

Next Review Date: 01/09/2026  
Date of Last Review: 01/09/2025

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

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## 1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

A whole charity, child centred approach is fundamental to all aspects of everyday life at our school. At CHEXS we strive to create a culture which enables children to express their wishes and feelings and talk about anything that is of importance to them. We believe that every child deserves to receive an education within an environment where they feel safe to learn and develop. We want our children and young people, staff, parents and carers to have confidence and trust in our goals and know that collaborative working is fundamental to create and maintain a child-centred approach to safeguarding.

In practice this means we endorse the key principle that the welfare of a child is paramount, keeping them at the centre of all decision making in our partnership working with them, their families, and those supporting them.

In line with our duties set out in the Children Act (1989, 2004) and Working Together (2023) we are committed to providing support and help as soon as possible, underpinned by our values that children are best looked after within their families, with their parents playing a full part in their lives where possible. We are also committed to ensuring that we work with agencies, including the Local Authority, to access support and targeted interventions for families when we consider that a child is, or may be, at risk of harm.

We hope that parents and carers will support us to undertake our statutory duties to offer early help support and to liaise with agencies to protect children who have suffered or otherwise likely to suffer significant harm without doing so. The core objective of early help support is to prevent any child from being harmed or placed at risk of harm and therefore halt any escalation where possible.

This policy outlines the commitment to our legal duties to safeguard children, the responsibilities for all our staff and the specific roles and responsibilities for our key Designated Safeguarding Leads and Trustees.

## 2. Important Safeguarding Contacts

### School's In-House Contacts

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Liz Allum	<a href="mailto:liz@chexs.co.uk">liz@chexs.co.uk</a> 07494258155
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Pete Maiden	<a href="mailto:petem@chexs.co.uk">petem@chexs.co.uk</a> 07974262875
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Jenny Hammond	<a href="mailto:Jennyh@chexs.co.uk">Jennyh@chexs.co.uk</a> 07757 754029
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Kerry Davies	<a href="mailto:Kerryd@chexs.co.uk">Kerryd@chexs.co.uk</a> 07946 874632
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Nicola Roberts	<a href="mailto:Nicolar@chexs.co.uk">Nicolar@chexs.co.uk</a> 07494 972994
Prevent Lead	Liz Allum	<a href="mailto:liz@chexs.co.uk">liz@chexs.co.uk</a> 07494258155
Chair of Trustees	Tony Gorton	<a href="mailto:tony.gorton@gmail.com">tony.gorton@gmail.com</a> 07801 576063
Vice Chair of Trustee	Paul Seeby	Mobile: 07305 823621
Link Safeguarding Trustee	Julie Cottenden	<a href="mailto:juliecottenden@yahoo.com">juliecottenden@yahoo.com</a> 07983 522075

## Non School Contacts

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Duty LADO	<a href="mailto:LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk">LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/child-protection/allegations-against-staff/local-authority-designated-officer-lado-referrals">https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/child-protection/allegations-against-staff/local-authority-designated-officer-lado-referrals</a> <i>Strictly for professionals use only</i>
Hertfordshire County Council Children's Social Care	Customer Service Centre	Children's Services includes SOOHS (Out of Hours Service-Children's Services) – 0300 123 4043
Hertfordshire County Council's Prevent Programme Manager	Please speak to CHEXS Safeguarding DSL	Details not to be made publicly available
NSPCC Helpline	N/A	Call: <a href="tel:08088005000">0808 800 5000</a> Email <a href="mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk">help@NSPCC.org.uk</a> .
Police	N/A	Emergency 999, non-emergency 101
Prevent	Prevent referrals  Parent guidance  Advice line for members of the public	Prevent Referrals – <a href="https://www.herts.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/">https://www.herts.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/</a> <a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/prevent.aspx">https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/prevent.aspx</a> <a href="http://educateagainsthate.com">Parents' Booklet (educateagainsthate.com)</a> <a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/prevent.aspx">ACT Early   Prevent radicalisation</a> 0800 011 3764
Families First	Families First website, information for parents, carers and professionals  Professionals can access support from Families First Coordinators when supporting a family with an FFA or other support in the EH arena	<a href="http://familiesfirst.hertfordshire.gov.uk">Families First (hertfordshire.gov.uk)</a>

### 3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 4 definitions).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- [HYPERLINK](#)  
"[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6849a7b67cba25f610c7db3f/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_2023\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6849a7b67cba25f610c7db3f/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)" [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#) DfE guidance outlines what organisations and agencies must and should do to help, protect and promote the welfare of all children and young people under the age of 18 in England
- [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership | Hertfordshire County Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(HSCP\)](#) The three partners (Hertfordshire County Council, Police and Health) have a joint and equal duty to ensure multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are in place at a local level, and organisations and agencies are clear about how they will work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare of children
- [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils regarding these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there is evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to

focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

- [Resolution of Professional Differences including Escalations](#) - effective partnership working is key to keeping children and young people safe from harm. HSCP encourages constructive challenge as part of our culture of learning and partnership working. In May 2025, the HSCP published this revised policy for resolutions and escalations.
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners produced by the [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#), outlines the importance of sharing information about children, young people, and their families in order to safeguard children. It provides clarity on when and how information can be shared legally and professionally to achieve improved outcomes. It also includes the “Seven Golden Rules for Sharing Information”, which provide a framework to support information sharing where practitioners have reason to believe failure to share information may result in the child being at risk of harm. It is non-statutory and has been produced to support practitioners in the decisions they take to share information, which reduces the risk of harm to children and young people and promotes their well-being.

#### 4. Definitions: Safeguarding and Child Protection

All our staff at CHEXS are expected to be familiar with the wide range of policies and procedures we have to keep our children safe and promote their wellbeing at all times.

**Safeguarding as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), means:**

- *providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge*
- *protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online*
- *preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development*
- *ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care*
- *taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.*

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#) further extends this definition to include: *promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the child* *retaking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework* [Children's social care: national framework - GOV.UK](#).

**Child/ren:** The legal definition of a child in the UK includes everyone under the age of 18.

'**Early Help**' is a term used in Hertfordshire that refers to a wide range of interventions offered by various organisations and partner agencies, as well as services within the County Council and beyond. The primary early help service in Hertfordshire is known as "[Families First](#)" which is in place to help professionals and families find early help and information as soon as problems emerge to prevent issues from getting worse. Support and interventions under the Families First umbrella can help coordinate additional support to that which is available from a family's usual support network as well as more targeted and short pieces of interventions.

**Families First Assessments (FFA)** are used by practitioners who work with children, young people, parents, and carers where it is considered that the child/family would benefit from early help support. It is used to identify needs, and to organise the right support and services to address those needs at an early stage. The FFA process allows different agencies and services to share information and work together in a coordinated way.

For families with children under 18 (25 if they have a learning need or disability), Families First can help with issues such as parenting, mental and physical health problems, drug or alcohol dependency, domestic abuse, school-related concerns, debt problems, and risk of becoming homeless.

**The Continuum of Need guidance aims to ensure that support in Hertfordshire is offered at the earliest opportunity, with an approach that enables us to work effectively alongside families. The Continuum of Need is a threshold document that supports everyone working with Hertfordshire's children and families to identify the "Level of Need" and the service responses that can be expected. It sets out how we can work together, by placing the child and family at the centre, sharing information, and working with families to help them to find solutions early to prevent their difficulties from escalating. It is not intended to be a prescriptive guide and does not replace professional judgement.**

**Child in Need:** Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are under a general duty to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. A child in need is defined under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of services, or a child who is disabled. To fulfil this duty, practitioners undertake assessments of the needs of individual children, giving due regard to a child's age and understanding when determining what, if any, services to provide.

**Child Protection:** Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives or is found in their area is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make such enquiries as it considers necessary to decide whether to take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Such enquiries, supported by other organisations and agencies, as appropriate, should be initiated where there are concerns about all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation whether this is taking place in person or online, inside or outside of the child's home. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst an assessment or enquiries are carried out. Schools are required to cooperate with children's social care when carrying their inquiries and therefore we have a duty to share information when requested to do so.

**Significant Harm** is the threshold for a child protection response to support and or protect children. Harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 as the ill-treatment of a child or the impairment of their health or development. This can include harm caused by seeing someone else being mistreated, for example by witnessing domestic abuse. The phrase 'significant harm' was introduced by the Children Act 1989. The Act does not define 'significant'. The question of whether or not harm is 'significant' relates to its impact on a child's health or development.

**The Gateway is the 'front door' to Hertfordshire's social care. The Gateway Service receives contacts and queries via calls or emails.**

**Contact - A 'Contact' is where a member of the public or a professional makes contact with Children's Services about a child who may be a child in need of support or protection, and where there is a request for information or a service.**

**Referrer - The 'Referrer' is the member of the public or professional making contact with Children's Services.**

**Referral - For this procedure, a 'Referral' is a possible outcome of a Contact, where a social worker or manager considers a statutory response may be required. In some instances, it may be identified that a child may be better supported via other services such as Early Help or Universal Services (e.g. health, schools, family centres, etc.)**

The Gateway operates to the principle that every family (child/young person and their parent/carer) has the right:

- to be told when a professional is worried about the safety or wellbeing of their child *by that professional*
- to have their consent obtained when someone wishes to make a request for support on their behalf
- to be front and centre of the plan to keep their child safe and well.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is co-located, within the Gateway. It is a partnership comprising of colleagues from Children's Services, Health, Police, and Probation; advisory support is provided by Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and satellite partners. These agencies work together to improve the quality of the information sharing process when identifying the needs and risks of children and their families. They make decisions at the earliest opportunity and make recommendations about what services and resources the child and family may benefit from.

Although all contacts being assessed by MASH or early help services are important, it is less likely that they will meet the threshold for Child Protection (significant harm).

**Abuse** is all forms of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and 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. Section 9 provides the full definition.

**Exploitation** is a risk to children and young people that takes place outside of 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.

NB the terms abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

**Children Looked After:** A child is 'looked after' (in care) if they are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours. Children can be in care by agreement with parents or by order of a court. The placement providing the care can be a connected person to the child or a Local Authority approved foster carer.

**Kinship Care** refers to a type of care where a child who cannot be looked after by their birth parents is cared for by relatives or friends. The government in England has launched a Championing kinship care: the national kinship care strategy [Championing kinship care: the national kinship care strategy](#) to improve kinship carers' financial stability, education, training, and partnership with local authorities and other agencies.

#### **Legal Care Arrangements:**

- **Informal Kinship Care**
- **Special Guardianship Order (SGO)**
- **Child Arrangements Order (CAO)**
- **Kinship Foster Care**
- **Private Fostering**

## · Adoption by a Family Member or Friend

**Victim** is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

**Alleged perpetrator(s)** and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children and their parents and carers) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

## 5. Equality Statement, Children with Protected Characteristics

Some children are at greater risk of harm, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. At CHEXS we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that all children are provided with the same protection regardless of any additional needs, barriers or protected characteristics they may have. As stated in the Equality Act, 2010, we recognise the protected characteristics that may be applicable to our pupils:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

All staff and volunteers understand the importance of recognising that a child may benefit from Early Help intervention, and it is integral to our charity's approach to look and listen out particularly for children:

- 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 education, home, or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

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### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

We know who our pupils are with special educational needs, disabilities, or additional health needs and recognise that they may face additional barriers, that can include:

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- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood, and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration

- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- assumptions that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.
- reluctance to challenge carers (professionals may over-empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child)
- disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased
- a disabled child's understanding of abuse
- lack of choice/participation.

## **Children Looked After (CLA)**

Virtual School Heads have a responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of:

- children looked-after,
- children previously looked-after; and
- children with a social worker – defined as any child who has been assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and currently has a social worker; it also includes those who have been assessed as needing, or previously needing, a social worker within the past 6 years due to safeguarding or welfare reasons.

In line with Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements: virtual school head role extension - GOV.UK this has been extended to include:

- children who have previously had a social worker – the cohort of children with a social worker and those who have previously had a social worker who are aged from 0 to 18; and
- children in kinship care arrangements - this means any friend or family member, who is not a child's parent but raising them for a significant amount of the time, either as a temporary or permanent arrangement.
- Children who are in Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Children Missing from Education (CME)

The most common reason for a child to become looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We therefore ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place to support these children and keep them safe from further harm. This includes:

- Appointment of a CHEXS key worker
- Appropriate staff made aware of a child's looked after status
- Ensure that necessary staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding of the child's needs
- Ensure the child's record contains a clear understanding of their legal status and care arrangements, including the levels of authority delegated to their carer and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility
- Keep contact details of the child's social worker and carer(s)

## **Kinship Care, EHE and CME**

- CHEXS acknowledges the extended remit of the Virtual School Head (VSH) in Hertfordshire to include the educational outcomes of children in Kinship Care, Elective Home Education (EHE) and Children Missing Education (CME). We will work collaboratively with families and local services to ensure the wellbeing and educational progress of these children is supported where appropriate.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff and Leadership/ Management

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors at CHEXS and is consistent with national duties outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and local expectations expected within [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual](#). Our Child Protection (CP) policy and procedures also apply to all activities delivered by the charity.

CHEXS plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/ misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/ harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- CHEXS Behaviour Policy
- Planned programme of activities, which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues, when appropriate, such as:
  - Healthy and respectful relationships
  - Boundaries and consent
  - Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality
  - Body confidence and self-esteem
  - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
  - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.
  - Monitor forthcoming guidance updates, including those related to RSHE, gender-questioning children, and mandatory reporting requirements.
  - Review online filtering and monitoring systems annually using the DfE's "Plan Technology for Your School" self-assessment tool and the UK Safer Internet Centre's guidance on appropriate filtering and monitoring.
  - Be aware of the evolving role of the Virtual School Head (VSH) in supporting children in Kinship Care, Elective Home Education (EHE), and Children Missing Education (CME), especially in line with Hertfordshire practice.

### **Role and Responsibility of all staff, volunteers, supply staff and contractors**

All staff at CHEXS are required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), and sign to say that they have read and understood the content.

Translated versions of Part One Keeping Children Safe in Education can be found at [Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 Translations | LGFL](#). This is accessible for all staff, volunteers, parents and carers whose first language may not be English, should they wish to use this.

Staff who work directly with children are also expected to read Annex B of KCSiE (this sets out specific safeguarding issues that by the virtue of a child's circumstances suggest they could be at greater risk of abuse and neglect).

**All staff will be required to:**

- Read Part One and Annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children safe in education [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) and review this guidance at least annually.
  - Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the above guidance and understand their role.
  - Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
  - Provide a safe space for children and young people who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.

**All staff will be aware of:**

- CHEXS' safeguarding arrangements and systems are explained to staff as part of their induction and thereafter reviewed with staff at least annually. All new staff/ volunteers are given copies of CHEXS' CP policy and Part One KCSiE essentially these are the key guidance provided:
  - Child Protection Policy
  - Staff Behaviour Policy/ code of conduct
  - The role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies
  - The Behaviour Policy
  - Data protection policy
  - Mobile phone use
  - Positive touch policy

Staff are to read and sign declaration that they have read and reviewed the above.

- our expected safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- signs of vulnerabilities to look out for in children who may benefit from Early Help support, we explain to staff the Early Help process for children and their families and what their role is in this to support DSLs in ensuring children and their families receive support as soon as problems emerge
- the importance of Families First Assessments and how they can help identify emerging difficulties and therefore how sharing information, including with other practitioners, can support early identification and assessment
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals

- the process for recording and sharing information internally to DSLs and on children's safeguarding records
- the process of making referrals to the Local Authority Children's Social Care and/or Police where required and the statutory processes that may follow
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines) [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*
  - how to support and speak to children when they may share their worries or make disclosures of abuse, neglect or exploitation and contribute to creating a culture where children feel able to speak with the relevant safeguarding leads
  - The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
  - the importance of supporting families and providing a culture of support to encourage parents/carers to seek support and engage with our school and professionals when issues emerge or become a concern
  - children can be at risk of harm inside the home (familial harm) and outside of their home (extra familial harms) and that any form of harm can happen directly or online
  - the fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
  - what to look for to identify children who need help or protection in accordance with statutory provisions under the children act section 17 (child in need) and section 47 (significant harm).

## **Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

Our DSL team includes a member/s of our senior leadership team. We also have Deputy DSLs (DDSL) within our staffing group. Whilst one of the DSLs is referred to the 'lead' and will coordinate the DSL team, they are all trained at the same level to ensure that at all times one or more of them are available to carry out all of their designated functions in safeguarding.

- The DSL takes lead responsibility for CHEXS' child protection and wider safeguarding arrangements. This includes online safety.
  - Whilst all of our staff are part of our safeguarding culture, it is the role of our DSL to receive information, review and make decisions about any necessary further considerations or actions needed to respond to any safeguarding matters that arise.
- During term time, the DSL will be available during working hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- In the event that non-urgent matters arise out of working hours, our DSL can be contacted, if necessary.
- When the DSL is absent, please contact CHEXS Deputy DSL's as detailed above.
  - If the CHEXS DSL and deputies are not available or cannot be reached, contact must be made with Hertfordshire County Council Children's Social Care Out of Hours Service- Children's Services – 0300 123 4043

### **The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:**

- provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters

- take part in and/or lead early help support which may include a Families First Assessment and thereafter attend/chair Team Around the Child meetings
- take part in strategy discussions organised by the Local Authority's Children's Social Care and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so when required
- contribute to the assessment of children (when a child may have suffered harm or is at risk of harm)
- refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (Local Authority Children's Social Care, Channel Programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or Police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

have a good understanding of behaviours that may impact on a child's engagement and learning that may require consideration through safety/support planning, this includes the impact on themselves but also to other children

- have a good understanding of harmful behaviours that may require risk management, safety planning and/or support in the Charity, this includes those presented by children within the setting, their parents/carer or associated adults where necessary
- assist the CEO to review and respond to low-level concerns that may arise regarding staff
- share information and/or take part in statutory processes that involve reviewing and analysing of safeguarding practice and policies. This can include meetings held by Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership in response to significant safeguarding incidences, child death and/or where a safeguarding practice review is required to determine learning and practice analysis.
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership in response to significant safeguarding incidences, child death and/or where a safeguarding practice review is required to determine learning and practice analysis.

#### **The DSL will also:**

- Keep CHEXS CEO informed of any issues
  - liaise with universal, targeted and statutory agencies, Local Authority workers (Children's Services and other key practitioners) when there are safeguarding concerns as appropriate (includes early help and child protection)
  - share information about incidences of sexual violence and sexual harassment with statutory colleagues such as Police and Children's Social Care colleagues in order to prepare and implement the school's policies
  - be confident about what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment
  - be aware that children are entitled to have an 'Appropriate Adult' to support and help them in Police investigations or if there is threshold met for them to be searched.
- The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputy(s) are set out in their job description. See KCSiE, Annex C
- All staff and leadership are required to support HSCP principals to safeguarding children by exercising their professional curiosity at all times. April 2025 Professional Curiosity

## Role and Responsibilities of CHEXS Trustees

CHEXS Trustees have a strategic role within our leadership and management team and must ensure that all staff comply with legislation and local guidance at all times.

### The Trustees will:

- Facilitate a whole charity approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the CEO to account for its implementation
  - evaluate and approve recommendations/action plans identified through quality assurance activity that the DSL undertakes to review safeguarding practice through audits and annual/termly governing reports to ensure that they have regular oversight and hold the CEO accountable for the practice improvement
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a link Trustee to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing body. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- CHEXS Trustee for Safeguarding will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety, and review compliance of this task at least annually and receive a certificate they have completed this.
- Policy will be ratified annually

### The Trustees will make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the charity approach to safeguarding and related policies
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety.
- CHEXS has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Section 11 of this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects those children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/ activities are children on CHEXS roll):
  - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/ procedures in place, and inspect them if needed

- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with CHEXS about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using CHEXS premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

See

- [Keeping Children safe during community activities, after-school club and tuition: Non statutory guidance for providers running out of school settings](#)
- [Safeguarding for providers of extra-curricular clubs, youth organisations and study groups - GOV.UK](#)

- The Chair of Trustees will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the CEO, where appropriate (see Section 11 managing concerns and allegations).

## **Role and Responsibilities of the CEO**

**The CEO is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:**

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Parents/ carers are able to access this policy when their child joins CHEXS via CHEXS website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

## 7. Working with Families

Alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education *CHEXS* adopts the fundamental principal of ***working in a child-centred approach within a whole family focus*** as promoted in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

This principle is underpinned by the findings and recommendations within the Government's 2023 publication Stable Homes, Built on Love in response to the recommendations of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care. The strategy sets out how children's social care is to be committed to supporting every child to grow up in a safe, stable and loving home. For most children this means growing up within their family. The strategy also emphasises the importance of having stronger expectations of support through early help and family networks.

At *CHEXS* our principles align to the above. We endeavour to work in partnership and collaboration with children and their families so that they are supported from an early stage by being a part of and leading the conversations about change and aims for their children. We are keen to support families in a strength and solution-based approach, encouraging motivation and confidence to improve their own agency to make safe and positive decisions for themselves and their children.

### Family Help

Keeping children safe, helping families thrive - GOV.UK underpins the Children and Wellbeing bill which is a key step towards delivering the government's 'Opportunity Mission' to break the link between young people's background and their future success. It will better put in place support to drive high and rising standards throughout our education and care systems so that every child can achieve and thrive. It outlines the government's commitment to keeping families together and children safe and support children to live in family settings where children cannot remain at home, including through kinship or foster care, rather than residential care. In March 2025 the DfE published The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide this sets out how every child is to be kept safe and have the opportunity to succeed, children's social care is to be reformed and committed to supporting every child to grow up in a safe, stable and

loving home, for most children this means growing up within their family and support through early help and family networks.

Family Help will take place at the heart of communities, bringing together local services under a combined, multi-disciplinary practice approach and service offer. The key principles that will inform the delivery of services will include:

- wrapping support around the whole-family at the earliest opportunity – using the expertise of multi-disciplinary practitioners;
- ensuring consistency of relationships between children, families, and their lead practitioner;
- adopting one plan that will stay with families but adapt as needs change.

At *CHEXS* we endorse these principles and will continue to work in partnership and collaboration with children and their families so that they are supported from an early stage by being a part of and leading the conversations about change and aims for their children. We are keen to support families in a strength and solution-based approach, encouraging motivation and confidence to improve their own agency to make safe and positive decisions for themselves and their children.

Our principles include, but are not limited to:

**Promoting effective partnership working with parents and carers** e.g. build strong, positive, trusting, and co-operative relationships by:

- approaching families and their wider family networks and communities with empathy, respect, compassion, and creativity
- avoiding reinforcing family shame, suffering, and blame
- making efforts to understand the impact of the parental trauma influencing the dynamics and experiences of the family
- using strength-based approaches, working with parents and carers to identify what is working well and how their strengths could support them to effect positive change
- ensuring we work sensitively with parents, carers, and children, to identify and understand the impact of adversity and trauma in their lives; seeking to understand how adversity and trauma might manifest and affect children and parent's engagement and use their expertise to adapt their response with care and compassion
- adapting our responses to meet the diverse needs of parents and carers, including fathers and male carers, and the specific challenges being faced, including parents and carers of disabled children, and where harm is outside the home
- ensuring we understand the family's background, ethnicity, religion, financial situation, ability, education, sex, ages and sexual orientation, and potential barriers these create in seeking and accessing help and support
- being alert and recognising where parents or carers may not be acting in the best interest of the child or where children may be experiencing abuse, neglect, and exploitation as a result of actions by parents, carers, or other individuals in their lives. Practitioners use their skills and expertise to adapt their response to secure engagement
- being mindful of negative stereotypes when making decisions which might lead to false assumptions.

#### **Communicating effectively verbally and non-verbally by:**

- communicating with respect, being clear, curious and inclusive; adapting to parent's and carer's needs
- providing materials to children, parents, carers, and families which are jargon free, developmentally appropriate and in a format that is easily understood
- ensuring any materials, such as minutes or reports, capture the school's contribution but also those from the children, parents and carers which must include their views and wishes
- supporting families to access support to translate information where English is not their first language. Our school will access interpreters where needed including British Sign Language.

#### **Empowering our parents and carers to participate in decision-making to help, support and protect children by:**

- creating a safe culture which is an open and accepting forum free from discriminatory or prejudicial judgements
- ensuring the open culture is one which still provides reflection and challenge where the information has the potential to be a risk or influencing factor which may impact on a child's safety and wellbeing
- asking families for their perspective on a situation or issue that arises, ensuring we consider their point of view and factor this in when thinking about support
- promote families' rights to support through use of advocates, family members or a supporter
- ensuring parents and carers are fully aware of who will attend meetings and discussions, if the child will be invited to participate, and the format of the meeting or discussion

- giving parents and carers adequate preparation at every stage, relevant information, a safe and appropriate environment for participation, and suitable access arrangements
- signposting parents and carers to sources of help and support available locally or through the Local Authority
- provide opportunities for feedback and review to ensure acknowledgement of positive progress but also reviewing and discussion of any new or increasing issues to readapt a family's plans
- being transparent about our concerns and why we may need to request support from an outside agency; and the potential actions should our concerns increase for the children
- helping parents and carers to understand what the issues are and how these impact on the child, what decisions could be made, what changes need to be made, why and how, timescales and possible outcomes
- providing information about different types of support, what it involves and expects from parents and carers so they can make an informed choice and decision about which support pathways will be more helpful and effective for them.

## 8. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

Trusted relationships are at the heart of working with children and their families at CHEXS. We strive to uphold good practice and work in partnership with children and families, communicating effectively and listening well so that we have sufficient information to understand and be able to meet their needs.

An open culture is imperative when deciding whether to share information and it is important to get the lawful basis right. The legal framework can appear complex, and a lack of clarity can lead practitioners to assume, incorrectly, that no information can be shared because consent has not been provided. CHEXS understands the lawful basis in which our DSLs can share information with other people, agencies and organisations about the children and families we are supporting.

In line with our principles of working with families outlined above, we strive to be transparent, open and clear when we need to discuss any information or concerns that worry us about a child's wellbeing. If we feel that we need to share information, we will explain how information will be shared or used so that families can make an informed choice about whether to consent.

If we feel that we need to share information with services due to concerns about a child's safety or welfare to provide the family with specific support, we will be upfront, transparent and honest about our concerns and the ways in which such services could help the family. We will endeavour to support and encourage the family to consent and engage with such support. We believe that this collaborative approach will support children to have the confidence to speak up and share their views as well as encouraging parents and carers of children at our school to have a willingness to engage with services that provide support.

If we have a concern about a child's safety and have decided to share information to protect them from a risk of harm, we will endeavour to gain cooperation and understanding from parents and carers. We will strive where possible to always gain consent and where we believe our concerns have increased and warrant the sharing of information to statutory services such as Police and Children's Social Care, we will have made efforts to discuss, explore and provide support to address these with families in a collaborative way beforehand; concerns should not be a surprise to families unless in situations where a one off or unprecedented incident occurs.

However, for a small number of children, seeking parental consent is not always possible and may place a child or others at risk of harm, for example:

- the child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent
- there would be an impact on a criminal investigation
- a delay in making the referral would impact on the immediate safety of the child.

In situations where our professional or legal duty is exercised to share certain information in the absence of consent, we will inform them as soon as possible if it is safe and appropriate to do so. We will be clear about what we have shared, with whom, the reasons why and how the information will be used.

In any situation where a child or their parent/carer object to consent or particular information sharing and we decide that it is proportionate to do so, a clear rationale, outlining our decisions and the reasons why, will be recorded on the child's file.

In situations where there are allegations of child-on-child abuse, we will notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. If a child or group of children have suffered significant harm or are considered at risk of harm either directly or online we will have a duty to consider making a referral to Children's Social Care and the Police if a crime has been committed. The process for this can be found in Section 9 and our principles for information sharing and consent will apply, unless we have a legal obligation to report the incident.

In addition to sharing information, our DSLs will endeavour to arrange a meeting with the parents and carers of all children to share information about the incident, plan safety strategies and/or risk management plans. Our DSLs will endeavour to keep families up to date and provide reassurance on any measures being taken, whilst respecting the privacy of each individual child involved.

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 [Data protection: The UK's data protection legislation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/data-protection-the-uk-s-data-protection-legislation) does not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. CHEXS recognises that timely information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding. Whilst we promote collaboration and partnership with our families, fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children when required.

The following principles apply to CHEXS confidentiality agreement:

- timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- if staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- if a victim asks CHEXS not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
- even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there is another legal basis under the Data Protection Act that applies
- the DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children

The DSL should consider the following points:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the child at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care where the child resides
- where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the Police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the Police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal

justice system

- do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- have regard for the Government's publication Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information with all relevant parties.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they can seek advice from our CEO, DSL or any person in a position of senior leadership or wider DSL team.

## 9. Recognise and Respond to Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (what all staff must know and do if they have concerns)

### Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All our staff are aware of what abuse, neglect and exploitation is and have an understanding of the different types of indicators as outlined in Appendix 3 which could suggest a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm.

We encourage our staff to be professionally curious about what to look out for as this is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection at the earliest opportunity.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, including emerging digital risks such as **misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories (including fake news)**. These can impact children's emotional wellbeing and cognitive development.

Our staff are aware that children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve:

- hitting
- shaking
- throwing
- poisoning
- burning or scalding
- drowning
- suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (Fabricated Induced Illness FII).

### Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- a child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- causing a child to feel frightened or in danger
- exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. It can be difficult to recognise emotional abuse and children may not always realise they are experiencing it. However, there may be indicators in the way a child behaves and reacts to certain situations.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- **Physical contact:** including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing
- **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
- **Online abuse:** sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

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

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance 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)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

HSCP Neglect Tool: [Neglect Tool](#)

7 minute briefing Parental Neglect of Medical Needs [may-2025-parental-neglect-of-medical-needs.pptx](#)

## Exploitation

Exploitation in relation to children refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification, or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel, and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression or ill-treatment.

Our staff are aware that there are several types of child exploitation, including, but not limited to:

- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** this is a type of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power, or status. It can involve contact and non-contact activities and can occur without the child's immediate recognition; this is due to their grooming by the abuser.
- **Child Labor Exploitation:** this involves the use of children in work that is harmful to their physical and mental development. It deprives them of their childhood, potential, and dignity.
- **Child Trafficking:** children are recruited, moved, or transported and then exploited, forced to work, or sold. They are often used for forced labour, sexual exploitation, or illegal activities.
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** this is where children are involved in activities of a criminal nature, often in gangs. They may be forced or manipulated into committing crimes, such as selling drugs or stealing.

## Safeguarding Issues and Specific Forms of Abuse

All our staff understand that children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. They are aware that 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), drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, radicalisation, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) and can put children in danger.

Staff are aware that Extra Familial Harms can present online, in a child's environment/neighbourhood, school and any place/space that children occupy or access such as:

- Child abduction
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- County Lines
- Children and the Court system
- Children absent from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse

- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Preventing radicalization
- The Prevent Duty
- Channel
- Sexual violence and Sexual harassment between children in schools
- Serious Violence
- FGM and the mandatory reporting duty for teachers
- Forced marriage
- Misinformation, Disinformation and Conspiracy Theories

Detailed information about what staff understand about these forms of abuse and safeguarding issues is outlined in Appendix 4.

### **Child-on-Child Abuse**

At CHEXS we know that children can cause harm to other children. As a school we have a zero acceptance of child-on-child abuse and create a culture of keeping an open mind and attitude that “it could happen here”. Our staff are aware that even if no reports are being made in our school, it does not mean it is not happening.

Our staff understand that it is important to challenge inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature, and we have clear expectations that incidents are not downplayed or suggested to be jovial or part of growing up as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and unsafe environments for children and young people.

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 children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes 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 nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- 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
- 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).

## **Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. They may also experience it within their own intimate relationships.

Our staff understand that these experiences can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members.

Our staff are aware that domestic abuse can include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse and that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

### Types of Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse can be, but is not limited to the following, signs to look out for and be professionally curious about:

- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Economic abuse
- Technology-facilitated abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse
- Stalking
- Violence against woman and girls (VAWG) includes but not limited to harassment, stalking, rape, sexual assault, murder, honour-based abuse, coercive control and while

men and boys also suffer from many of these forms of abuse, they disproportionately affect women. Crime and Policing Bill: reducing violence against women and girls (VAWG) factsheet - GOV.UK

Child-to-parent-abuse (CPA) or adolescent-to-parent abuse (APA) is any behaviour used by a child or young person to control, dominate or coerce parents. It can include emotional, verbal, physical or financial abuse and includes “coercive control,” or in other words, the parent or other adult is compelled to change their own behaviours for fear of further abuse.

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

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) explains that FGM includes ‘all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs.’

FGM is illegal in the UK and is considered as a form of child abuse that has significantly harmful and long-lasting consequences. It can also be referred to as ‘female genital cutting’, ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.

Our staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty and the requirement to immediately contact the Police if they are

- informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her
- observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 (and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth).

The duty for teachers above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. In these circumstances, teachers know they must report to the DSL who will follow local safeguarding procedures.

Our members of staff who are not teachers, are aware that if they suspect a child is at risk or that FGM has been carried out, they should report this to the DSL immediately.

## **Prevent and concerns about extremism**

This section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 14 March 2024.

CHEXS is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of our functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty is one of our wider safeguarding obligations. Our DSLs and senior leaders are aware of the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education.

Our staff are aware that children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is a part of our school's 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.

The Prevent Duty is concerned with all forms of terrorism and extremism. It also includes some forms of nonviolent extremism. For example:

- Right Wing extremism
- Religious extremism
- Environmental and Animal Rights extremism
- School Massacre ideology
- Involuntary Celibate (Incel) ideology

**Radicalisation** is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

**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.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to Children's Services website [Professionals – report a concern about a child or young person | Hertfordshire County Council](#). or Channel [Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel \(PMAP\) guidance - GOV.UK](#), the Government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which all staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism for a pupil. In non-emergency situations DSLs can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk) . In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

### **Concerns about mental health**

Mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Poor or deteriorating mental health can also be a safeguarding concern in its own right. Our staff know to be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing mental health or be at risk of developing one.

If a staff member has a concern about a child's mental health, no matter the level of the child's emotional difficulties, they must speak to the school's DSL who will evaluate if the child is at risk of immediate harm, and if so, will escalate to the appropriate level of support which includes speaking to the school lead for Mental Health.

If a child is experiencing low moods, low self-esteem and general anxiety, our school mental health lead will be able to provide some advice about some self-accessed support through relevant approved wellbeing websites and apps. If however, the child is presenting with a concerning level of low mood and anxiety for a period of time then our mental health lead in partnership with the DSL will discuss with the child and their parents/carer to explore options of support.

If someone is experiencing suicidal thoughts but they do not need physical input from A&E then consideration will be given to accessing support from the SPA/Crisis team. If a referral for targeted mental health support is required, then a referral through SPA will be made.

If, however, a child/young person is at immediate risk the school will recommend they need to be sent to A&E or dial 999.

More information can be found in the Mental health and behaviour in schools' guidance, colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England<sup>149</sup> has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience among children. See Better Health Every Mind Matters for links to all materials and lesson plans. [youth-suicide-prevention-7-minute-briefing-may-2023.pptx](#)

### **What all staff need to do to respond if abuse, neglect and exploitation is suspected or been disclosed.**

At CHEXS we adopt a whole school approach and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff and volunteers, and governors must comply with our safeguarding procedures as set out below:

### **Concerns about child-on-child abuse**

In most circumstances, incidences of children/young people hurting other children/young people will be dealt with under our charity's behaviour policy. Our child protection policy will apply to all incidents that raise safeguarding concerns where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- could put pupils in the school at risk
- is violent
- involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol

- involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

If a child makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- staff must record the allegation and report to the DSL, staff should not investigate the matter
- the DSL will assess and consider the relevant next steps which may include, speaking with the child and parents, accessing relevant consultation lines provided to schools by the Local Authority, making a request for support to Children's Services as well as the Police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), if appropriate
- the DSL will consider whether a risk assessment or a safety and support plan would be beneficial for any children involved, including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected, with a named person they can talk to if needed. This should include consideration of all aspects and areas of the school environment and beyond, for example off-site activities and school transport
- the DSL will speak to the child and their parent/s or carers to share the concerns, gain their views and consent to liaise with other agencies if there are any identified risks and unmet needs
- if the incident is a criminal offence school have a duty to report this and thereafter work closely with the Police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any measures to manage risk. For incidences which involve significant harm and/or a potential criminal offence, the DSL will endeavour to gain consent but may override this should not gaining consent increase the risk to a child
- Our DSLs are committed to ensuring that where concerns are raised about child-on-child abuse, incidences are taken seriously and dealt with fairly. DSLs will consider all information available to them and ensure that any action or decision is proportionate for all children involved, and that such decisions do not disproportionately impact on their access to education, although at times some restrictions or adaptations may be required to manage identified risk.

### **Creating a culture where children feel safe in CHEXS and minimising the risk of all forms of abuse.**

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of any form of abuse, neglect and exploitation irrespective of from whom and where this comes from, including child-on-child abuse. Creating a supportive environment where children can feel confident in reporting incidents is key to our safeguarding culture in CHEXS.

We expect all staff to:

- challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders, for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
- reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems in the school or elsewhere that could be addressed by us updating policies,

processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with our safeguarding partners

- support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, and alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- consider intra-familial harms (adults close to the child and family) and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.

Our staff are trained to understand:

- how to recognise the signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an open mind and attitude of “it could happen here”
- if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told; and always speak to the DSL should they be unclear
- children may not always make a direct disclosure and therefore they must be aware that:
- children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to; it may be that their difficulties emerge from behaviour when they do not have the language to express themselves
- a friend of the child may share information to a staff member or make comments; professionally curiosity is key, do not fear exploring the information and asking open ended questions
- staff overhear a conversation between children
- a child’s behaviour may change suddenly with no clear reason or precipitating event that might offer some explanation
- some children can face additional barriers to telling someone, for example they have a disability, special educational need, age gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation etc.
- one child’s concerning/abusive behaviour towards another could be an indicator of that child having been harmed themselves.

### **If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff or volunteer**

All staff are aware they should always be prepared as children can disclose spontaneously to anyone anywhere.

CHEXS is situated within the County of Hertfordshire which has a rich and diverse population. We cannot, and do not, assume that all children and their families have the ability, understanding, language and resilience to convey any difficulties they may experience. It is key to our school ethos to recognise the needs of children and their families and to recognise and provide support where English may not be their first language and/or the children or family members have special educational needs; and without doing so may impede their ability to represent their voice, wishes and feelings.

All staff know that we place the voice of children at the centre of everything we do and endeavour to place their best interests at heart. We ensure we know who our children are, staff are encouraged to be curious by speaking and listening to children whilst respecting any protected characteristics. We hope our children have confidence and trust in our staff, believing they will be taken seriously and be supported with their issues or concerns sensitively.

Staff also know that children may not always feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, neglected or exploited and do not always recognise their experiences as harmful.

We listen to children by:

- showing patience regardless of a child's age as we know they can find it hard to find the words to express themselves
- encouraging children to tell their story in their own words
- avoiding the use of leading questions or suggesting what may have happened, instead we maintain genuine curiosity, and only ask open-ended questions / prompts.

We reassure children by:

- making sure a child does not feel they are in trouble and that they have done the right thing in speaking to staff
- we let a child know it is not their fault as children are often made to feel blame by those harming them
- never promising confidentiality and being transparent about our obligations to share information if we are concerned that they are at risk of harm
- helping children to understand how we plan to support them and their family and let them know what action we will need to take next to support them.

### **Recording concerns**

Our staff know that reporting concerns is a procedural requirement when safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Our staff are clear that they must:

- record all conversations relating to any level of concerns on our recording systems; ensuring that the record is as detailed as possible, is factual, does not contain assumptions or personal judgement and captures the child's account in their own words
- inform the DSL about their concern as soon as possible; where the concern involves a disclosure or concern that the child is at risk of harm they must inform the DSL immediately.

Our staff are aware that such information is confidential and should be shared with the DSL only who may hold additional information about the child and their family and therefore can form a view on its significance and whether any action is required. Staff will not share information amongst themselves and will not share the information outside of the formal reporting process unless asked to by the DSL. This ensures that information is shared without delay enabling the DSL to carry out any necessary functions of their role whilst upholding confidentiality for the child and their family.

### **What staff and volunteers? should do if they have concerns about a child**

CHEXS is committed to ensuring that all children feel safe and comfortable to share and report any concerns and/or allegations about their personal experiences at home, in the community, online or regarding a member of staff or other children in the school. As outlined above, all our staff are clear on the importance of listening to and supporting children when making disclosures, and the need to reassure them.

Our staff are aware that children can share information with anyone in our charity but there are clear reporting processes when such information sharing raises concern about their welfare. Children may talk about worries and anxieties around friendships and school life which they need

to support with but on other occasions they may share information about their family life which indicates that the children and their family may be in need of help and/or fear or experiences which cause staff to be concerned about whether they have been harmed or are at risk of being harmed. Where such situation arises, our staff are clear on the reporting processes.

Any member of staff, including, contract workers, volunteers, trustees and visitors at CHEXS who has any concerns about a child's welfare should:

- maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and always act in the best interests of the child. Never promise a child confidentiality
- reassure the child they have done nothing wrong and if appropriate explain to them how they will be supported and who you will need to share information with
- record what the child or others have disclosed using their language - or describe what you have seen or suspect and your rationale for this. Also ensure you make a note of any injuries observed or described by the child (if it is the latter two)
- consider if the child needs medical attention and if so prioritise ensuring they receive this
- you must never delay reporting your concerns about the welfare of a child and always act immediately by reporting/speaking to the school's DSL/deputies
- record what the child or other has disclosed in their language or describe what you have seen or suspect and your rationale for this (if it is the latter two)

The DSL or deputy will:

- use Hertfordshire threshold guidance to initially assess the concerns raised and consider the impact on the child's welfare, at the same time their safety. They will also review the child's record in order to establish if there has been any previous concerns (records help to establish relevant history and risk factors for example even if a concern appears low level on the surface, a series of incidents can highlight patterns of ongoing abuse and neglect.) The DSL will use the Continuum of Need to support their analysis and rationale for any decision
- DSL or deputy will speak to the child to verify their wishes and feelings, contact the child's parents or carers to either inform them of the concerns and also to gauge their view (it will be at the discretion of the DSL team to carefully consider if this action may place a child at further risk, e.g. if the child has disclosed abuse and neglect caused in the family home)
- if the child has not suffered significant harm as defined by the Children Act, DSL may also decide to seek advice through the range of Hertfordshire departmental non child protection advice lines. The purpose of these are to support DSLs to consider the best options to engage children and their families with an offer of early help support, preventing escalation where possible but also request for support via Children's Services where necessary. Examples of this are managing any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes and/or undertaking a Families First Assessment
- if it is immediately apparent that a child has suffered significant harm or is at risk of harm e.g. suffered abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, CHEXS DSL will make a referral to Children's Social Care to request support at the earliest opportunity; consent will be gained where appropriate. If there has been a crime committed within the circumstances of the abuse, they will also report this to the Police.

### **What will the Local Authority Children's Social Care do?**

Within one working day of a referral being made, a social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the school's DSL and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required

- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
  - the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process
  - there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process
  - further specialist assessments are required to help the Local Authority to decide what further action to take
  - the DSL or deputies should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.
- Anyone working/volunteering with children can make a referral, if in an emergency staff are unable to locate or do not have time to inform DSL of a serious concern, the following process must be followed without delay.

### **Making a referral to Children's Services and/or requesting support**

Professional referrals are made using the online referral form located on Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website. (consent is needed from parents and carers, unless to do so may place a child at risk).

If someone is in danger or a crime has also been committed call the Police on 999.

Out of hours (17:30-08:00 and weekends) call 0300 123 4043.

Members of the public (non-school staff), parents, carers, children and young people can call Children's Services at any time of the day or night on 0300 123 4043.

This link provides leaflet for parents and carers HSCP Family Leaflet [HSCP Family Leaflet](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) (hertfordshire.gov.uk)

### **What children and young People need to know and do to report safeguarding concerns (abuse neglect and exploitation)**

At CHEXS we cultivate a culture of openness and transparency and want to make it clear to all our pupils/students that we are available at any time to listen to you and will always take your concerns seriously, however small you may consider them to be.

Our pledge is:

- we will ensure we provide you with the space away from public areas for you to talk
- we will listen without judgement and endeavour to respect your wishes and feelings
- we want you to feel safe and we will be honest about our duty to prioritise your wellbeing and longer-term safety, this means, depending on the circumstances, we cannot offer you total confidentiality. We understand that this may create uncertainty, but we are confident that often when matters are dealt with as they emerge the longer-term prospects can be much improved for you and your family
- we will respect your place but if we consider that you have suffered significant harm or are at risk of harm, we will need to share this information so that you and your family can be offered the right support. We will be clear on what information needs to be shared, with whom and how it might be used
- when the concerns suggest you may benefit from early help support this may include considering support to your parents and carers with matters that will improve your situation
- we will provide a named mentor for you so that you can have the confidence and trust to know that you have someone to go to at school if you are feeling vulnerable and experiencing difficulties

- your education and welfare is important to us and we want to reassure you that your experience at school remains positive, and you feel safe.

### **What you can do to report concerns:**

There will be posters displayed in Schools at a child friendly level with CHEXS staff names clearly displayed.

- you can speak to any member of staff of your choice. Those staff will listen and support you but we have a team of DSLs in our school who have a specific role to support children and therefore it is likely that the staff members will talk to them or arrange for you to.

If you are being abused, neglected or exploited you can call Children's Services at any time of the day or night on **0300 123 4043**.

If you are in immediate danger and/or think a crime has/is being committed, you can call the Police on **999**.

You can contact the NSPCC Helpline by calling **0808 800 5000** or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **Risk Management Plan (RAMP) and Safety and Support Plan (S&SP)**

RAMP - When there has been a report of sexual violence, or and harassment, the DSL (or a deputy) will make an immediate Risk and Needs Assessment for both the alleged victim and the perpetrator. The RAMP is to enable the DSL to use their critical thinking and consider what the needs of any child/ren are, analyse what are the risks and what measures can be put in place to protect children and keep them safe from further harm. Risk assessments will be recorded (paper or electronic) and kept under review.

The risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of other expert specialist assessments, but the DSL will seek and share information from other agencies where required to inform the school's understanding from a multi-agency perspective so that a holistic approach in supporting and protecting children can be strengthened.

We are aware that children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will find the experience stressful and distressing, this can also impact on the family and can cause the child adverse effect on their educational attainment and can be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college or other activities CHEXS supports with. The RAMP will take this into account and plan accordingly on the gravity of a situation on treat incidents on a case-by-case situation.

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part Five Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment provide statutory duty for schools and colleges.

The RAMP is the responsibility of school and leadership and management team, and it is critical that parents and carers place confidence and trust in our school by working with us and supporting the plan. Any school who have a child/child with a RAMP or SP in place, will need to share appropriate information with CHEXS so that appropriate Risk Assessments can be put in place for the specific activity.

All schools and colleges are at liberty to adopt any form of risk management and safety planning protocols, at CHEXS we use the following types of risk management to not only support children presenting with Harmful Sexual Behaviour but more commonly we experience a range of specific safeguarding issues that vulnerable children and young people are faced with, examples of these cited in Part one and Annex B KCSiE.

## 10. Online Safety and Filtering

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. CHEXS Trustee Board ensures that our DSL takes lead responsibility for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes we have in place, alongside their safeguarding and child protection duties. To address this, our charity aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and Trustees.
- Protect and educate the CHEXS community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the CHEXS community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following 4 categories of risk as identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023:

**Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, misinformation, disinformation, including fake news, and conspiracy theories., racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism

**Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as pressure from another child(ren), 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, such as 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.

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will educate pupils about online safety as part of our activities. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they’re a witness rather than a victim

We will also:

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities
- All staff members will receive refresher training as required at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/ carers about online safety via our website.

- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, See Appendix 5 Mobile phone policy
  - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to the settings for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present and in areas designated by schools
  - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/ carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure regular review of our filtering and monitoring practices, including use of relevant NCSC cyber security standards and other tools to review filtering and monitoring

## 11. Working with Parents and Carers

At CHEXS where appropriate, we will discuss concerns about a child with their parents or carers. We know parents and carers know their child best and we will always value that often, when concerns emerge, these can easily be resolved with the support of school and parents/ carers working together. To retain confidentiality within the school community other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

Although we will always want to be open and transparent with our parents and carers, there may be circumstances where the safety of a child overrides their liberty and rights for this to happen immediately as consent may not be appropriate/ required. For a small number of children, seeking parental consent would not be appropriate if:

- The child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent
- There would be an impact on a criminal investigation
- A delay in making the referral would impact on the immediate safety of the child.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the Local Authority Children's Social Care team to seek advice when it would be the right time to share information, so that we do not interrupt planned inquiries by Children's Services or the Police.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about other children involved, and when. We will work with the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with other agencies if there is third party involvement (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what is being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what is being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) for any decision(s).
- Kinship Care, EHE and CME: We will work collaboratively with families and local services to ensure the wellbeing and educational progress of these children is supported where appropriate.

## 12. Managing Allegations About Staff, CHEXS' Safeguarding Policies & Practice

### Concerns that DO meet the harm threshold and require a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

CHEXS are required to comply with the procedures set out in Hertfordshire Safeguarding Partnership procedures manual <https://hertfordshirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/managing-allegations-against-adults-who-work-with-children-and-young-people> when there are concerns or allegations about staff.

The procedures apply whenever there are suspicions or allegations that a person who works with children in a paid or unpaid capacity (including but not limited to permanent, temporary or agency staff member, contract worker, consultant, volunteer) has in any activity connected with their role:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child; (Harm Threshold)
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against / related to a child; (Criminal Threshold)
- Behaved toward a child in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm; (Suitability Threshold) \*
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (Transferable Risk Threshold)\*

Or

- It is discovered that an individual known to have been involved previously in child abuse, is or has been working with children.

\* These categories can include behaviour that may have happened outside of an organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children.

All staff and volunteers at CHEXS know that if they have concerns about a colleague/ member of staff, (including a volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, they should report it urgently as below.

Allegation against member of staff (including volunteers and contractors – report to CEO  
Allegation against CEO – report to Head of Trustees

Upon receipt of the information, the CEO/Chair of Trustees will review whether the allegation/concern meets the LADO threshold giving consideration to our staff code of conduct, managing allegations policy and [Managing Allegations Against Adults who work with...](#) . If necessary, they will complete a LADO referral within one working day.

If after reviewing the guidance and procedures, the CEO/Chair of Trustees considers that the matter does not meet the LADO threshold they may consider that it can be dealt with in line with the charity's complaints policy.

If you believe your concerns are not being taken seriously – report directly to LADO service via [Lado.referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lado.referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

### Concerns that DO NOT meet the harm threshold - Low-Level Concerns (LLC)

As outlined in [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) the term 'low-level' concern is any concern, no matter how small, 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 LADO threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a LADO referral.

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils.

At CHEXS we have clear codes of conduct and processes in place to deal with any concerns or allegations which do not meet the LADO threshold. Such concerns may arise from suspicion, complaint, safeguarding concerns or allegation from another member of staff, disclosure made by a child, parent or another outside of the school or pre-employment vetting checks.

Please see the CHEXS Low Level Concerns Policy Appendix 6

## **Other complaints**

If any of our stakeholders are not satisfied with any aspects of how we manage and operate within our policy and procedures and also how we exercise our duty of care for children, please follow our CHEXS Complaints Procedures that you can find on our website at: [www.chexs.co.uk](http://www.chexs.co.uk)

After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers

CHEXS has a legal duty of care to ensure we maintain a safe environment for children. If the It is the schools responsibility if they receive an allegation or concern relating to an incident that has happened when an outside individual or organisation are using our school premises, CHEXS will ensure that we follow our school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, which includes reporting allegations to the LADO, Children's Social Care and Police if a crime has been committed.

It is the role of the school's governing body to ensure any organisation that hires the school premises is compliant with the guidance set out in After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) In particular the school have embedded within our lease agreement with external organisations the standards and expectations for them to provide evidence and assurance of their safeguarding and child protection procedures.

## **Whistleblowing**

At CHEXS we strive to create a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share any concerns they have about poor or unsafe practice, concerns or

allegations against staff or the school's safeguarding practice and arrangements so they can be addressed appropriately.

Please see CHEXS whistleblowing policy that covers concerns regarding the way the charity safeguards children, including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures, refer to it here.

Whistleblowing directly to Children's Social Care on 0300 123 4043 and/or the Police 999 or to the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline 0800 028 0285 [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **13. Record Keeping:** The Information Commissioner Employment Practices Code

CHEXS will hold records confidentially, safely, securely and in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached, and the outcome.

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate electronically for each child on the Civi database

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to know/ access them.

Safeguarding records relating to an individual child will be retained for the student until they reach their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday or 31<sup>st</sup> birthday if there is an EHCP in place (Information Records Management Society 2022). eBook: Ultimate Guide to Electronic Records Management Laserfiche – records are kept on CHEXS data management system.

[Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse were being retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse \(IICSA\). This has now concluded, and the Home Office sent a letter to schools advising that files no longer needed to be kept indefinitely. However, the recommendations from the inquiry have stated:](#)

[\*Recommendation 17: Access to records The UK government should direct the Information Commissioner's Office to introduce a code of practice on keeping and accessing records which relate to child sexual abuse. The code should require records about child sexual abuse and allegations of child sexual abuse to be kept for 75 years, with appropriate review periods.\*](#)

[CHEXS will follow the Recommendation 17.](#)

CHEXS will ensure records comply with the latest Information Commissioner's guidance on employment practices and data retention.

### **Receiving** in and transferring pupil records to other education provision

If a child for whom the charity has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another provider, the DSL will ensure that their safeguarding information file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely.

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the provider and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the child.

### **Retention, archiving and destruction of records**

For records that are not transferred to another provider, for example the child leaves the country or is going to be home educated, we have:

- Secure and appropriate system to archive with restricted access
- We have a written assurance from our providers of our electronic recording systems that all records are maintained securely which includes any archived records.

Storage, retention, and destruction of our child protection files is also made clear in our data protection policy.

## 14. Safeguarding Training and Development

To fulfil our aim of continuous improvement in order to safeguard our pupils, we ensure that learning and development starts at induction. All staff, supply contractors, leadership and management, and trustee board, undertake the minimum safeguarding training. We want reassurance for our children and families that all staff are aware of systems within our charity and have the skills and knowledge to follow our charity's procedures.

### Induction

- Child Protection Policy - which should amongst other things include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse
- Behaviour Policy - which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) - which should amongst other things include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
- Role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)
- Copies of/ given links to Part One KCSiE (What school and college staff should know and do) or Annex A, (condensed version for volunteers and non-teaching staff if appropriate).

### Safeguarding children training for all staff and senior leadership

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the safeguarding approach and wider staff training.
- Be in line with the quality and standards expected from our 3 safeguarding partners (Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership)
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff
- Updates will include awareness of new harms linked to digital misinformation, conspiracy content, and artificial intelligence. CHEXS will ensure that all staff understand and can respond to these emerging risks.

In addition, all staff will have training that raises awareness of children susceptible to extra familial harm such as radicalisation which our school adopts the government's anti-radicalisation strategy and Prevent duty to enable us to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

### Our charity's current safeguarding training schedule is as follows:

**All staff, including DSL/ deputy(s)** and CHEXS staff must attend safeguarding children training every 3 years

- Our school's DSL will also provide an annual update to all staff, which includes online safety
- Throughout a given academic year, our school's DSL provides for all staff relevant **updates** as changes occur to keep abreast of approach and thus supporting staff to fulfil their role as set out in Part One of KCSiE (for example, through **emails, e-bulletins** and **staff meetings**).

- **Contractors or sole traders** who are provided through an SLA will also receive safeguarding training, and if not undertaken with CHEXS we will ensure through their employer that they have the skills and knowledge to blend in with CHEXS policies and procedures.
- We anticipate that all volunteers share our whole school approach and are willing to receive appropriate training and support from our staff.

### **DSL and Deputy(s)**

- The DSL and (deputy/deputies) will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years
- In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments)
- They will also undertake Prevent awareness
- It is desired that our DSL and (deputy/deputies) when capacity permits, undertakes multi-agency training, this provides opportunities to develop further their knowledge and skills to work with a wide range of safeguarding themes that our children and families can be affected by locally. The three safeguarding partners, HSCP provides a local offer of such training on their website. [HSAB and HSCP training and resources | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- DSLs will be responsible for disseminating and embedding any new statutory updates, including the implementation of the mandatory reporting duty for child sexual abuse once the Crime and Policing Bill take effect

### **Cybersecurity Awareness**

- CHEXS is committed to maintaining robust information security and cyber resilience, in line with national standards set by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). This includes ensuring that safeguarding data is protected from cyber threats and breaches

### **Trustees**

All Trustees receive training about safeguarding and child protection at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding
- As the Chair of Trustees may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the CEO, they receive training in **Managing Concerns and Allegations** for this purpose.

### **CEO**

As the CEO is ultimately responsible for safeguarding children from adults who work or volunteer with children and are either unsuitable or pose a risk to children, therefore it is highly recommended that **Managing Concerns and Allegations** training is undertaken in order to maintain an ongoing vigilance of safe practice and culture within the school.

## **Safe Recruitment – interview panels**

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken **safer recruitment** training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

More information can be found in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

## **15. Quality Assurance, Improvement and Practice**

The purpose of auditing is to quality assure safeguarding arrangements and identify where they need to improve professional development and strengthen practice, it can also evidence the settings strengths and practice. Effective safeguarding should be part of Chex's' management shared approach and should be embedded in the vision, ethos, and strategic direction so that a 'whole school approach' is achieved as this is what ultimately creates a safe and secure environment for children and young people to learn and develop and feel safe.

Auditing is essential for management and leaders to be able to reassure stakeholders about how schools/colleges are complying with the contractual requirements for safeguarding arrangements are met.

CHEXS endeavours at all times to provide an education and learning where children feel safe and are kept safe by all staff. We review and monitor our practice is through annually reviewing the policy and by auditing with the link Safeguard Trustee. At every review, it will be approved by our full Governing Board/ Board of Trustees.

To ensure that safeguarding policies reflect current statutory guidance and are updated annually to align with emerging national frameworks when published.

## 16. Additional Associated Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

All of the below policies and procedures are in place

- Staff behaviour/ code of conduct
- Children's behaviour/ code of conduct
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Mobile phone use
- Equality and inclusion
- First Aid
  - Staff disciplinary procedures, as set out in the CHEXS handbook
  - Staff grievance procedures as set out in the CHEXS handbook
  - Online safety
- Whistleblowing
- Email and home communications
- Positive Touch Policy

# Appendix 1: Declaration for CHEXS Staff

## Declaration for CHEXS staff to verify they have read and understood the school's Child Protection Policy and other key guidance

School/ College name: CHEXS  
 Academic Year: September 2024 / 2025

Return declaration to: Liz Allum by: Date 15/09/2024

*Please agree a time and date with your school's DSL/ DDSL, to read the following Child Protection Policy and associated parts of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2025. Please thereafter verify that you have understand your role and responsibilities in relation to these.*

Statutory Guidance and CHEXS Child Protection Policy	Date and Verification When Completed
1. CHEXS Child Protection Policy (Arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in your school)	Click or tap to enter a date.
2. Part One of Safeguarding information for all staff, what you should know and do to safeguard children	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>3. Annex B (Specific Safeguarding issues) KCSiE 2025</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
4. Having read the above guidance, I understand my role and responsibilities to comply with these	I agree or I do not agree and require further support from DSL
I am aware of who my CHEXS DSL and Deputy(s) for safeguarding are	DSL Liz Allum DSL- Pete maiden, Kerry Davies, Jenny Hammond, Nicola Roberts
5. If I need support or I am worried about the wellbeing and safety of a child( ren) or suspect they are being harmed, I have the means to report this and/or discuss any concerns with the DSL/ DDSL team in CHEXS	I agree or I do not agree and require further support from DSL
6. I know that further guidance, together with copies of the policies mentioned above, are available at:	CHEXS SharePoint

### Declaration:

*I ..... have read CHEXS Child Protection Policy and the associated guidance as above and agree that I understand my role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare at CHEXS .*

Signed .....and returned to DSL on Click or tap to enter a date.

## Appendix 2: Declaration for Trustees / Volunteers

### Declaration for Trustees/ volunteers to verify they have read the charity's Child Protection Policy

CHEXS : September 2025/ 2026

Return declaration to: CHEXS Office Manager

Statutory Guidance and School's Child Protection Policy	Date and Verification When Completed
1. CHEXS Child Protection Policy (arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in CHEXS)	<i>Click or tap to enter a date.</i>
2. The entirety of KCSiE 2025	<i>Click or tap to enter a date.</i>
3. Having read the above guidance, I understand my strategic leadership role and responsibilities to work with my corporate GB to ensure that all staff and volunteers comply with such guidance and safeguarding arrangements at all times	I agree or I do not agree and require further support from DSL
4. I am aware of who within CHEXS and management are the DSL and Deputy(s) for safeguarding are	DSL Liz Allum DSL/D- Pete Maiden, Kerry Davies, Jenny Hammond, Nicola Roberts
5. If I need support or am worried about the wellbeing and safety of a child(ren), or I suspect a child is at risk of being harmed, I know how to report this and discuss my concerns with the DSL/ DDSL team in my school	I agree or I do not agree and require further support from DSL
6. I know that further guidance, together with copies of the policies mentioned above, are available on the school's website and the HGfL website.	CHEXS Website/Shared with Trustee Board  Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)

#### **Declaration:**

*I ..... have read CHEXS Child Protection Policy and the associated guidance as above and agree that I understand my role and responsibilities as a Governor in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare at CHEXS*

Signed .....  
via CHEXS Office Manager

and returned to CHAIR of Trustees

## Appendix 3: Safeguarding Issues and Specific Forms of Abuse

Children occupy all types of places and spaces when socialising, either directly with other or online. Some of these contextual environments away from their home can present additional risks of harm and exploitation that could impact on their welfare and wellbeing. Preventative safeguarding is about having arrangements in place so that whole school staff are made aware of these and know the signs that a child is susceptible or already being impacted on. The aim of your school safeguarding arrangements is to identify those children so that early help support for the child and, where applicable, their family can be offered early help support.

All staff play an important part in CHEXS approach to report any concern to the CHEXS DSL or deputies without delay.

Safeguarding Issues, Child-on-child abuse	Safeguarding descriptor, links for further learning
<b>Bullying</b>	<p>Including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.</p> <p><a href="#">Cyber Aware - NCSC.GOV.UK</a></p> <p><a href="#">Helping Children Deal with Bullying &amp; Cyberbullying   NSPCC</a></p> <p><a href="#">cyberbullying_teachers.pdf (proceduresonline.com)</a></p> <p><a href="https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-cyberbullying">https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-cyberbullying</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cyberbullying Guidance   Childnet</a></p>
<b>Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children</b>	<p>Sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'.</p> <p><a href="#">Teenage Relationship Abuse   The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">2008 Expect Respect LeafletEDITED-2.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Controlling-Behaviour-in-Relationships-talking-to-young-people-about-healthy-relationships.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)</a></p>
<b>Physical abuse</b>	<p>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).</p> <p><a href="#">No place for bullying.doc (live.com)</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to talk to your children about bullying   UNICEF</a></p> <p><a href="#">5.1.7 Children Who Abuse Others (proceduresonline.com)</a></p> <p><a href="#">safe_extended_bully.pdf (proceduresonline.com)</a></p>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	<p>Such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence) sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and</p>

	<p>online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse 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.</p> <p><a href="#">Sexual violence and sexual Harassment KCSiE</a>  <a href="#">Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse   NSPCC Learning</a>  <a href="#">5.3.10 Online Safety (proceduresonline.com)</a>  <a href="#">harmful-sexual-behaviour-pathway-2021.docx (live.com)</a>  <a href="#">brooks traffic light tool - Search (bing.com)</a>  <a href="#">harmful-sexual-behaviour-strategy-2021-23.docx (live.com)</a>  <a href="#">Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>  <a href="#">Overview   Harmful sexual behaviour among children and young people   Guidance   NICE</a></p>
<b>Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos</b>	<p>Also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery.</p> <p><a href="#">Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a>  <a href="#">Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (updated March 2024) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>  <a href="#">Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p>
<b>Upskirting</b>	<p>This 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.</p> <p><a href="#">Upskirting: know your rights - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
<b>Initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals</b>	<p>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.</p> <p><a href="#">Who, what, why: Why is hazing so common? - BBC News</a></p>
	<p><b>Please note:</b> CSE, CCE, domestic violence, mental FGM, forced marriage, serious violence are set out below.</p>

<b>Specific Forms of Abuse in Annex B of KCSiE, 2024</b>	<b>Safeguarding descriptor and links for further learning</b>
<b>Child Abduction and community safety incidents</b>	<p>Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.</p> <p>Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns also, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.</p> <p><a href="#">Home - Action Against Abduction</a></p>

	<p><a href="#">5.3.6 Safeguarding Children from Abroad (including Children who are Victims of Trafficking and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) (proceduresonline.com)</a></p>
<p><b>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)</b></p>	<p>Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Through violence or the threat of violence.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p> <p><a href="#">5.3. 11 Children and young people affected by exploitation and serious violence ( HSCP Procedures on line)</a></p>
<p><b>Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)</b></p>	<p>CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transporting drugs or money through county lines</li> <li>• working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing</li> <li>• committing vehicle crime</li> <li>• threatening/ committing serious violence to others</li> <li>• become trapped by exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt</li> <li>• coerced into carrying weapons such as knives/ carry a knife for self-protection</li> <li>• children involved in CCE often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced</li> <li>• the experience of girls can be very different to that of boys and the indicators may not be the same, especially as they are at higher risk of CSE- girls are at risk of CCE too.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child sexual and criminal exploitation - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Criminal exploitation and gangs   NSPCC</a></p>
<p><b>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</b></p>	<p>CSE is a form of child sexual abuse and may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical contact, assault by penetration (rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing</li> <li>• non-contact activities like 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</li> <li>• can occur over time or be a one-off and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media</li> <li>• includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited as they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">CEOP Education (thinkuknow.co.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://hertfordshirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/hertfordshires-strategy-to-prevent-child-sexual-exploitation">5.3.4 https://hertfordshirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/hertfordshires-strategy-to-prevent-child-sexual-exploitation</a></p>

<b>County Lines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”</li> <li>• This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required</li> <li>• Children are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims</li> <li>• Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes</li> <li>• Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media.</li> </ul> <p>See CCE resources above</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines</a></p>
<b>Children and the Court System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed</li> <li>• Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children</li> <li>• The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information may be unusual for parents and carers.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Get help with child arrangements - Get help with child arrangements (justice.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cafcass resources for professionals</a></p>
<b>Children who are absent from education</b>	<p>All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines</li> <li>• it may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse,</li> <li>• risk of travelling to conflict zones</li> <li>• risk of female genital mutilation, so-called ‘honour’ based abuse or risk of forced marriage.</li> </ul> <p>Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school’s or college’s unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.</p> <p><a href="#">Children missing from education - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)</a></p>
<b>Children missing from home</b>  <i>(NB this is not in Annex B but to illustrate the separate processes)</i>	<p>Use school’s CP procedures to escalate to Children’s Services/ Police</p> <p>Operation Encompass for MISSING CYP is Hertfordshire’s system for sharing information quickly with schools to safeguard children following the success of supporting children who have witnessed Domestic Abuse</p> <p><a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e089340f0b62302688bd0/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e089340f0b62302688bd0/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf</a></p>

<p><b>Children with family members in prison</b></p>	<p>Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.</p> <p>The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.</p> <p><a href="#">NICCO (National Information Centre on Children Offences)</a></p> <p><a href="#">5.6.5 Children Visiting Prisons</a>  <a href="https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/p_ch_visit_prison.html">https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/p_ch_visit_prison.html</a></p>
<p><b>Cybercrime</b></p>	<p>Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or</li> <li>• ‘cyber dependent’ (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).</li> </ul> <p>Cyber-dependent crimes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unauthorised access to computers (illegal ‘hacking’), for example accessing a school’s computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded</li> <li>• ‘Denial of Service’ (Dos or DDoS) attacks or ‘booting’. These are attempts to make a computer, network, or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,</li> <li>• making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cyber Choices - National Crime Agency</a></p> <p><a href="https://yjresourcehub.uk/when-to-call-the-police-guidance-for-schools-and-colleges-national-police-chiefs-council-february-2020/">https://yjresourcehub.uk/when-to-call-the-police-guidance-for-schools-and-colleges-national-police-chiefs-council-february-2020/</a> (yjresourcehub.uk)</p>
<p><b>Domestic Abuse (DA)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DA encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents</li> <li>• Abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional</li> <li>• Children can be victims of DA abuse e.g. see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse)</li> <li>• DA can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Domestic abuse: recognise the signs - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Helplines briefing: The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people from the voices of parents and carers (nspcc.org.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Homelessness</b></p>	<p>Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The DSL (and deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/ progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• household debt</li> <li>• rent arrears</li> <li>• domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• the family being asked to leave a property.</li> </ul> <p>This is also a safeguarding issue and DSL should seek advice from Children’s Social Care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.</p> <p><a href="#">Homelessness - Citizens Advice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Stats and facts   Centrepoin</a></p> <p><a href="#">Professional Resources - Shelter England</a></p>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<p>Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, 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, attendance, and progress at school.</p> <p>Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering exploitation.</p> <p>Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a MH problem.</p> <p>Education staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviours that suggest they may be experiencing a MH problem or be at risk of developing one.</p> <p><a href="#">Mental Health First Aid Kit   Childline</a></p> <p><a href="https://thegrid.org.uk/wellbeing/wellbeing-and-mental-health/hertfordshire-support-and-resources">https://thegrid.org.uk/wellbeing/wellbeing-and-mental-health/hertfordshire-support-and-resources</a></p>
<b>Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism</b>	<p>Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexual exploitation</li> <li>• forced labour, slavery and servitude</li> <li>• forced criminality</li> <li>• the removal of organs.</li> </ul> <p>Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance</p> <p><a href="#">Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/hertfordshire-modern-slavery-partnership">Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Partnership - https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/hertfordshire-modern-slavery-partnership</a></p> <p><a href="https://hertfordshirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/safeguarding-children-from-abroad-including-children-who-are-victims-of-trafficking-and-unaccompanied-asylum-seeking-children">5.3.6 https://hertfordshirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/safeguarding-children-from-abroad-including-children-who-are-victims-of-trafficking-and-unaccompanied-asylum-seeking-children</a></p>
<b>The Prevent duty/ Preventing Radicalisation</b>	<p>Children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support</li> </ul>

<p><b>tion and Channel</b></p>	<p>terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul> <p>Channel is a voluntary, confidential support program which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.</p> <p>The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools and colleges wider safeguarding obligations.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/prevent-duty-guidance">Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://thegrid.org.uk/prevent-in-education">Prevent in Education - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://proceduresonline.com/5.3.9-prevent-guidance">5.3.9 Prevent Guidance (proceduresonline.com)</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance">Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges</b></p>	<p>Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online</li> <li>• through a group of children sexually assaulting</li> <li>• sexually harassing a single child or group of children.</li> </ul> <p>Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.</p> <p><a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk">[Title] (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.bing.com/search?q=brooks+traffic+light+tool">brooks traffic light tool - Search (bing.com)</a></p>
<p><b>Serious Violence</b></p>	<p>Indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased absence from school</li> <li>• change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups</li> <li>• significant decline in performance</li> <li>• signs of self-harm</li> <li>• significant change in wellbeing</li> <li>• signs of assault or unexplained injuries</li> <li>• unexplained gifts or new possessions.</li> </ul> <p>Anything which could also indicate they have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence</a></p> <p><a href="#">Hertfordshire Serious Violence Strategy &amp; Delivery Plan</a></p>

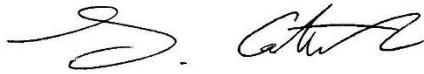
<p><b>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</b></p> <p><i>So-called 'honour' based abuse (includes both Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)</i></p>	<p>FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.</p> <p>Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or a deputy) any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers they must report this to the Police.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation">Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.nationalfmgcentre.org.uk/">Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief – National FGM Centre</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.thegrid.org.uk/">Female genital mutilation, honour based violence and forced marriage - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Forced Marriage</b></p>	<p>Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England. A forced marriage is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties</li> <li>• and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage</li> <li>• threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.</li> </ul> <p>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).</p> <p>Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-forced-marriage-protection-order-overview">Apply for a forced marriage protection order: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-for-dealing-with-forced-marriage-and-multi-agency-practice-guidelines-handling-cases-of-forced-marriage-accessible">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-for-dealing-with-forced-marriage-and-multi-agency-practice-guidelines-handling-cases-of-forced-marriage-accessible</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.childline.gov.uk/information-support/forced-marriage/">Forced marriage   Childline</a></p>

CHEXS Child Protection Policy is in line with the quality and standards expected from Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and will be monitored by the Trustees. This policy will also be reviewed annually or when new legislation requires changes, whichever is the soonest. This policy is approved by the *CHEXS Trustees*.



Signature .....  
*Pete Maiden, CEO*

Date Agreed: 06/09/2025



Signature .....  
*Safeguarding Trustee Julie Cottenden*

Date Agreed: 06/09/2025