Helpringham Primary Academy - Site Specific Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Helen Kay	

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Introduction
This document sets out the arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Helpringham Primary Academy.

Helpringham Primary Academy is committed to Safeguarding and encourages a strong culture of vigilance in this area.

This document forms part of the integrated safeguarding portfolio and should be read alongside:

- Voyage Education Partnership: Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy;
- Voyage Education Partnership: Policy and Procedure for allegations and concerns raised in relation to staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers
- Voyage Education Partnership : Staff Code of Conduct
- Voyage Education Partnership : Attendance Policy
- Voyage Education Partnership: Acceptable Use Policy
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2025;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – December 2023
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (December 2023)
- Local arrangements for managing allegations issued through the relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership;
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004;
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- The Education Act 2002;
- Covid-19 safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers 2020

For the purpose of this document the following terminology should be considered:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment; 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 and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the Academy, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Academy.

DDSL refers to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Academy.

Child/learner includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Key Staff and Contacts

Academy Based Contacts

Name	**Role**
Mrs Helen Kay	Headteacher
Mrs Helen Kay	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Zoe Austin	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Helen Kay	eSafety Officer
Mrs Helen Kay	Prevent Duty Lead
Mrs Helen Kay	Designated Teacher for Children in Care
Mrs Helen Kay	Designated Teacher for Children Previously in care
Mrs Helen Kay	Attendance Champion
All of the above can be contacted via the Academy office on 01529 421676	

Other Useful Contacts

Agency / Contact	**Contact Details**
Voyage Education Partnership- Central Office, Venture House	01205 337057
Sue Clinton – Trust Safeguarding Lead	01205 335335
Maxine Cunningham – Trust SEND Improvement and Inclusion Lead	01205 316822
Caroline Nixon – Trust Attendance Lead	01205 332743
Corinna Wright – Trust Primary Improvement Lead	01205 319900
Clare Willerton - Chief Education Officer	01205 337057
Children's Social Care Contact Centre Lincolnshire County Council	01522 782111
Children's Social Care – Emergency Duty Team Lincolnshire County Council	01522 782333

Designated Officer (LADO) Lincolnshire County Council	01522 554674
Child Line	0800 1111
NSPCC Information Service	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285

A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

All school staff and volunteers are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners will make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that we will consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- 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 the 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

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- is a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- will be available during term time for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- has the status and authority within the Academy to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with regular updates
- is able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and has relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school

- recognises the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities face online and have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- acts as a source of support, advice and expertise to the Academy community
- acts as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- has a working knowledge of local procedures
- makes staff aware of training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns using My Concern and ensures that child protection records are up to date
- discuss with the Headteacher any complex concerns; especially on going enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations, including being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult
- promote educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issue that children in need are experiencing or have experienced and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement in school
- support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- consider whether concerns referred to him/her need to be referred to Children's Services Social Care; or any other agency such as Early Help, Channel Programme, Disclosure and Barring Service and where a crime has been committed to the police
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- ensures that when a learner leaves the Academy, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main learner file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained within 5 days for a mid year transition
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the Academy's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSP
- liaises with the 'case manager' and the Designated Officer (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaises with other relevant staff (Academy and multi-agency) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral so that children's needs are considered holistically
- liaise with the mental health support team were safeguarding concerns link to mental health
- promotes supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including when families may be facing challenging circumstances
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually, liaises with the Trust Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the Headteacher) as appropriate

- makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the Academy's website or by other means.
- follows the LSP's escalation policy where cases are not progressing in an acceptable manner; and
- gather, collate and analyse as appropriate all relevant information for purposes of quality assurance.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Is trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of learners. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Any child may benefit from Social Care Support or Early Help, but some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues, reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur and contextual safeguarding issues. To ensure that all of our learners receive equal protection we will give special consideration to children who:

- are subject to Child In Need or Child Protection Plans or have other social care involvement
- are a Child in care or a child previously in care
- are disabled or have special educational needs
- are Elective Home Education
- have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- are young carers
- show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- are frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, criminal exploitation or sexual 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
- are misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- have returned to the family home after a period in care
- are asylum seekers
- are living away from home / are privately fostered
- are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- are living in temporary accommodation
- are living transient lifestyles
- are homeless
- are vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- do not have English as a first language
- are at risk of "honour" based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage

- are within the court system
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, persistently absent or missing from education
- have a mental health need or require mental health support

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities

(Insert Academy Name) recognises that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect such as:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Allegations against Adults

- When an allegation is made against any adult (paid and voluntary) working within the Academy, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations or low level concerns against adults can be found in the Voyage Education Partnership Policy and Procedure: Allegations and concerns raised in relation to staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers

If you have a concern about an adult working within the Academy, please contact:

Name	**Role**	**Contact Number**
Helen Kay	Headteacher	01529 421676

If your concern relates to the Headteacher, please contact:

Name	**Role**	**Contact Number**
Clare Willerton	Chief Education Officer	01205 337057

Staff training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

All staff will undertake training each September covering as a minimum:

- Signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect (including online safety)

- Local procedures for responding to concerns
- The Academy's behaviour policy
- Response to children that go missing in education
- The staff code of conduct
- Allegations management.

The level of additional training staff will receive is based on their role.

Safer recruitment

Our Academy complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 20234) and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Partnership by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have completed safer recruitment training within the last **2 years**.
- All relevant staff are made aware of relevant legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information.
- The Academy obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the Academy have been appropriately checked.
- Trainee teachers will be checked either by the Academy or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.
- The Academy and Trust maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken on the Every System

Volunteers

All volunteers working within Helpringham Primary Academy will be risk assessed and will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the Academy, their contact with learners and the supervision provided to them.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

Contractors

The Academy checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised whilst learners are on-site.

Site security

Visitors to the Academy, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the Academy's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The Headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the Academy, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our Academy we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our learners attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Teaching our learners about safeguarding

We teach our learners about being safe and keeping safe through a comprehensive PSHE and RSE curriculum. The curriculum is driven through the key headings:

- **Keeping and staying safe**
- **Growing and changing**
- **Relationships**
- **Being responsible**
- **Feelings and emotions**
- **Keeping Healthy**
- **Computer and online safety including misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.**
- **Money Matters**

The themes are repeated annually and are progressive in content delivered at an age-appropriate level. In addition, each year group have termly additional lessons regarding online safety. We recognise that computers and tablets are not the only source of online device for our learners. Our learners have increased access to smart interactive watches and mobile phones.

Specific themed weeks and school days also focus upon keeping and staying safe. Examples such anti-bullying week, on-line safety week, water safety, cyber bullying are features of the long-term curriculum. However, the detail in content is driven by the current needs of classes/year groups. For example, railway safety may feature as a priority for particular years or cohorts. It is important that the additional curriculum content is driven by current need and is proactive rather than reactive.

Helpringham Primary Academy has close working relationships with local and national agencies and charities that keep children safe such as NSPCC, National Network Rail, Royal Life Saving Society, CEOP, NHS and many more. This ensures that Academy use the most up to date guidance to plan, teach, review and update our curriculum offer.

Child Protection Procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our learners are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Children are not always ready or able to talk about their experiences of abuse and/or may not always recognise they are being abused. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people. Children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff can identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

Taking action

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here or what if I'm right". Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

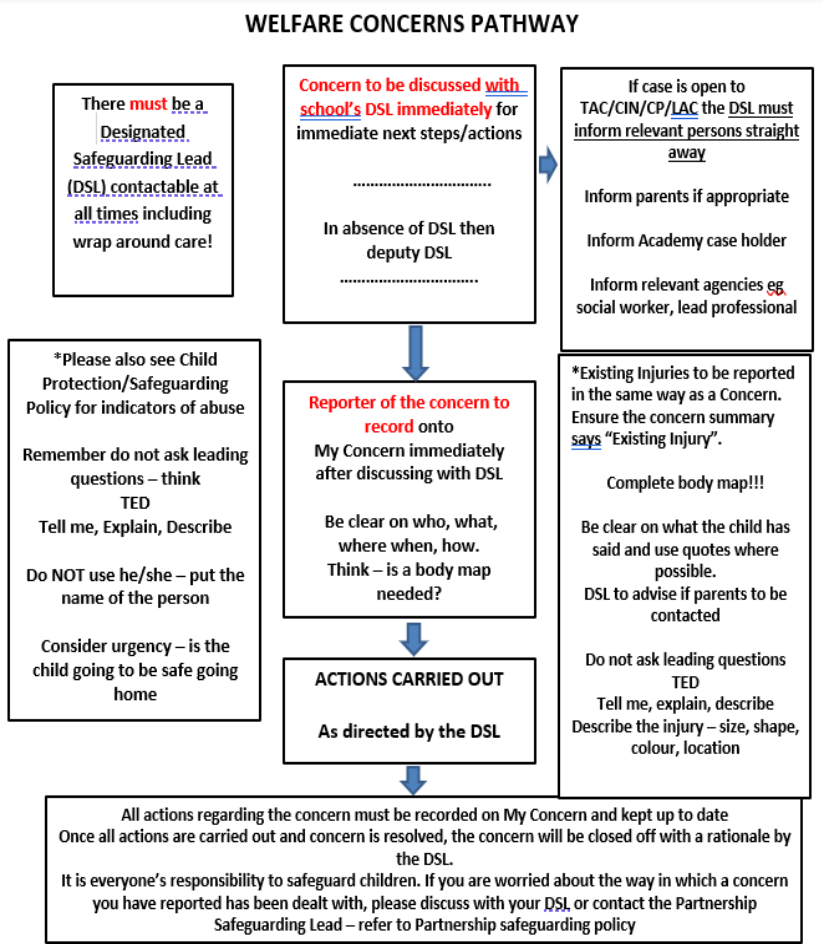
- always act in the best interest of the child
- follow the Academy Welfare Pathway
- report your concern immediately to the DSL or DDSL, so that they can advise whether immediate action is necessary
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern on CPOMs
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

Early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate services. This includes when problems first emerge or where a child is already known to the local authority.

If you are concerned about a learner's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a learner may be at risk. The learner's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the learner the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should record these early concerns following the agreed Academy process using CPOMs. If the learner does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the learner, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.



If a learner discloses to you

We recognise that learners are not always ready to share or recognise that they are being abused, therefore when a child does disclose abuse, it has taken a lot of courage for them to do so.

They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a learner talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the learner know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL. The point at which they tell the learner this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the learners staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences

- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the learner's mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the learner that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the learner what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- Add a 'concern' to 'CPOMs' as soon as possible, notification of which will be sent to the DSL
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, Headteacher, DSL's and staff will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. CPOMs is well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible to enable children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback. Actions taken in response to a child's wishes and feelings will be recorded on CPOMs.

Notifying parents

The Academy will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a learner with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the learner. Therefore, if notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the learner and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL (or Deputy in their absence). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) emphasises that any member of staff can contact children's social care or the dedicated NSPCC helpline if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles.

The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the learner's pastoral file within 'My Concern'.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the learner and/or parents to share sensitive information within the Academy or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information without consent and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a learner or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Headteacher to consider in line with the Trust Data Governance Policies.

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

Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as problems emerge, at any point in a child's life. Lincolnshire's Early Help Pathway will be followed in order to initiate and support Early Help within a multi-agency arena. Appendix Three.

Early Help in our Academy and Lincolnshire

"School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating" Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Helpringham Primary Academy is committed to ensuring that Early Help begins as soon as a concern or worry emerges. We ensure that learners are at the heart of everything we do, and we fully promote every child holistically. We follow Lincolnshire's Early Help Pathway - see appendix 3 to ensure we support our learners holistically in the best way possible.

Worries or concerns may have been identified by our Academy, parents/carers, learners, other professionals or members of our community. Through the curriculum we teach our children about keeping safe and being happy and what to do if they have a worry, find

something difficult or feel sad.

We want our learners and parents/carers/family members to feel comfortable in talking to us about any worries or concerns. We have an "open door" "non-judgemental" approach. We are always here to listen and help our families. Sometimes, just talking about a worry or concern can help to resolve things quickly and make parents/carers/learners feel better.

Our Academy has support from well trained staff. This ensures that our learners and families are directed and supported in the most appropriate way at the right time. The support network is then built accordingly.

Within the Academy this could be individual support to the learner, whole class support, whole academy support, support for parents/carers, evidenced based programmes eg Friends Program or Lego Therapy. Our Academy has experienced staff who have had appropriate training to support children and young people and have knowledge of other services to signpost to.

All children and families may need a bit of support at some time during their school life for many reasons, and to help us work out together how best to support the learner and family, we may complete an Early Help Assessment with the child/family. Once we have done this, we can then see what else school, the learner or the family needs to do to help the worry or if we need to involve others to help. If it is agreed with the learner/family that we need other services to help, then we will start a Team Around the Child (TAC). This means that everyone works together as a team to create a plan to help make things better. The ownership of the plan belongs to the family, and it is always with consent. We strongly believe in a "done with" approach, empowering families.

If we feel more targeted support, help or advice is needed, we can gain advice and guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Trust Safeguarding Lead.

In Lincolnshire, we can also access support from earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnhshire.gov.uk or the TAC admin team AskTAC@lincolnshire.gov.uk for any advice on Early Help, Early Help Assessments and Team Around the Child (TAC)

Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a learner is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm. The learner (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

Lincolnshire's Social Care Customer Service Centre (referrals) number is **01522 782111 / out of hours 01522 782333**

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the Headteacher and the Trust Safeguarding Team are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the learner's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Escalating concerns

Staff need to be aware of those times when concerns may look as though they are not progressing to an outcome or some form of action. This may be indicated by:

- difficulty in getting hold of a DSL
- staff not being satisfied about the decision of the DSL or Headteacher
- staff aware that a colleague has not passed on a concern
- external agencies not accepting a referral from an Academy when it is felt one is needed
- staff not aware of what has happened to their concern because of a lack of feedback.

It is important that staff do not close down a concern because they feel "stuck" or "they can't do anymore". *It is important to escalate concerns to DSLs, Headteachers, other senior staff or if necessary, to the Trust Safeguarding Lead.*

If there are concerns about the work of an external agency the Academy will follow the escalation steps outlined in the locally agreed procedures documents.

The important principle is not to allow a concern to be "closed down" without it having received the necessary attention, assessment and resolution.

If the options above have been explored fully and the concern still isn't being handled effectively and therefore placing the child or young person at risk, it is important that you continue to escalate your concerns by contacting the Chief Education Officer by contacting the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

Specific Safeguarding and Child Protection Issues

Mental Health

Mental Health problems can in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, however, academy staff are well placed to identify where a child's behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of potential mental health concerns and will share these with the DSL.

As a school, we can access a range of advice and support to help us identify what mental health support needs a child may need, which may include working with external agencies.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. It can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the victim and by strangers.

Staff should be vigilant regarding community safety incidents within the vicinity of the academy and ensure that all information is passed to the DSL in a timely manner.

Children are also provided with information in order to ensure they are able to keep themselves safe.

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. The families of children may also be subject to child arrangements processes through the family court system.

We recognise that both circumstances may be stressful for children and appropriate support will be provided in line with local and national guidance.

Children missing in education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. Children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, persistently absent or missing from education could potentially indicate abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation as well as criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage The Academy will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the Local Authority, particularly where children go missing for extended periods of time, on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the Academy day.

Children with family members in prison

Children who have family members that are sent to prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The Academy recognises that these children may need support. Support will be provided in line with guidance from the National Information Centre on Children of Offenders and local agencies.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or c) through violence or threat of violence.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

This list is not exhaustive, staff should remain vigilant and any concerns should be raised immediately with the DSL.

Child Sexual Exploitation

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CSE can affect any young person, male or female, under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to sexual activity.

Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

Indicators of CSE (in addition to those indicators for CCE) can include:

- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

The Academy includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

County Lines

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".

It involves Child Criminal Exploitation as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move and store drugs and money across the country.

County Lines activity and the associated coercion, intimidation, violence, weapons and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities. Children can be targeted and recruited in any setting and are easily trapped as the gangs create 'debts' and can threaten serious violence and kidnap of family members if they attempt to leave the network.

Academy staff will remain vigilant to those children and concerns will be shared with the DSL.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded

- '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,

- 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.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing.

It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK. D

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn (Insert Academy Name) fully supports Operation Encompass which is a police and education early intervention partnership to support children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse. Experiencing domestic abuse is really distressing for a child who may see it or hear it, see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards or even be hurt trying to stop the abuse. Following this children/young people may arrive to school upset and unprepared. Operation Encompass aims to ensure that appropriate school staff are made aware early enough to support the child/young person in the best way possible.

How does it work?

Once police have received a report of domestic abuse where children were present or usually reside there, brief info is shared with the DSL in school. Our DSL's and deputy DSLs have been trained to ensure this is managed well.

Homelessness

Being homeless, or being at risk of becoming homeless, presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

The DSL will be able to support learners facing homelessness in supporting and signposting through appropriate agencies and support networks within the locality.

On-Line Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole academy approach to online safety empowers (Insert Academy Name) to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff and families in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. Our Academy ensures that our school devices and network have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place supported by our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Trust IT Team to ensure the safe use of our IT and smart technology.

Our Academy recognises that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (eg 3G, 4G, 5G). This access means some children whilst at school, could sexually harass, bully and control others via their mobile phone and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often in large chat groups) and view or share pornography and other harmful content.

Children are not allowed phones during the day and are encouraged to leave them at home. Children who do bring phones to school will hand them in to their class teacher at the beginning of each day. The class teacher will securely store them until home time.

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

Helpringham Primary Academy ensures online safety is a key feature within the curriculum and our safeguarding of children. Being safe online is well considered within all long-term planning and is reflected in our Academy (please see KCSIE para 134- 151, Trust online safety policy and Trust acceptable use policy and Academy Behaviour policy).

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation).

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so Academy staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by a female learner about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

Teachers have a legal duty to personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. This should be done with the support of the DSL so that wider concerns for the child or young person are also considered. This will also enable the Academy to support the staff member through this process.

A forced marriage is a marriage entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. Staff must speak to the DSL if they have concerns of forced marriage. Further advice can be sought at Forced Marriage Unit if further advice or information is needed Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. Academy staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a learner about being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to England.

Preventing Radicalisation

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy and other forms of extremism

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 an extremist ideology, there are possible indicators that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). However, it is possible to protect people from extremist ideologies and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral. Although not a cause for concern on their own, possible indicators when taken into consideration alongside other factors or context may be a sign of being radicalised.

Academy staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable learners to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the Academy follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

The Academy has an identified Prevent Lead who will co-ordinate all concerns and necessary referrals related to extremism, radicalisation and terrorism.

Child-on-child abuse

The Academy recognises that children can abuse other children. This can happen inside and/or outside of school and on line .

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the Academy's anti-bullying procedures where necessary.

However, there will be occasions when a learner's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a learner's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

The academy recognises that although there may not be any reported incidents of child on child abuse, this does not mean that it is not happening, it may just be the case that it is not being reported Academy staff will be vigilant of this at all times.

- Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include but may not be limited to bullying (cyber, discriminatory and prejudice based)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes knows as "teenage relationship abuse"
- physical abuse which can include: kicking, punching, hitting, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery (please note consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response – it may not be abusive but it is illegal, whilst non consensual is abusive and illegal)
- 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
- 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

Sexual violence and harassment can occur between 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.

It is recognised that girls are more likely to be the victim of this type of abuse, however abuse of this kind will be dealt with in the same way as all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable.

Sexual Violence - referring to sexual violence in this advice, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual violence. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 which includes rape, sexual assault, assault by penetration, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. If a child is ether a victim or perpetrator of sexual violence, the DSL will complete a risk assessment to ensure the child/ren is supported holistically.

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

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include: • sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names • sexual "jokes" or taunting • physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes.. • displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature • upskirting (this is a criminal offence137), and • online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence • consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. (Taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence.) • sharing of unwanted explicit content • sexualised online bullying •unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media • sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and o coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. If a child is ether a victim or perpetrator of sexual harassment, the DSL will consider completing a risk assessment.

Harmful sexual Behaviour – Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context.

When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum.139 Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support

In order to minimise the risk of child-on child abuse, the academy takes the following steps:

- Regular and appropriate training to staff which includes indicators of abuse, reporting concerns about children, responding to concerns, supporting children and next steps if staff are unsure what to do
- Challenge inappropriate behaviours by making it clear that sexual harassment and sexual violence it not accepted or tolerated or 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'
- Provides a preventative age-appropriate curriculum which covers healthy relationships, respectful behaviour, consent, gender roles, body confidence, prejudiced behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment

Staff will report instances of child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and harassment through the Academy Welfare Pathway process informing the DSL and recording on 'CPOMs' and recognise that support must be provided to both the alleged victim and abuser. It will be made clear that no form of child-on-child abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment will be tolerated or accepted as an inevitable part of growing up or banter, any behaviour of this type will be challenged and not normalised.

Children are made aware of how to report concerns to adults in school and will understand how these concerns will be dealt with by the academy.

Addressing allegations of Child-on-child Abuse:

There are a range of ways concerns might be raised:

- A child or adult might make a direct allegation of abuse by a child or young person.
- A child or adult might tell another adult they're uncomfortable with a child or young person's behaviour. They may not realise the behaviour is abusive.
- A member of staff or volunteer might observe behaviour that gives cause for concern and make a report following our organisation's safeguarding procedures.
- Our Academy may be informed that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation.
- A child or young person might tell an adult or another pupil they have harmed someone else or are at risk of doing so.

Talking to a child **who tells someone** they have behaved abusively:
Sometimes a child may tell an adult directly that they have behaved abusively towards someone else. If this happens we will:

- reassure the child that they've done the right thing by telling someone about it
- listen carefully to the child and let them tell their whole story.
- Not try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure we understand what they're saying
- use non-judgmental language
- remember that a child who is telling someone they've abused someone else is a child in need of support
- tell them that we now have to do what we can to keep them and the other children involved safe
- explain what we are going to do next and that we will need to speak to other people who can help
- reassure the child that they can get help to change their behaviour and move forward with their life

- Never promise to keep what a child tells us a secret. Rather, we will explain that we need to talk to other people who can help keep them and the other children involved safe.

Talking to a child **who may** be behaving abusively:
If allegations have been made against a child this should be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately. If adults confront the child about the allegations before taking advice, it may make the situation worse. The DSL, their Deputy or any other member of staff working in an educational setting can contact the Report Abuse in Education Helpline for support and guidance on 0800 136 663 or at help@nspcc.org.uk.

Remember that they may not realise their behaviour is unacceptable. Be aware that a child who displays challenging behaviour may be doing so because they have experienced abuse or neglect. Talk to them calmly and explain why their behaviour is unsuitable and what they can do to improve it. Discuss the child's behaviour with the support of the Academy Behaviour Policy.

As always, accurate and detailed notes on any concerns about a child should be recorded on 'CPOMs'. These should include: what the child said or did that gave cause for concern (if the child made a verbal disclosure, write down their exact words) and the details of any other children involved or impacted.

When a child or young person behaves inappropriately towards another child, a decision needs to be made about whether there may be a child protection concern. Our DSL or Deputy DSL will make this decision in consultation with:

- Any staff member who is responsible for the supervision/pastoral care of the children involved
- The Trust Safeguarding Lead
- Any other agencies known to be working with the child
- The local child protection services if deemed necessary.

We will also take into account any relevant information from other agencies, such as care plans or multi-agency assessments.

An allegation becomes a child protection concern when:

- the behaviour involves sexual assault or physical assault
- the child who has experienced the abusive behaviour has suffered significant harm
- the behaviour forms part of a pattern of concerning behaviour by the child or young person who is being abusive
- the child carrying out the abuse is displaying harmful sexual behaviour
- We are concerned that the child carrying out the abuse may be doing so because they have experienced abuse or other upsetting experiences themselves.

It is also a child protection concern when there's a significant difference of power between the child who is displaying abusive behaviour and the person being abused, for example when:

- there's an age difference of more than two years
- there's a significant difference in terms of size or level of ability
- the child displaying abusive behaviour holds a position of power (such as being a helper, volunteer or informal leader)
- the child being abused is significantly more vulnerable than the other child or young person.

If in doubt, the DSL will consult with the Trust's Safeguarding Lead and the Local Safeguarding Children's Team.

Informing Parents/Carers:
The child's parents or carers will be told what has happened, as long as it doesn't increase the risk to the child. (Insert Academy Name) recognises that it is important for parents and children to talk about what's happened and begin to come to terms with it as a family. Parents will be signposted to support to help their child change their behaviour and move forward. The DSL / Deputy DSL will also make sure parents/carers are offered appropriate support.

Reporting concerns:
If we think a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police on **999**.

If we feel they are not in immediate danger we will risk assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.

Taking action to keep all children and young people safe:
Depending on the nature of the allegation or concern, we may need to take action to protect and support children who have experienced peer abuse. We will also consider how best to support the child against whom the allegation was made.

Sanctions:
Helpringham Primary Academy's Behaviour Policy sets out for all pupils how we expect our learners to behave. It also sets out what sanctions will apply to anybody who chooses not to behave appropriately. We will follow these sanctions for any child who does not behave in the right way.

Emotional support
If child-on-child abuse has taken place, this may have an emotional impact on everyone in the group. We will ensure both pupils and staff have access to the emotional support they need and know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything.

Protecting both parties:

- We will make sure the child who is alleged to have carried out the abuse is separated from the children who experienced the abuse until such a point that it is proved otherwise.
- We will also separate the child who is alleged to have carried out the abuse from other children where there is a risk of further abuse
- We will assess whether the children who experienced the abuse are at risk of bullying or victimisation from others and put in place appropriate preventative measures as deemed necessary.
- We will also assess whether the child who is alleged to have carried out the abuse is at risk of any retaliation and take appropriate action to keep them safe.

Serious Violence

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime.

These may include:

- increased absence from school

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

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

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

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy. Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence

Dealing with issues of images and videos being shared (Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes)

We recognise the children and young people who are involved in a sexting incident might have:

- shared an image of themselves
- received an image from someone else
- shared an image of someone else more widely.

This may have happened with or without consent of all the people involved. Children may also have been coerced or pressured into giving consent. Sometimes a child might tell an adult in school directly that they have been involved in sexting. Or they might mention something which gives someone cause for concern. Other times adults might notice that a child is behaving differently or being bullied, and the sexting might come to light when the adult tries to find out what's going on. Never wait for a child to tell an adult directly that they have been involved in sexting. Notify the DSL immediately if concerned. Any concerns should be managed alongside the guidance Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (December 2023)

Gathering information:
The nominated DSL or Deputy DSL will take the lead on responding to incidents of sexting. They will liaise with agencies such as the police or children's social care as appropriate.

The DSL or deputy DSL will talk to the young people involved, to find out what's happened, how they are feeling and what support they need. They should try to find out:

- if it's an image, video or message
- who sent it
- who is featured in it
- if there were any adults involved
- if it's on an organisational or personal device.

Safeguarding and child protection will remain the main concern of any investigation into a sexting incident and we will avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily (College of Policing, 2016). If sexting is reported to the police, they will make a record but may decide not to take any formal action against a young person.

What we will do with a sexting image:

- We will never view any sexting images (in line with best practice). If the image is on a school device, the IT team will be contacted in order to isolate it so that nobody else can see it. This may involve temporarily blocking the network to all users.
- We will never copy, print or share sexual images of a child or young person (Childnet, 2016; UKCCIS, 2017a and 2017b).
- We will only search devices if we believe a child is at immediate risk of harm. This will be undertaken in line with the Department for Education (DfE) provides guidance for head teachers, staff and governing bodies in England on searching electronic devices (DfE, 2018).

Continued support for children and young people:
All children and young people involved in sexting will be offered ongoing support. Parents and carers will be informed, unless we deem that doing so might pose a risk to their child.

Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a learner may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the Academy should notify the Local Authority of the circumstances.

Looked after children/ Children in Care

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The Academy ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the Local Authority's virtual head for children in care.

Work experience

The Academy has detailed procedures to safeguard learners undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise learners on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

Children staying with host families

The Academy may make arrangements for learners to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas learners may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the Local Authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable. In such circumstances the Academy follows the guidance in Annex D of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Appendix One

Indicators of abuse and neglect

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. 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. 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 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. 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.

Sexual abuse:

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

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

.**Indicators of abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead..

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

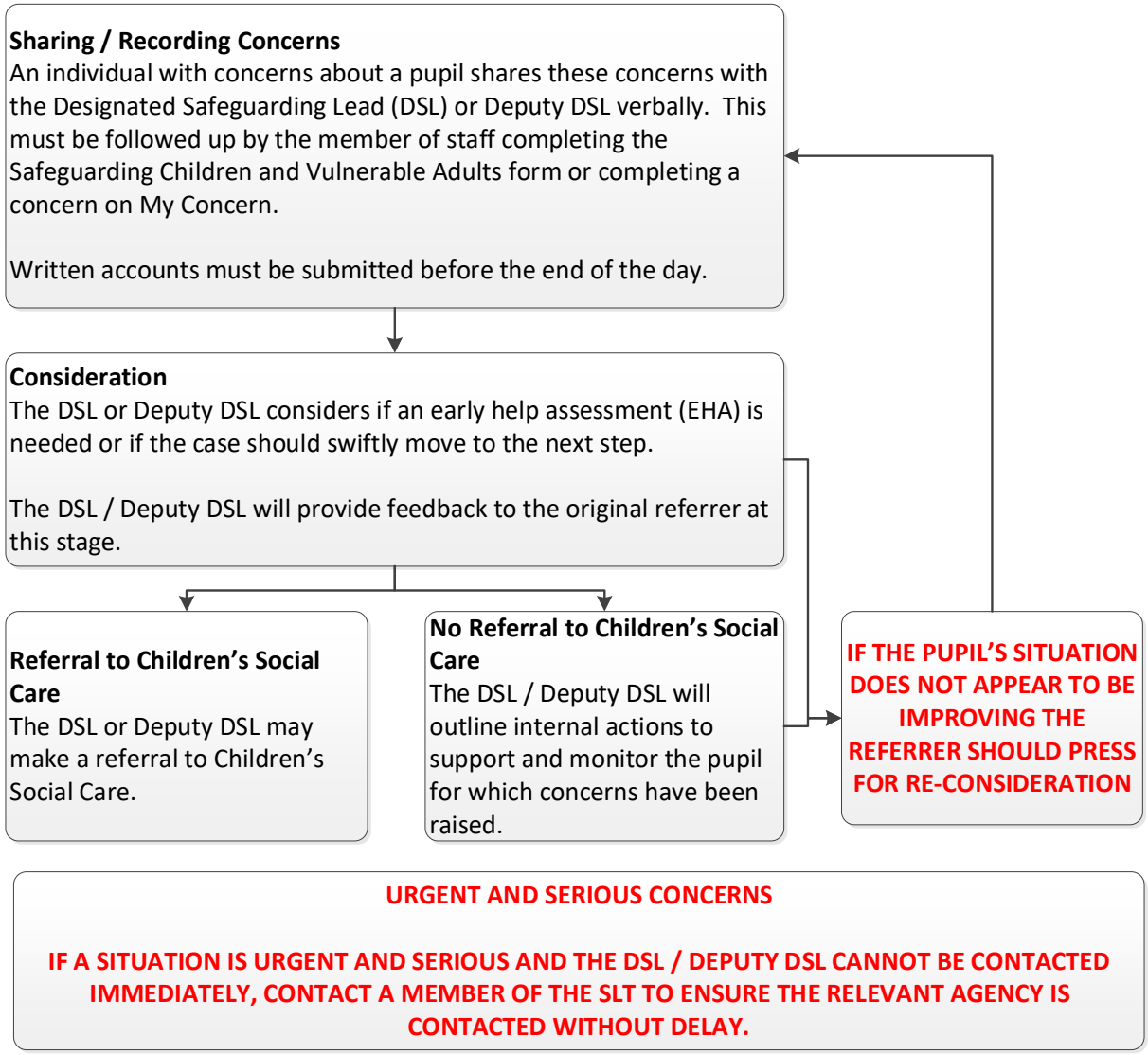
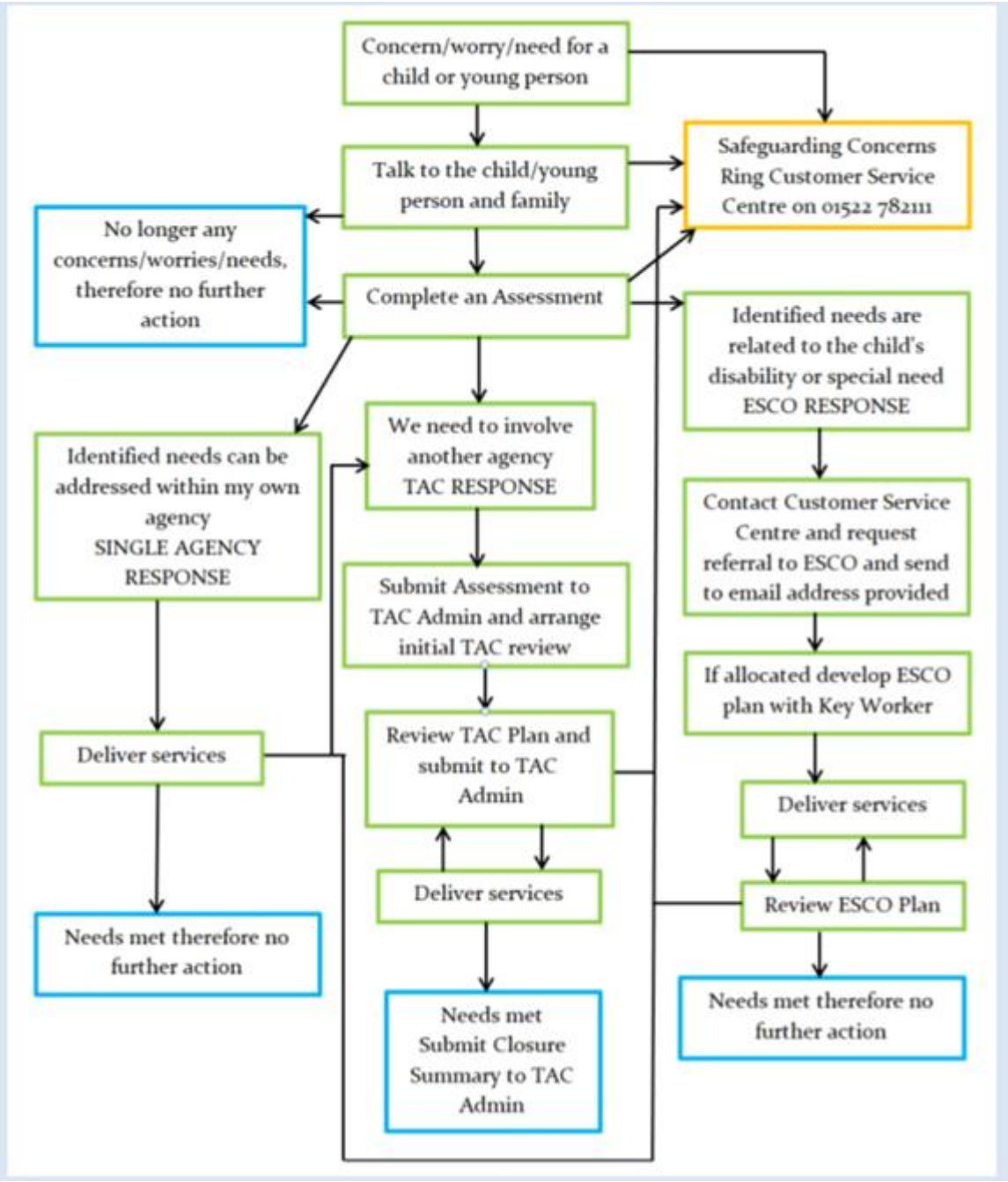
A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol

- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

Appendix Two – Concerns Flowchart



Appendix Three- Early Help Pathway (Lincolnshire)