Stoke Row CE School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

(inc. Missing Pupils)

Document Approval Record

Committee	Finance, Health & Safety
Chair of Committee	Kerrie Blaker
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Headteacher	Charlotte Whittle
Chair of Governors	Gary Chater
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'Shine like stars and become light in our world'

At Stoke Row School we aim for our children to have the brightest futures, each one nurtured individually to be a guiding light with a unique sparkle. We teach on another to live with kindness and respect. We help our children to understand that with courage and perseverance they can excel.

These policies are all created in line with the Christian foundation of this school which is expressed through our five core values and our view that every child is unique and valued.

Contents

1. Part 1

1.1. Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with the following:

- "Keeping Children Safe in Education" September 2019
- "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018 (updated 2019)
- "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families" 2000
- "What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused" 2015
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board guidelines
- "Children missing education" 2016

Our school aims for a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding. The school and its staff recognise they are an important part of a wider safeguarding system for children (as described in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children).

The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under section 11 of the Children Act and duties under "working together" to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer harm.

We recognise that our staff and governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

Our school should provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child free from discrimination or bullying where children can learn and develop happily.

This policy applies to all staff, governor and volunteers working in our school, and has been updated in line with Keeping Children Safe

In Education 2020. All staff will sign to confirm they have read and understood this policy.

1.2. Terminology

- **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children, An Interagency Guide to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children](#)) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.
- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- **Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents
- **DSL:** Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **PTO:** Pupil Tracking Officer

1.3. Aims

- To provide all staff with information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children

1.4. The role of school staff

Our school staff are very important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.

- **All our** school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

- **Our** school has a DSL who provides support our staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties, and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care. The DSL (and any deputies) are the most likely persons to have a complete safeguarding picture and are most appropriate persons to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

- **All** our staff are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

- **Any** staff member with a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes indicated in this policy, and they are expected to support Social Workers and other agencies involved, following any referral.

- **The Teachers' standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public interest in the teaching professions as part of their professional duties.**

1.5. What school staff need to know

- **All** staff must be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

  - child protection policy;
  - behaviour policy;
  - staff behaviour policy (code of conduct);

- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- role of the DSL lead (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one of this document MUST be provided to staff at induction.

- **All** staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- **All** staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, **especially section 17** (children in need) **and section 47** (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality by involving only those who need to be involved, such as the DSL (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff must never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

1.6. *What school staff should look out for*

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

  - is disabled and has specific additional needs;
  - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
  - 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;

- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited; • 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 drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child.

- **All** school staff members are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection ([see Part 2 of this policy for the definitions](#))

- Departmental advice: What to do if you are worried a child is being abused- Advice for practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2

- Staff members at our school are advised to maintain an attitude at all times of **"it could happen here"** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the **best interests of the child**.

- Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure they should **always** speak to the DSL or deputy.

1.7.   What school staff should do if they have concerns about a child

If our staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. See page 34 for a flow chart setting out the process for our staff when they have concerns about a child.

If staff have a concern, they should follow this child protection policy and speak to the DSL (or deputy).

Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment; a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need,
- is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

Our staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Information sharing:

Early help

If early help is appropriate, the DSL (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Statutory Assessments

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

Female Genital Mutilation mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Whilst our staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal** duty on **teachers.** If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL (or deputy).

Why is all of this important?

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Examples of this poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- poor record keeping;
- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information;
- sharing information too slowly; and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

1.8. *What school staff should do if a child in in danger or at risk of harm*

- **If, a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.** Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not

made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

1.9. *What school staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member*

- This **must** be referred to the Headteacher.
- Where the concerns are about the Headteacher this should be referred to the **Chair of Governors**.
- *See Part 2 of this policy for fuller details*

1.10. *What school staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school*

- **All our staff and volunteers** are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime and that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

- [Appropriate whistleblowing procedures](), which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, are in place.

- Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

  - General guidance can be found at- https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

  - The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

2. Part 2

2.1. Key personnel at our school:

- The **designated senior person** for child protection in this school is: Mrs Charlotte Whittle
- **The deputy designated person** in this school is: Mrs Ellie Siv
- The **nominated child protection governor** for this school is: Rev Mark Taylor

2.2. Roles and responsibilities

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements and this person is named in this policy guidance. We will ensure that the DSL or a deputy is available (during school or college hours) to discuss safeguarding concerns. We will also ensure there are adequate and appropriate measures in place to cover out of hour/out of term activities.

The governing body

The Governing Body of Stoke Row CE Primary School undertake the regular review of safeguarding related policies and procedures that operate in our school. **They have a crucial role in monitoring and challenging staff on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.** An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses or areas of concern will be rectified without delay.

Our Governing body ensure:

- The school has a DSL for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken the approved LSCB training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- Our Child Protection policy and procedures are consistent with OSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request

- Procedures exist for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher
- Safer recruitment procedures which include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance
- A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head teacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals, and that the DSL receives refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- Staff are regularly updated with any changes to safeguarding practise and that safeguarding remains a school priority
- Arrangements for all temporary staff and volunteers to be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher.

The head teacher:
- Ensures the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- Allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- Ensures all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's whistle blowing procedures
- Ensures child's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

The school has ensured that the DSL:
- Is appropriately trained.
- Acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- Has an understanding of OSCB procedures.
- Keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, given that these records are kept separately from the child's general file.

- Refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedure.
- Notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- Ensures that when a child with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the child's social worker is informed
- Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences in accordance with local procedure and guidance
- Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans.
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- Ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
- Ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- Liaises with the nominated governor and head teacher (where the role is not carried out by the head teacher) as appropriate
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- Provides an annual safeguarding report to governors which is sent to the LADO/Safeguarding team at County Hall no later than the December of the academic year, following the academic year to which the report applies.
- Makes this policy available to parents.

The Deputy DSL(s)

Is (are) appropriately trained and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

All staff will:

Follow the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures/Local Authority guidance in all cases of abuse, or suspected abuse (these can be found at www.OSCB.org.uk).

We will therefore:

- Implement and follow part 1 of this guidance
- Understand our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children.
- Support the child's development in ways that foster security, confidence and resilience
- Provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- Provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children where appropriate.
- Ensure detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. [See guidance on record keeping.](#)

2.3. Supporting Children

- We recognise a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

- We accept research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our school will support all children and young people by:

- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of life.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.

- Carrying out no name consultations with the LCSS (Locality Community Support Service) where appropriat
- Carrying out EHA's (Early Help Assessments) where appropriate to identify what support can be put in place for the child and family
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Notifying Social Care when a child/young person attending the centre is privately fostered.
- Providing continuing support to a pupil (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Designated Person at the pupil's new school immediately.

2.4. Confidentiality

- We recognise all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The Designated Person will disclose personal information about a child or young person to other members of staff **on a need to know basis only**.
- Provided that all staff **understand their professional responsibility** to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.

- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents/carers **unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation**. If in doubt, we will consult with the Schools Safeguarding Team or Social Care on this point.
- We will take no names consultations with our LCSS/local Assessment Teams/MASH team to discuss concerns we may have, but we understand that if they must ask for a name we will disclose those details and it will become a referral.

2.5. Supporting Staff

- We recognise staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support affected staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support. This may be provided by another trusted colleague, Occupational Health, and/or a representative of a professional body or trade union, as appropriate.
- In consultation with all staff, we have adopted a code of conduct for our staff. This forms part of staff induction and is in the staff handbook. We understand staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour.
- We recognise that our Designated Person(s) should have access to support and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised by the LA.

2.6. Allegations against staff

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

- We understand a child may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the most senior member of staff available.

- The most senior member of staff on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Designated Officer for the Local Authority (LADO), **before taking any action.** In our county the named Designated Officer is (verified January 2020):

Alison Beasley,
Designated Officer
Telephone: 01865 815956
LADO team 01865 810603 or
Lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Contact must be made with the Designated Officer or one of the Assistant Designated Officer's before any internal investigation is commenced.

- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the head teacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the governing body who will consult with LADO, without notifying the head teacher first.
- The school will follow the procedures for managing allegations against staff, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.
- Before suspension of a member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will first consult with LADO and County HR.
- Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will follow LA procedures for managing allegations against staff and, where necessary, the suspension of adults from premises.
- See the flowchart in Appendix B.

2.7. Whistleblowing

- We recognise children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the Designated Officers team where necessary.
- See full details in our school's **SR - Whistleblowing Policy**

2.8. Physical Intervention/Positive Handling

- Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately, as part of our **SR - Use of Reasonable Force Policy**. It complies with LA Guidance, 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils' 2010 and DfE guidance Use of Reasonable Force July 2013
- Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- We recommend staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention should be appropriately trained.

- We understand physical intervention of a nature which is both unreasonable and disproportionate to the circumstances and or causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.
- See our **SR – Use of Reasonable Force Policy**

2.9. Anti-Bullying

- Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. Bullying is a safeguarding matter that if left unresolved can become a child protection matter. Our setting will take seriously any bullying concerns, and both investigate and take action to protect pupils where appropriate.
- We will liaise with the anti-bullying co-ordinator from OCC where appropriate.
- See the **SR – Anti-Bullying (Inc. Cyber Bullying) Policy**.

2.10. Health & Safety

- Our Health & Safety policy, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment and, for example, in relation to internet use, and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.
- See full details in our **SR - Health and Safety Policy**

2.11. Children with Special Educational Needs

We recognise children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. This policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

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

- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

2.12. Indicators of abuse and neglect

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

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

- **Physical abuse:** 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.

- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child may 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. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond 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. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including

cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

- **25. Neglect:** 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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

2.13. *Specific safeguarding issues*

- **General wariness:** staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff are made aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

- **Peer abuse: s**taff have an awareness that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm, sexual violence/sexual harassment, sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Staff are clear about our policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

- **Female genital mutilation (FGM): All** staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM). There is a **specific legal duty on teachers:** if a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

- **Contextual Safeguarding.** Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, especially the DSL (and deputies), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur (known as contextual safeguarding). Our assessments of children will consider if wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

2.14. Online safety

Aware that our pupils increasingly work online, we recognise that it is crucial to safeguard our pupils from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such we ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

2.15. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

We ensure our pupil are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

2.16. Peer on Peer abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- **bullying** (including cyberbullying);

- **physical abuse** such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

- **sexual violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;

- **sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

- **up-skirting**, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;

- **sexting** (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and

- **initiation/hazing** type violence and rituals.

- **serious violence**, may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime.

All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse. See our **SR-Managing allegations against other pupil's/Peer on Peer** abuse policy for further details.

Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

2.17. Dealing with Disclosures

> **We will never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected abuse by interviewing the young person or any others involved because this is a highly skilled role and we recognise any attempts to do so could affect possible criminal proceedings.**

Receive

• Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.

• Listen quietly and actively, giving your undivided attention.

• Allow silences when needed.

• Do not show shock or disbelief and take what is said seriously.

Reassure

• It is important to stay calm, make no judgements and empathise.

• **Never make a promise to keep what a child has said a secret.**

• Give reassurance that only those who need to know will be told.

• Reassure the young person that they were right to tell you.

React

• React to the student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but don't interrogate for full details.

• Refrain from asking leading questions.

• If you need to try to get more detail about what has been disclosed, use questions such as tell me, explain to me and describe to me.

• **If you do ask further questions, remember to record the questions you have asked as well as the responses provided.**

• Do not criticise the perpetrator; the student may have affection for him/her.

• Explain your next steps to the student, i.e. who you will be speaking to and what will happen next.

Record

• Make brief notes about what they are telling you at the time. If not possible, make these notes as soon as possible.

• Keep al notes, however rough they are.

• **Record what was actually said** by the child rather than your interpretation of what they are telling you, be factual at all times.

• Record the date, time, place and any noticeable nonverbal behaviour.

Report

• Report the incident to the DSL (or deputy) **and do not tell any other adults or students what you have been told**.

Record Keeping

• A full and accurate record is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

• The DSL (and deputy) for child protection are responsible for ensuring that all necessary paperwork is completed and sent to all relevant people. Records are stored in a safe and confidential place. We ensure our records are a coherent, chronological, and factual record of the concerns about individual.

• More information

Examples of poor record keeping practice include:

• failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;

• poor record keeping;

• failing to listen to the views of the child;

• failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;

• not sharing information; • sharing information too slowly; and

• a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

3. Part 3

3.1. Children Missing Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

The DfES document "Identifying and Maintaining Contact with Children Missing or at Risk of Going Missing from Education" defines Children Missing Education as:

"all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in an alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more)."

3.2. Oxfordshire County Council Contact Details.

1. Pupil Tracking Officer

Day-to-day responsibility for administration of the Children Missing Education procedure lies with the PTO, who should be contacted if you know of any child who is not receiving an education, or you know of a child who has gone missing from school, or you want to discuss any concerns about such a situation:

> **The PTO**
> **Second Floor**
> **West Wing**
> **Abbey House**
> **Abbey Close**
> **Abingdon OX14 3JD**
> **Telephone: 01865 810515**
> **Email:** missing.pupils@oxfordshire.gov.uk

3.3. Stoke Row Primary School Responsibilities

Our school's **daily responsibilities** are listed in **Appendix C**.

Stoke Row Primary School has adopted Oxfordshire County Council procedure for identifying missing pupils, [detailed in OCC Missing Education Policy 2017-2021](#). **Please refer to Appendix D for Stoke Row Procedures.**

[Further detailed guidance and forms](#) can be found on the OCC website.

Our school will notify OCC when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point **under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the regulations** ([Children missing education September 2016](#)), as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply at standard transition points – where the pupil has completed the school's final year – unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

When Stoke Row Primary School notifies OCC that a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register**,** we will provide

> a. the full name of the pupil;
>
> b. the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
>
> c. at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
>
> d. the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
>
> e. the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
>
> f. the ground in regulation 8 ([Children Missing Education September 2016 Annex A](#)) under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register.

Stoke Row Primary school will notify OCC **within five days** when a pupil's name is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. We will provide all the information held within the admission register about the

pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless OCC requests for such information to be provided.

3.4. *Children Joining Stoke Row School*

If a child joins the school at a non-standard transition point. Stoke Row School will enquire at the child's previous school if the child has a safeguarding record which we should be made aware of.

+ END OF POLICY +

4.   APPENDIX A - Annex A

Information included here may not be directly relevant to our primary school, and is included for wider information purposes.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people, (or a third person or persons) receive something, (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or others performing on them, sexual activities.

CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidations are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice, resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Key Facts about CSE

- Sexual exploitation often starts around the age of 10 years old. Girls are usually targeted from age 10 and boys from age 8.
- It affects both girls and boys and can happen in all communities.
- Any person can be targeted but there are some particularly vulnerable groups: Looked after Children, Children Leaving Care and Children with Disabilities.
- Victims of CSE may also be trafficked (locally, nationally and internationally).
- Over 70% of adults involved in prostitution were sexually exploited as children or teenagers.

Sexual violence or abuse against children represents a major public health and social welfare problem within UK society, affecting 16% of children under 16. That is approximately 2 million children.

Good practice – Individuals

- Recognise the symptoms and distinguish them from other forms of abuse
- Treat the child/young person as a victim of abuse

- Understand the perspective/behaviour of the child/young person and be patient with them
- Help the child/young person to recognise that they are being exploited
- Collate as much information as possible
- Share information with other agencies and seek advice/refer to Social Care
-

Good practice – Organisations

- Ensure robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place which cover CSE
- Promote and engage in effective multi-agency working to prevent abuse
- Work to help victims move out of exploitation
- Cooperate to enable successful investigations and prosecutions of perpetrators

Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and

- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

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

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/ progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

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

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV)

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

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers.

Female Genital Mutilation FGM

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore should be dealt with as part of existing child safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures.
FGM is illegal in the UK. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.
Other than in the excepted circumstances, it is an offence for any person (regardless of their nationality or residence status) to:

- perform FGM in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 1 of the Act);
- assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 2 of the Act); and
- Assist (from England, Wales or Northern Ireland) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a **UK national or permanent UK resident** (section 3 of the Act).

Forced Marriage (FM)

FM is now a specific offence under s121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 that came into force on 16 June 2014.

A FM is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties, and where duress is a factor.

FM is when someone faces physical pressure to marry (e.g. threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (e.g. if someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). This is very different to an arranged marriage where both parties give consent.

FM is illegal in England and Wales. This includes:

- taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not)

Prevent

The Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015

The Act places a Prevent duty on specified schools to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". The education and childcare specified authorities in Schedule 6 to the Act are as follows:

- The proprietors of maintained schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained nursery schools, independent schools (including academies and free schools) and alternative provision academies, PRUs, registered early years providers, registered late years providers and some holiday schemes.
- Schools/settings subject to the Prevent Duty will be expected to demonstrate activity in the following areas –

- Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism
- Demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
- Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism
- Expected to ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school

Sexting in schools

[Detailed information and advice is available](#) from Oxfordshire Council

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and

- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

What is Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment?

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 200319 as described below:

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

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

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

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Sexual Harassment

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

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- It may include:
- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

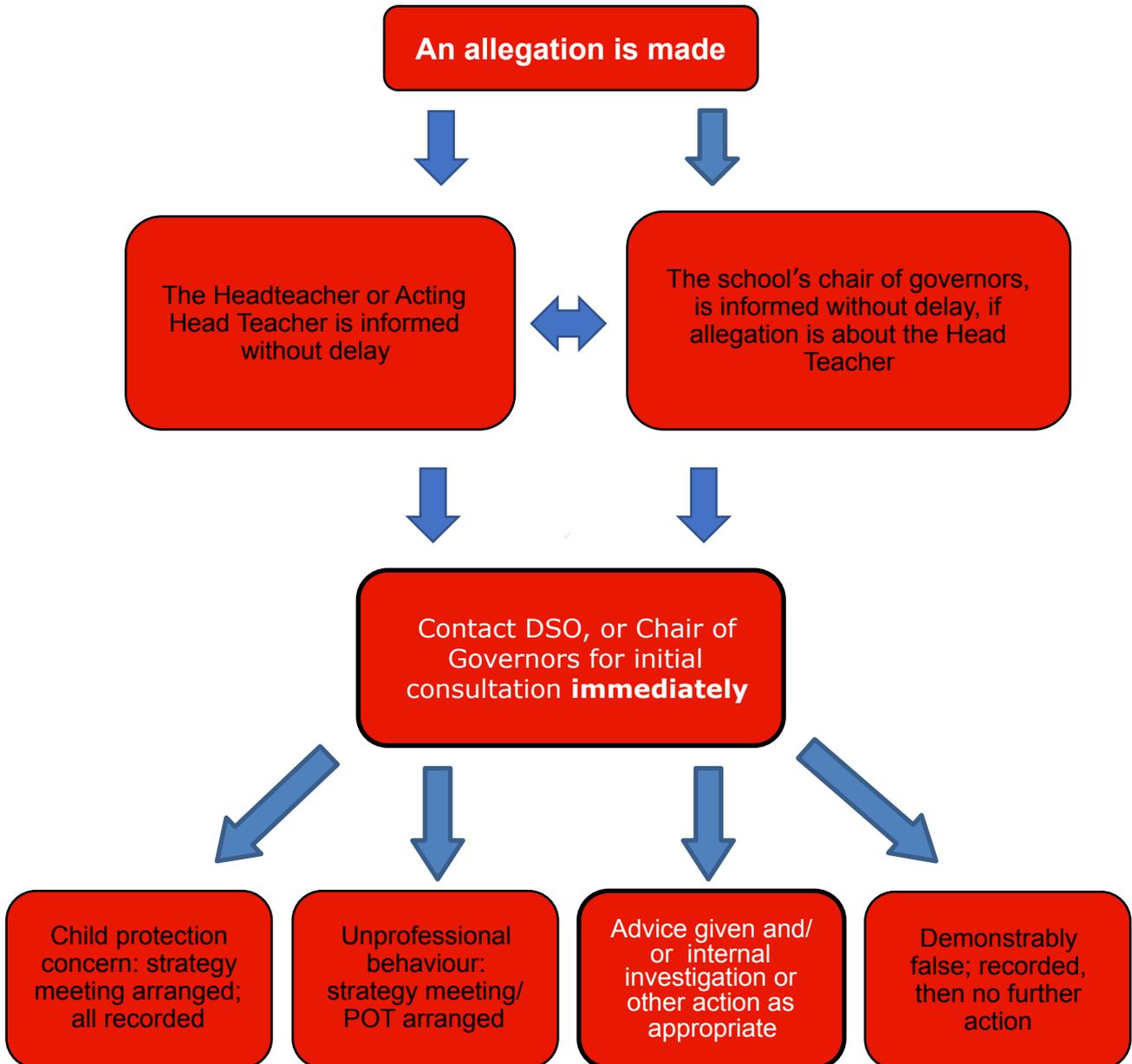**The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out from paragraph in part one of this policy. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak o the DSL (or a deputy).

5.   APPENDIX B - Allegation flowcharts

Allegation flowchart

If you have a concern that a person who works with children and young people may have behaved inappropriately or you have received information that may constitute an allegation you must:

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  An allegation is made  │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
```

| The Headteacher or Acting Head Teacher is informed without delay | ⟷ | The school's chair of governors, is informed without delay, if allegation is about the Head Teacher |

Contact DSO, or Chair of Governors for initial consultation **immediately**

| Child protection concern: strategy meeting arranged; all recorded | Unprofessional behaviour: strategy meeting/ POT arranged | Advice given and/ or internal investigation or other action as appropriate | Demonstrably false; recorded, then no further action |

STAFF HAVE CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

REFERRAL NOT REQUIRED: school takes appropriate action, which may include 'early help' and/or in-school

REFERRAL INDICATED: concerns for the child or young person has escalated or must be reported

REFERRAL MADE: REFERRAL INDICATED: concerns for the child or young person has escalated or must be

SOCIAL CARE MAKES A DECISION
about how to progress the report/referral made, and will indicate the type of response required by the school

CHILD IS IN NEED OF IMMEDIATE PROTECTION (referrer is informed)

SECTION 47 ENQUIRY REQUIRED (referrer is informed)

SECTION 17 ENQUIRY REQUIRED (referrer is informed)

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED (referrer is informed)

APPROPRIATE EMERGENCY ACTION TAKEN BY POLICE OR SOCIAL CARE

IDENTIFY THE CHILD AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM, THEN START INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION PLAN (ICPP)

IDENTIFY THE CHILD IN NEED, THEN OFFER APPROPRIATE SUPPORT TO THE CHILD & FAMILY

CONSIDER AN EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH OTHER APPROPRIATE SERVICES

AT ALL STAGES, BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD WILL BE THE DIRECTIVE BEHIND ALL DECISIONS MADE AND ACTIONS TAKEN. THE CHILD'S CIRCUMSTANCES WILL MONITORED AND ACTION REVIEWED AS NECESSARY.

Please note the referrer should always receive feedback after a referral is made, or be involved in any ongoing meetings if the case progresses

6. APPENDIX C – School's Register Responsibilities

- Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

- Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission. Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

- Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

- Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England* statutory guidance.

- It is important that the school's admission register is accurate and kept up to date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur, through using existing communication channels such as regular emails and newsletters. This will assist both the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

- Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admission register:

  - the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;

  - the new address; and

  - the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

- Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record in the admission register

  - the name of the new school; and

  - the date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

7. APPENDIX D – Missing Child Procedures

These procedures are copied from Section 2 of the OCC Children Missing in Education Policy 2017-2021

These procedures are copied from [Section 2 of the OCC Chidden Missing in Education Policy](#)**, which is recommended background to read.**

NOTE: If a school has a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a pupil arising from his/her non-attendance or departure from the school, **it is the school's duty to contact the Local and Community Support Service, the MASH or the police.** The pupil tracking procedure is intended to ensure only that a pupil is receiving a suitable education. A referral for pupil tracking is not a substitute for making any necessary safeguarding referral.

There are several situations in which a school may need to make a pupil tracking referral, and the following paragraphs set out the procedure where:

   • The school is informed that a child is leaving, but no new school is confirmed within twenty school days (section a).
   • A child stops attending (or fails to return after absence) without explanation (section b).
   • A child is allocated a place at a school, but there is no contact from the parents/carers, or the child does not start as arranged (section c).

In any case, a child should not be removed from the registers unless his/her new **educational provision has been confirmed, or the PTO has accepted a referral and has taken over responsibility for tracking the child.**

When a school is informed that a child is leaving, but there is no contact from a new school within twenty school days of his/her last attendance, the school should complete a referral to the PTO (contact details at paragraph 1.3) [using the pupil tracking referral form](#)(Appendix 1). An earlier referral will be accepted where appropriate, for example if the school has reason to think no school application will be made. Any information the school has obtained about the destination of the family should be supplied. The PTO will advise when the child can be removed from the school's register (it will normally be possible to backdate the removal to the last day of attendance).

If a child has left the school to move abroad, the school here may not receive confirmation that the child has started at a new school. Where a school is informed that a child is going abroad, but does not have full details of new educational provision, a referral should be made to the PTO as set out in the previous paragraph. The PTO will advise the school about removal of the pupil from the register and will advise the school on whether further action is required.

When a child stops attending without explanation, or does not return from holiday at the appropriate time, the school should first attempt to contact the parents/ carers in accordance with its attendance policy. On the third day of absence, the school will contact the Locality and Community Support Service. If it is considered that a home visit is required this will be carried out by Early Help staff.

 If the visit establishes that the family has left the address, Early Help staff will refer to the PTO., who will advise when the child can be removed from the school's register (it will normally be possible to backdate the removal to the last day of attendance).

 If the visit establishes that the child is at the address but failing to attend school, the school should continue to apply its attendance procedure, leading to action by the County Attendance Team if other measures are unsuccessful. Please note that the pupil tracking procedures set out in this document apply only when a child is no longer resident at a reasonable distance from the school – where a child remains on the registers but is failing to attend, attendance procedures will apply.

Unexplained absence from school may also give rise to a safeguarding concern and in all such cases the school should consider whether a safeguarding referral is required alongside attendance and pupil tracking procedures.

When a child has been allocated a place at a school but there is no contact from the parents/carers, the school should initially try to contact them by telephone or letter to find out what is happening. The school should also contact the School Admissions Team to find out whether the admissions officer has had any information from the parents/carers. If, after twenty school days, there has been no contact, the school should complete a referral using the pupil tracking referral form (Appendix 1).

Once a start date has been agreed, the pupil must be entered on the school's admission and attendance registers and if he/she then fails to attend, the school must establish the reason for absence and apply its attendance procedure in the normal way.

If at any time after a pupil tracking referral has been lodged, the school is contacted by another school to confirm that the pupil is now on the register there, the **PTO** should be informed **immediately**.

When a child is removed from the school's admission register, the school should indicate the date and the reason for removal from register. Where the new school is known, this should be indicated, **including the new school's seven digit local authority identifier**.

When the new school is unknown and the child is removed from the register in accordance with this procedure, the **"Reason for Leaving"** on SIMS should show **"Unknown Destination"**. The common transfer file should also be completed, and coded XXX XXXX (destination unknown) or MMM MMMM (moved to independent sector or out of England and Wales). It can then be uploaded to S2S in the normal way. These records are securely stored in an area of S2S known as the **Lost Pupils Database**.