, or sexuality.
  - Sexual - For example, sexualised behaviour towards pupils, sexual harassment, inappropriate phone calls and texts, images via social media, sexual assault, and rape.
  - Neglect - For example, failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.
  - Spiritual Abuse - For example, using undue influence or pressure to control individuals or ensure obedience, follow religious practices that are harmful such as beatings or starvation.
2. If a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, supply staff, proprietor, visitor or volunteer the Headteacher must be informed immediately. The Headteacher must carry out an urgent initial consideration to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. The Headteacher should not carry out the investigation him/herself or interview pupils.
3. The Headteacher will exercise and be accountable for their professional judgement on the action to be taken as follows:
  - If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, raise credible Child Protection concerns the Head Teacher will notify the Staffordshire Designated Officer (**LADO**) (**0300 111 8007**) or Stoke-on-Trent's Designated Officer (**LADO**) **01782 235100**. The LADO will liaise with the Head teacher and advise about action to be taken and may initiate internal referrals within Staffordshire Childrens Social Care to address the needs of children likely to have been affected.
  - If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, do not raise credible child protection concerns, but do raise other issues in relation to the conduct of the member of staff or the pupil. These should be addressed through the school's own internal procedures.
  - If the Headteacher decides that the allegation is without foundation and no further formal action is necessary, all those involved should be informed of this conclusion, and the reasons for the decision should be recorded on the child safeguarding file.
4. Where we are not the employer of an individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately and that they liaise with relevant parties (this includes supply teachers and volunteers). In no circumstances will our school/college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Our proprietor and directors will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.
5. Where an allegation has been made against the Headteacher or a Proprietor, then the HR Manager takes on the role of liaising with the LADO in determining the appropriate way forward. [Managing Allegations of Abuse Against a Person Who Works with Children](#)
6. Where the allegation is against the sole proprietor, the referral should be made to the LADO directly.

## Appendix 4 - Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as: The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:
  - Encourage, justify, or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of beliefs
  - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
  - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts or
  - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK
4. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.
5. Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal, and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
  - Identity Crisis - the student/pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
  - Personal Crisis - the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
  - Personal Circumstances - migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student/pupil’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
  - Unmet Aspirations - the student/pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
  - Experiences of Criminality - which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration
  - Special Educational Need - students/pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others

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



7. More critical risk factors could include:

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

## Appendix 5 - SPOC Contacts

| Prevent Leads                                       | Contact Name        | Email Address  |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Cannock   | Karla Vowles        | <a href="mailto:KarlaVowles@cannockchasedc.gov.uk">KarlaVowles@cannockchasedc.gov.uk</a>           |
|   | Oliver Greatbatch   | <a href="mailto:olivergreatbatch@cannockchasedc.gov.uk">olivergreatbatch@cannockchasedc.gov.uk</a> |
| East Staffs   | Mike Hovers         | <a href="mailto:Michael.hovers@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk">Michael.hovers@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk</a>         |
|   | Sal Khan            | <a href="mailto:sal.khan@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk">sal.khan@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk</a>                     |
| Lichfield   | Susan Bamford       | <a href="mailto:Susan.Bamford@lichfielddc.gov.uk">Susan.Bamford@lichfielddc.gov.uk</a>             |
| Newcastle   | Georgina Evans      | <a href="mailto:Georgina.Evans@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk">Georgina.Evans@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk</a> |
| South Staffs  | Maggie Quinn        | <a href="mailto:M.Quinn@sstaffs.gov.uk">M.Quinn@sstaffs.gov.uk</a>                                 |
| Stafford  | Victoria Cooper     | <a href="mailto:vcooper@staffordbc.gov.uk">vcooper@staffordbc.gov.uk</a>                           |
| Staffs Moorlands                                    | David Smith         | <a href="mailto:david.smith@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk">david.smith@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk</a>         |
| Tamworth  | Joanne Sands        | <a href="mailto:joanne-sands@tamworth.gov.uk">joanne-sands@tamworth.gov.uk</a>                     |
| Staffordshire County Council<br>(Safer Communities) | Fiona Chapman       | <a href="mailto:fiona.chapman@staffordshire.gov.uk">fiona.chapman@staffordshire.gov.uk</a>         |
| Staffordshire Police Prevent<br>Team                | Sgt. Darren McGrath | <a href="mailto:prevent@staffordshire.police.uk">prevent@staffordshire.police.uk</a>               |

## Appendix 6 - Role of the Staffordshire LADO

The Staffordshire LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) promotes a safer children's workforce by providing effective guidance, advice, and investigation oversight to cases. They may be able to offer advice and assist with communication in situations which sit outside the statutory criteria, albeit at the discretion of the LADO Duty Officer and where the broader goals of a safer children's workforce are relevant.

The service will give advice on how concerns or allegations should be investigated, including if a referral needs to be raised with the Police and/or Children's Social Care. Staffordshire LADO is not directly responsible for investigatory activities but will actively support any investigation and give advice around a range of parameters including suspension, possible media interest, when to tell the adult, and ensure all interested parties are appropriately linked together. They will retain oversight of individual cases to ensure concerns or allegations are investigated thoroughly in a fair and timely manner, and will advise in relation to any subsequent duties to communicate with regulatory bodies and/or the DBS.

The StaffsSCB inter-agency procedures for: [Managing Allegations of Abuse Against a Person Who Works with Children](#) is based on the framework for dealing with allegations made against an adult who works with children, this is detailed in [Working Together 2018](#) and should be followed by all organisations providing services for children and young people. Compliance with these procedures will help to ensure that allegations are dealt with consistently and in a timely manner, that a thorough, proportionate, and fair process is followed and that processes are open to challenge.

Arrangements for managing concerns or allegations of this nature should be robust and effective in keeping children safe. All allegations should be taken seriously, approached with an open mind, and not be driven by preconceived opinions about whether a child has or has not been harmed.

[Guidance for Safer Working Practice](#) is available which will help individuals form judgements on what may constitute behaviour that is unsafe or abusive.

### Who to refer concerns to:

All reports of concern or allegation to the Staffordshire LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) that an adult working or volunteering with children:

- 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
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

**Step 1** - Follow KCSiE 2023 Guidance. Headteacher/ Chair of Governors/ Proprietor will contact the LADO (Staffordshire) on 0300 111 8007 or LADO (Stoke) 01782235100.

**Step 2** - Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support Team will ensure that the matter is passed promptly to the Staffordshire LADO Duty Officer and assist in initiating any additional safeguarding activities.

If your concern or allegation is urgent and outside of office hours telephone: 0345 6042 886 (Staffordshire Emergency Duty Team) 01782 234234 (Stoke Emergency Duty Team).

This single referral point will provide a responsive and inclusive service for all children's workforce sectors, focus the advice and support where it is needed most and enable the team to continue to work effectively with partners.

## Appendix 7 - Useful Safeguarding Contacts

- Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice Service (ESAS) on 01785 895836 email: [esas@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:esas@staffordshire.gov.uk)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 111 8007
- Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support (SCAS) 0300 111 8007
- Emergency Duty Services (EDS-out of hours safeguarding concerns) 0345 604 2886 or email [eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk)
- Staffordshire Police Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via 101, in an emergency please dial 999
- Stoke-on-Trent Children's Services: Chat and Advice Service (CHAD) 01782 235100  
Emergency Duty Team: 01782 234234 (outside office hours)
- Dave Atherton - School Guidance around Asylum Seekers (Central Thoroughfare Team) [david.atherton@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.atherton@staffordshire.gov.uk)
- Staffordshire Police coordinator: Mark Hardern Tel: 07539 3636299 Email: [mark.hardern@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:mark.hardern@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk)
- Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email [prevent@staffordshire.police.uk](mailto:prevent@staffordshire.police.uk)
- PHSE Coordinator Natalie McGrath [natalie@staffscvys.org.uk](mailto:natalie@staffscvys.org.uk)
- [Prevent and Channel | Prevent and Channel | Stoke-on-Trent](#)
- [Managing Allegations \(stoke.gov.uk\)](#)

### Local Advice

- Fostering Service (Staffordshire) 0800 169 2061 Email [fostering&adoptionbus@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fostering&adoptionbus@staffordshire.gov.uk) Out of Hours: Emergency Duty Service 01785 354030
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board [StaffsSCB](#)
- Entrust HR Services (subscription basis) 01785 278961
- Fostering Service (Stoke-on-Trent) 01782 234555 Email: [fostering@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@stoke.gov.uk)
- Stoke-on-Trent Family Information Service Hub (F.I.S.H) 01782 232200 Email [fish@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:fish@stoke.gov.uk)

### Useful Safeguarding Links

#### NSPCC

- [Harmful Sexual Behaviour \(HSB\) NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe Online - Online Safety/Sexting/Sending Nudes](#)

#### National Contacts

- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) [CEOP Safety Centre](#)
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline 0844 381 4772 [Safer Internet Helpline](#)
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) [Internet Watch Foundation](#)
- Safer Internet Centre [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)
- Childline 0800 1111 [Childline](#)
- Ofsted – General enquiries: 0300 123 1231, About Schools: 0300 123 4234, Concerns: 0300 123 4666, Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)
- HM Government (advice on protecting children from radicalisation for parents, teachers, and leaders) [www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)
- NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour project: 0844 892 0273

### Useful Websites

- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board [StaffsSCB](#)
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) [Ceop-Police](#) & [Know About CSE](#)
- NSPCC 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000 [NSPCC](#)
- Women's Aid 24 Hour Helpline: 0870 2700 123
- UNICEF Support Care Team 0300 330 5580 (Mon – Fri 8am-6pm). If you think a child is in immediate danger, please call 999 [UNICEF](#)