

Westlea Primary School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2021-2022

Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
Annual	02.09.21	Sarah Sumner	01.09.22

Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Nigel Green		
Head Teacher	Sarah Sumner		
Loaded to website			

Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details

Highlighted green are the additions from the KCSiE Sep 21 update

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POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies

- Behaviour
- Recruitment and Selection
- Whistleblowing
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Anti-Bullying /Peer on Peer Abuse
- Online Safety
- Mental Health
- Policy on Supporting Children in Care
- Attendance including the safeguarding response to children who go missing
- Health and Safety

Definitions

- **Safeguarding** 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 situation where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, and action is required to protect that child.

Introduction

At Westlea safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone at Westlea** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. **Westlea recognises that we are an important part in the wider safeguarding system. All staff will understand and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, children who are victims of abuse and some SEND children may be needed.** In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff will make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they will consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

Westlea is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn;
- Fulfilling our statutory responsibilities to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- **Working to protect children from maltreatment, to prevent the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development**
- **Always taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes**

All action taken by **Westlea** will be in accordance with:

- **Current legislation and Statutory guidance:**

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm; in addition it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Teacher Standards 2012 state that teachers, including head teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

All staff at **Westlea** have a duty and responsibility to safeguard children and young people attending our school, irrespective of their role:

- All staff will be responsible for identifying concerns early and providing help for children and young people, to prevent concerns from escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989; i.e. Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (a child suffering harm, or likely to suffer significant harm). These concerns will be discussed with our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) **or their deputy**.
- All staff will be aware of the process and principles for sharing information within the school which supports safeguarding.
- All staff should be aware of the local early help process and understand their role within it.
- All staff have a responsibility to contribute to the Early Help Assessment and Plan as requested
- The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to safeguard and protect a child. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow our school referral processes.
- All staff will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) **will** consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside **the home**. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Equalities Statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and families' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, race, economic condition, disability and religion. With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to the safeguarding of pupils at **Westlea** by:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and pupils. Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust safeguarding ethos in the school, built on mutual respect, and shared values
- Teaching children about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of broad and balanced curriculum
- Alerting staff to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues including abuse and neglect
- Developing staff awareness of the causes and consequences of abuse and neglect
- Developing staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities their pupils face by addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage
- Reducing the potential risks pupils face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation or victimisation;
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents and agencies.

This policy will contribute to supporting the pupils at **Westlea** by:

- Identifying and protecting the most vulnerable
- Taking a contextual safeguarding approach to understanding the risks presenting to children outside the family home, taking into consideration extra familial harm
- Taking seriously the risks presented to children by children, with particular vigilance for child on child sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Assessing individual needs where possible
- Designing plans to meet those needs.

Expectations

All staff will:

- Be familiar with this safeguarding policy, in addition to this all staff will be aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including; reading the Behaviour Policy; the Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct); safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc.
- All staff will read and understand Part 1 or **Annex A** of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). Those working directly with children will also read **Annex B**.
- Be involved, where appropriate, in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and inter-agency child protection plans
- Know who and how to contact the DSL and any deputies, the Chair of Governors, and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse and neglect **or at risk of harm** and be able to identify vulnerable learners and take action to keep them safe.

Information or concerns about children will be shared with the DSL where it includes those:

- who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect
- requiring mental health support,
- may benefit from early help
- where there is a radicalisation concern
- where a crime may have been committed
- **where there is the potential for peer on peer abuse/child on child sexual harassment or sexual violence**
- Be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to peer on peer abuse, children missing education, **children who have low and persistent absence**, and children requiring mental health support
- Record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using the setting's safeguarding systems.
- Are aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the school.
- Adhere to the school's Staff Code of Conduct and behaviour management policies;

- Have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and previously looked after children safe;
- Be aware of signs of abuse or neglect and the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) **and those with relevant health conditions ;**
- Be aware of their legal responsibility to report cases of FGM to the police. Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (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 (KCSIE 2021)

Regulated professionals have a mandatory reporting duty to report cases of known FGM. Teachers are considered regulated professionals. The duty requires that they themselves report known incidents to the police. This cannot be delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Report their concerns to the DSL if they think a pupil/student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism;
- Aware that up skirting is now a criminal offence.
- Aware of school whistleblowing procedures and policy;
 - Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children should be referred to the LADO on the day that the allegation is reported. The allocated social worker should also be informed on the day. The school should not undertake any investigation unless the LADO advises this. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

General guidance can be found at:

Advice on whistleblowing <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.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to MASH 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.

[See When to Call the Police](#)

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior member of staff, who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school. Details of our DSL and Deputy DSL are:

Louise Edmonds, Craig Breeze and Alex Watson and can be found on the **Westlea** website and displayed around school.

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding child protection remains with the DSL.

The DSL and DDSL at **Westlea** have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills to carry out this substantive role, this includes training on the Prevent Duty. The safeguarding team at Westlea understand the importance of providing information and support to children's social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They also understand the impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing.

The broad areas of responsibility for the DSL are:

- **Liase** with the local authority and other agencies;
- **To hear** the voice and views of children, by developing a culture of listening to children, taking account of their wishes and feelings
- **Ensuring staff** understand the difficulties some children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and fostering a culture within Westlea to overcome any barriers
- **Provide** advice and support to staff regarding child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- **Liase** with staff, especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads, special educational needs coordinators on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.
- **Refer cases and managing referrals** to other agencies **to ensure a child's needs are considered holistically** including: the local authority children's social care in cases of suspected abuse; Wiltshire Prevent Policing team where there is a radicalisation concern; the Disclosure and Barring Service in cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and the Police in cases where a crime may have been committed in relation to safeguarding. The DSL will also support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies:

- **Refer cases to the Police as required**

- **When to Call the Police**

- **Work with others** to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people subject to a child protection plan by attending child protection conferences and implementing the multiagency child protection plan; and when required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- **Promote** supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- **Work** with relevant staff, including senior leaders, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children may be experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at **Westlea**
- **Ensuring** the staff at Westlea know the cohort of children who have or had a social worker, and they understand the academic progress and attainment whilst maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these children. Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these children to reach their potential.
- **Ensure** staff at **Westlea** understand that although statutory intervention may have ended for a child that there may be a lasting impact on the child's educational outcomes
- **The DSL** will act as a single point of contact for all matters of safeguarding and advice for staff, volunteers and governors.
- **Undertake Training** to ensure the DSL (and any deputies) has the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role (updated every 2 years). Further knowledge and skills should be updated at regular intervals and shared with relevant parties as appropriate;
- **Ensure** every member of staff at **Westlea** has access to the safeguarding and child protection policies and associated practices are known, understood and used appropriately. **This includes part time and new staff.**
- **Provide** an annual report to the governing body on safeguarding and child protection activity within the school;
- **Manage safeguarding** information confidentially and safely through:
 - **Ensuring** that child protection records are kept up to date, and records are clear and comprehensive, that the record contains details of how concerns were followed up and resolved and that records note all actions taken and decisions made including outcomes.

- That safeguarding records are shared **within 5 days** of a child leaving **Westlea** with a signed receipt being obtained

The DSL will understand that a lack of information about a child's circumstances can impact on a child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes, by providing information in a timely manner this will ensure the receiving school/college/educational setting can put in place the right support to safeguard this child and help the child to thrive. The DSL will share information in advance to the DSL at the new education setting prior to the child leaving to enable support to be available to safeguard the child.

- **Availability** of the DSL (or any deputies) during term time and school hours **will be** ensured for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- **Ensure** appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time/ any out of hours/out of term activities managed by the school **to include support or attending child protection conferences and strategy discussions.**
- **Help** promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable learners with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
 - know who these children are,
 - understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort;
 - are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face
 - make reasonable adjustments so that they act to best support these children.

The role of the DSL is explained in more detail in KCSIE **2021- Annex C.**

7. Governing Body

The Governing Body at **Westlea** will ensure that there is a whole school approach to safeguarding by ensuring safeguarding is at the forefront and underpins all relevant processes and policies. These systems, policies and processes will be readily available and easy to understand.

The Governing Body at **Westlea** will ensure that there is a senior board member with responsibility for **Westlea's** safeguarding arrangements and that member of staff from the school leadership team is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). They will also ensure that the DSL has the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out this substantial role effectively.

The **Governing Body at Westlea** will ensure:

- That safeguarding and child protection practice, process and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.
- That the appointed Governor with Safeguarding responsibilities will liaise with the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the S.175/157 (annual safeguarding) audit for the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
- That the school has a safeguarding policy
- That the school has key policies in place to cover
 - Behaviour
 - Code of Conduct
 - Children Missing Education
- That Westlea has policies and systems in place to prevent, identify and respond to Peer on Peer Abuse and Child on Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence
- The Governing Body reviews Westlea safeguarding policies/procedures annually or as required due to changes in statutory guidance
- That where possible more than one emergency contact telephone number is recorded for each pupil and this is checked on a regular basis
- That there is an appropriately trained Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement for: looked after children; those children who have left care through adoption; special guardianships or child care orders; or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales; and will work with the Virtual School Head
- That the staff at Westlea have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe
- Westlea operates “safer recruitment” procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers. In line with School Staffing Regulations at least one person on any recruitment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.
- That the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/volunteers
- The Chair of Governors will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer, Police and other partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head Teacher
- That Westlea will maintain a Single Central Record of relevant pre-employment checks as detailed in KCSIE 2021 and that details of individuals should be removed from the single central record when they leave the employment of Westlea

- That all staff who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and this training is regularly updated.
- That **Westlea** will contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance (see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)
- That **Westlea** consider their duties as required in the Prevent Duty and has in place a Prevent risk assessment
- That children are taught about safeguarding including online safety
- That **Westlea** has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to support work online, but these will not act as an unreasonable restriction – these filters and monitors will be informed by **Westlea's** Prevent risk assessment
- That the school remedies any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay
- That where facilities or premises are hired to organisations or individuals that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe this will include seeking assurances that there are appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these if needed), including liaising with **Westlea** staff if appropriate. These arrangements will be included in any lease or hire agreement.

Training

In addition to this policy, **all** staff working directly with children will read and understand Part One and Annex **B** of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021**. **Staff members who do not work directly with children will either read and understand Part One or Annex A of KCSIE 2021**

- **All** staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training on induction this will be refreshed annually taking into account current key learning points and trends from serious case reviews and local current **and emerging issues and trends**. In addition, **all** staff will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively
- Whistle blowing procedures will be covered in our whole school training so that staff know what to do if they have concerns relating to safeguarding practice within the school

- The DSL and any deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years. Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL.
- Governing Bodies will ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training will be regularly updated. Induction and training will be in line with advice from the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
- **Westlea** will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training
- The Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement of children in care will undergo appropriate training
- The DSL will undertake relevant Prevent awareness, **Prevent referral and Channel** training and in turn will provide training, advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. All other school staff members will complete appropriate training, this will include FGM and Prevent training using quality assured provision such as the [Government Online Prevent E-training learning package](#).
- Online and internet safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach
- **That as a minimum, the governor with safeguarding responsibility** will be trained in safeguarding (including Prevent) however where possible more members of the Board will receive this training to ensure suitable succession and robustness of knowledge, skills and support to the wider school.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

Westlea has a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in our school. At **Westlea** we have robust recruitment procedures that deter or prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment with us, this includes volunteers who may work in our school.

- **Westlea** pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021) including:
 - all our advertisements for positions in our school contain safeguarding statements,
 - job description and person specifications include safeguarding information relating to regulated activity,
 - the safeguarding policy and associated processes will be provided within the applicant pack.

- All applications including shortlisting will follow safer recruitment procedures and guidance within KCSIE 2021 which includes pre appointment vetting checks.
- References will always be obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

All recruitment materials will include reference to **Westlea** commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.

Staff Support

It is recognised the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work. **Westlea** will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support, as appropriate. Further, **Westlea** will endeavour to create a robust safeguarding culture and environment, so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters that occur outside the workplace, which may have implications on their practice to safeguarding of children in our school.

Support for Children

Opportunities will be provided for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and wellbeing.

Westlea understand that if children are at risk or have suffered abuse that a child will need support and all staff will understand their responsibilities to always act in the best interest of the child.

Children will always be encouraged and supported to report any incidences of abuse to a member of staff who will liaise with the DSL.

Westlea will take a zero tolerance approach to any child on child sexual harassment or sexual violence. Children at **Westlea** will never be made to feel ashamed or feel that they are the problem for making a report.

Support for children will be tailored on a case by case basis.

Staff will understand that if a child has experienced abuse, harassment or a sexual assault then they will likely to be traumatised and may struggle in normal classroom environments.

Westlea will always endeavour to seek the child's views and if required allocate a designated trusted adult, as far as reasonable this will be the child's choice.

Westlea will also consider the needs for support for any alleged perpetrator.

See Child on Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence policy or add in school policy process here, ensuring full reference to KCSIE and guidance on child on child sexual harassment and sexual violence

Whole School Approach

All policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example anti-bullying, equality and diversity, use of reasonable force, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure we have a whole school approach.

Our safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of our school, which ensures that pupils are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude 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.

Identification of those at Increased Risk, or have Additional Safeguarding Needs

Certain groups of pupils within school are more likely to be identified as requiring extra support to meet their safeguarding needs; these could include: children in care and previously looked after children, young carers, those with mental health problems and those living in households where there is domestic abuse, mental health concerns and/or substance misuse, children with parents who are currently in prison etc. **Westlea** will takes steps to identify those at greater risk, regularly monitored and appropriate measures are put in place to support their needs.

Extra familial harm – risk outside the home

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families, extra familial harm/**risk outside the home**. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers **possibly** have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can **possibly** undermine parent-child relationships. Therefore staff at **Westlea** will be considering the context within which incidents and or behaviours occur, and any actions taken will consider the safety and wellbeing of the child within this context. This is known as **Contextual Safeguarding**.

Managing allegations made against members of staff or volunteers

Allegations that meet the harms threshold

All staff should report any concerns relating to staff to the Headteacher without delay, the Headteacher will report all allegations that meet the harms threshold to the LADO within 24 hours of the allegation having been received.

Where there are concerns/allegations about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the Governing Body

All allegations will be managed in line with the statutory guidance in KCSIE 2021 and the school whistleblowing procedure.

Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with the Headteacher or Governing Body or feel their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available.

Staff can call 08000 28 0285 – 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk . Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

The new KCSIE 21 now includes guidance for schools where the concerns are low level and do not meet the harms threshold.

Allegations against adults working/ volunteering with children	Allegations which may meet the 'harms' threshold
	Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (Low level concerns)

Key Safeguarding Areas

In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that **Westlea** has a responsibility to address and these include (see KCSIE 2021 Annex B for full details):

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation,
- County Lines
- Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Cybercrime
- Domestic Abuse

- Homelessness
- So called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage)
- FGM
- Forced Marriage
- Preventing radicalisation
- The Prevent Duty
- Channel
- Additional Support
- Peer on peer/child on child abuse
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Upskirting
- The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Additional advice and support

Procedures

Reporting Concerns

The procedure to respond to a concern about a child is detailed in Appendix B.

Involving Parents and Carers

In general, the DSL will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before making a referral to another agency including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). There may be occasions when the DSL will contact another agency **before** informing parents/carers because **they consider that by** contacting them **it** may increase the risk of harm to the child.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Multi Agency Working

Staff at **Westlea** understand the importance of our role to work in partnership with other agencies and that we have a shared and equal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. If there are **safeguarding or** child protection concerns, referrals should be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSL) to MASH by phone (01793 466903 out of hours 01793 436699) following up with a referral on an RF1. Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager.

If there is immediate risk then a call must be made to Police.

All situations where rape of a child has been disclosed then contact with Police **must** be made.

At **Westlea** all staff will understand the age and meaning of consent.

Further information can be found here [Sexual harassment and sexual violence between children](#)

Westlea will co-operate with any child protection enquiries including statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: **Westlea** will ensure representation at **single and multi**-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings, initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

Where a pupil/student is subject to a multi-agency child protection plan or a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, **Westlea** will contribute to any information requests.

Escalation/professional disagreement

Westlea will use the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Policy on resolution of professional disagreements relating to safeguarding and protection of children in all cases where escalation is required, to achieve the right outcome for children.

[Escalation policy - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Exclusions

When **Westlea** is considering excluding, either fixed term or permanently, a vulnerable pupil and / or a pupil who is the subject of a child protection plan, **is a child looked after** or where there are safeguarding concerns **Westlea** will follow the local authority procedures. A contextual safeguarding risk assessment will be considered prior to **any** exclusion.

Private Fostering Arrangements

Where **Westlea** staff become aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, where a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by someone who is not a close relative, for 28 days **or more**, they should raise this, in the first instance, with the DSL. The DSL will notify the local authority of the circumstances **to enable the local authority to discharge their duties**.

6. FGM Reporting Guidance

Mandatory reporting duty for **teachers**

All staff, particularly teachers at **Westlea** understand the duty to report to Police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils/ students.

Staff at **Westlea** understand that if there is a suspicion that a girl may be travelling for the purposes of FGM, the teacher or DSL will report this directly to Police as the child may be in immediate risk of harm.

Phone 101 if a known case (999 if the child is in immediate risk of harm). It is also good practice to inform MASH (of these actions).

Children Missing from Education (To be read in conjunction with the Attendance Policy)

Staff at **Westlea** understand that a child going missing from education or there is increased absence, unauthorised absences or are persistently absent for part of the day that this is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or the child could be at risk of exploitation. All staff will follow **Westlea** procedures for unauthorised absence and for responding to children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify and protect them from the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual or criminal exploitation.

Peer on peer abuse and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and that sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue and that this can happen both inside and outside of school including happening online.

Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. All staff at **Westlea** understand that even if there are no reports in school that it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that children are just not reporting it.

All staff will be vigilant to what they hear, are told and see and will report all concerns, disclosures or incidents to the DSL.

Staff at **Westlea** will challenge any inappropriate behaviour between peers, they will not downplay or dismiss behaviours as ‘just banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’. All Staff at **Westlea** will develop and model the ethos and culture of our school’s zero tolerance of this type of behaviour and will support and encourage children to come forward and report any issues or concerns they have.

All staff will be trained to recognise signs and symptoms which may signal a child is at risk from sexual harassment or sexual violence and all other types of child on child, peer on peer abuse.

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

- Staff will inform the DSL and record the allegation, but will not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority MASH and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence

The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the child(ren) who experience the abuse and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a **named trusted adult** they can talk to if needed

All who experience abuse will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

Those who experience abuse will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment

Those who experience abuse will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

In addition to existing advice about managing a disclosure contained in this policy, staff will follow Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice 2018.

The DSL will manage any incidents in line with the guidance contained in Part 5 KCSIE 2021 and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges 2021.

Westlea will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different vulnerable groups
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by to ensure **their concerns are heard and** their wishes are understood
- Ensure staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

Serious Violence

All staff will be aware of the risk factors which may signal a child is at risk from or are involved in 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, a change in wellbeing, signs of unexplained injuries or assault. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate a child is being exploited.

All staff are aware of the risk factors which increase the likelihood of a child becoming involved in serious violence such as being male, having been frequently absent from school or permanently excluded from school, having experienced maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

All staff will report any concerns to the DSL.

The Prevent Duty

As with other safeguarding risks, staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include our DSL making a referral using the agreed local Prevent referral procedures.

All referrals will be made to Preventreferrals@wiltshire.police.uk by our DSL where it will be reviewed, there may be a need for a multi-agency Channel panel where information from partners is reviewed and the referral considered, level of vulnerability agreed and consider what support may be needed. Westlea's DSL will provide information and attend Channel Panels where they are requested to do so.

Westlea's DSL will also consider whether it is appropriate to share information with any new education setting in advance of the child leaving our school. This is to ensure the new setting are able to continue supporting the child through the Channel programme.

Sharing of Information

Westlea recognises the need to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

Whilst the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information **cannot** be allowed to stand

in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children; if unsure, staff should contact the DSL to discuss. **Westlea** will use the government's guidance 'Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers' (2018) to help manage information sharing in school.

Transfer of safeguarding records when a pupil moves to a new school

Where children leave **Westlea**, the DSL will ensure their child protection/safeguarding file is transferred to the new education setting **within 5 days**, to allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker or have been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives, also ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. This file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

The DSL will ensure this file is transferred within 5 days for an in-year transfer and within 5 days of the start of a new term.

Westlea's DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new education setting in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college

The school will retain records for pupils where there is an existing safeguarding /child protection file or who have been withdrawn to be electively educated at home. These will be stored confidentially until the child's 25th birthday and then disposed of in a confidential and secure manner.

Appendix A

Forms 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. 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.

All **Westlea** staff will be made 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. For children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those with relevant health conditions additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect, these include:

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

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.

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 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.

Domestic Abuse: The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act). Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing 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. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16).

Appendix B If you have concerns about a child:

If the child is at immediate risk call the Police on 999
(Police must be informed of all sexual assault cases)

To make an urgent referral to MASH 01793
466903 Out of hours 01793 436699

To make a Prevent referral use the Prevent referral form and send to PreventReferrals@wiltshire.police.uk For questions contact 01380 826454 or 01278 647466

It may be necessary to also refer to MASH – take advice from MASH or the Prevent numbers above

Sharing / recording concerns An individual with concerns about a child takes immediate action by following the school policy and informs a designated member of the safeguarding team. The DSL will consider the information, in the context of any other concerns / disclosures, and decide on next steps. Parents / carers should be involved at this stage, **unless to do so may place the child at increased risk of significant harm, in which case advice should be sought from MASH.**

No referral to children's social care Actions will be agreed to monitor the child and support the child / family where needed. An Early Help Record and Plan (EHRP) should also be considered.

If concerns continue / escalate, the decision will be reviewed to decide if a referral is necessary

DSL / DDSL make referral to social care (and call the police if necessary)

Referral to children's social care The DSL will make a telephone referral in the first instance to MASH. This must be followed up within 24 hours with a written referral, using form RF1. The RF1 form must be signed and dated by the referrer. **If a child discloses physical or sexual abuse, where the alleged abuser is either a family member or someone resident within the household, the school must consult the Duty Social Worker before informing parent(s).**

Children's social care consideration Children's social care decides within 1 working day what action will be taken, including if an assessment is needed and **feedback to the referrer**. This decision will be made using the Swindon threshold document.

Assessment

Child in need of immediate protection: Appropriate emergency action taken by police, NSPCC or social worker.
Section 47 assessment – child identified as at risk of significant harm, possible child protection plan
Section 17 assessment – child identified as at need and appropriate support identified.
All schools and colleges should allow local authorities access to facilitate arrangements.

No Assessment If the information supplied in the referral does not meet the threshold, an EHR should be started and/or onward referral to other specialist or universal services; **children's social care will feedback to the referrer**. For any concerns that Early Help provided at level 2 is not working and things are not getting better for the child, discuss this with the child, parents/carers and refer to MASH.

At all stages, staff should consider the circumstances and re-refer if necessary. The emphasis is on ensuring that the child's best interests come first and where appropriate improve.

The multi-agency referral form (RF1) should also be completed for all referrals to MASH

Appendix C: If you have concerns about an adult

All staff, and visitors, working in our school understand and adhere to a staff code of conduct.

If you have a concern about an adult, raise your concerns immediately with the Headteacher who will refer to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer).

The Headteacher is Sarah Sumner

If the Headteacher is not available, contact the most senior member of staff on site.

If your concern is about the Headteacher, contact the Chair of Governors

LADO 01793 463 854
LADO@swindon.gov.uk

NSPCC 0800 028 0285
help@nspcc.org.uk

For help and advice or if a member of staff feels their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may contact:

General guidance can be found at:

Advice on whistleblowing <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.

Appendix D

Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I Remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations on CPOMS.
- Pass this record on as soon as possible, immediately if significant risk is identified, to the DSL

It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures or investigate. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and ensure the child is supported through any disclosure process.

Key Documentation, procedures and guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children (2018)
- Prevent Duty departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (2015).
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018).
- The Teachers' Standards (2012)
- Multi agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (2020)
- Children Missing Education guidance for local authorities (2016)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021)
- Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Policy on resolution of professional disagreements relating to the safeguarding and protection of children (2019)