



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Aspiration – Respect – Excellence

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

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| Author | Mr M A Grantham | Review Period | Annual |
| Version | 10 | Status | Approved |
| Committee | Full Governing Body | Date Approved | July 2023 |
| Link Governor | Mr W Edwards | Review Date | July 2024 |



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policy/policies:

- Equal opportunities
- Anti-bullying and discrimination
- Inclusion
- Online Safety
- Young People's Mental Health
- PSHCE including Relationships and Sex Education [RSE]
- Low Level Concerns and Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

Introduction

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, teaching and support (including temporary and agency supply), governors and volunteers to share this commitment. Adults in our academy take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child Protection refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre will act in accordance with, amongst others, the following government legislation and guidance to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners and to work together with other agencies to ensure there are adequate arrangements within our academy to identify, assess and support those students who are suffering, or at risk from, harm:

- The Education Act, 2002/2011
- The Children Act, 1989/2004
- The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act, 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, updated Dec 2020
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners, 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act, 2019
- Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015
- Children Missing Education, 2016

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017
- Children and Social Work Act, 2017
- Child Sexual Exploitation, 2017
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, 2021
- Teaching online safety in school, 2019
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, 2018
- When to call the police (NCPCC)
- Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners, 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act, 2019
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS, 2020)
- Serious Crime Act, 2015
- Safer Working Practices, 2020
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Code C, 1984

All staff members believe that our academy should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes social, physical and moral development of the individual child or young person. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude 'it could happen to a child we know' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child or young person, staff members must always act in the best interests of the child.

At Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, students are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various learning and teaching opportunities, as part of providing a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum. Students are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it, for example through the PSHCE curriculum and consideration of e-safety as part of the Computing/ICT curriculum. Furthermore, the curriculum also ensures that students understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet, and teaches the academy's core values alongside the fundamental British Values.

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation. School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

We recognise that when a student has a social worker, it is an indicator that the student is more at risk than most peers. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support students who have a social worker.

At Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre we recognise the possibility that adults working in the academy may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of the adults in the academy should be directed to the Headteacher; any concerns about the Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors who can be contacted by emailing the Clerk at clerk@highdown.reading.sch.uk. The Headteacher, or Chair of Governors, will determine if the concern constitutes an allegation or a low-level concern (does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer).

Aims

The aim of this policy is to inform staff, parents/carers, volunteers, visitors and governors about the academy's responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people and to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out. Third parties related to us and who work on our estate and/or with our students are also covered by this policy (e.g. housekeeping and catering staff).

The key aims of this policy are based on **prevention, protection and support**.

Further aims of this policy include:

- To safeguard and promote our students' welfare, safety and health (both physical and mental) by fostering an honest, caring and supportive environment.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident knowing how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard students, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, exploitation, neglect or radicalisation.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring students known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the academy, contribute to assessment of needs and support packages for those students.
- To develop a structured procedure within the academy which will be followed by all members of staff in cases of suspected abuse.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff and between the academy and other agencies.
- To promote understanding and build relationships with other agencies (e.g. Police and Children's Services) in order to develop multi-agency working and information sharing.
- To practise safe recruitment of all staff, ensuring all new staff and volunteers working with students will be subject to the relevant and up to date Prohibition and DBS checks.
- To integrate child protection issues into the curriculum to enable students to develop personal awareness, security, E-safety, confidence, self-esteem and independence.
- To protect students from radicalisation, to ensure staff are aware of the dangers and to fulfil our duty to prepare young people for life in modern Britain

Significance of the Policy

It is essential that young people receive the right to help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Serious Case Reviews [SCRs] have identified a number of examples of poor practice nationally, which Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre will avoid by:

- referring concerns regarding potential signs of abuse or neglect on the day they arise to the safeguarding team, and external agencies, as appropriate/necessary
- ensuring records are well-kept and maintained
- ensuring staff listen to students' views
- monitoring concerns and re-assessing where situations do not improve

- sharing information, as appropriate, with stakeholders in a timely manner
- challenging those who appear not to be taking action

Duties and Responsibilities

The Safeguarding Team comprises the following:

- Academy Safeguarding Lead: Ms R E Cave [Headteacher]
- Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL]: Dr S Capaldi [Associate Deputy Head]
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead [DDSL]: Mrs B Boys [Inclusion Manager]
- Designated Safeguarding Officer [DSO]: Mrs S Flynn [Assistant Head]
- Designated Safeguarding Officer [DSO]: Miss J Lee [Inclusion Lead]
- Sixth Form Welfare Lead [DSO]: Mrs C Sawdon-Smith
- Appointed Safeguarding Governor: Mr W Edwards
- Single Central Register [SCR]: Ms L Fullbrook [School Business Manager]
- Training Records: Miss N Burns [Head's PA]

Parents/carers can contact the Safeguarding Team via email to dso@highdown.reading.sch.uk. Students can contact the Safeguarding Team via safeguarding@highdown.reading.sch.uk (from their school email account) or dso@highdown.reading.sch.uk (from a personal email account).

In the unlikely event of a member of the Safeguarding Team not being available, staff should speak to another Senior Leader and/or take advice from Brighter Futures for Children/Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA).

1. Responsibilities of all staff:

- To adhere to this policy, be familiar with protocol for handling disclosure, and meet the expectations as outlined in the Employee Handbook (staff code of conduct).
- To read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)' Part one and return a signed acknowledgement that the guidance has been received, read and understood to the Head's PA for records.
- To complete online safeguarding training at least every two years and return certificate to the Head's PA for records.
- To be aware of, and familiar with, the signs/indicators of abuse, neglect and radicalisation and know who to report any concerns or suspicions to. [See Appendix 1] If unsure, staff should contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- If any member of staff has any concerns about a student they must inform the Designated Safeguarding Officers on the same day following HSP 119. Recording of information on CPOMS must be a clear, precise, factual account of observations. Observations about a student's demeanour or emotional state may be recorded.
- If a member of staff is concerned about the following, they must speak with the DSL, Headteacher or allocated Safeguarding Governor:
 - Concerns are not taken seriously
 - Action to safeguard the student is not taken
 - Student is considered to be at continuing risk of harm

- Staff will endeavour to support students through:
 - Working to establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk
 - Regular consultation with students through mentor periods, PSHCE sessions, assemblies and monitoring unstructured times
 - Working with students at times of transition, e.g. from Year 6 to the academy, when joining mid-year, joining our Sixth Form, etc.
 - Implementing the behaviour policy
- All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- All staff must be prepared to identify young people who may benefit from **early help** and must be aware of local early help processes. [Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life]. If a member of staff is concerned and feels early help should be sought, they must liaise with the relevant Head of Achievement who will initiate the referral through CSPoA to seek an Early Help Assessment, or via the Safeguarding Team. Any young person may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a young person who:
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs
 - has SEN
 - is a young carer
 - is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines. This includes students at risk of Child Criminal Exploitations and/or Child Sexual Exploitation.
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
 - is at risk from modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the young person, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse
 - has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
 - has returned home to their family from care
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is a privately fostered young person
 - has a mental health need. 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.
 - is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day
 - is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse, e.g. Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- All staff must be aware of systems within Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre which support safeguarding:
 - the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
 - the Behaviour policy
 - the Employee Handbook and Code of Conduct
 - the safeguarding response to children absent from education (for repeated or prolonged periods) – see Annex B
 - the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and officers

- The Network Team must ensure that appropriate network/internet filtering and monitoring systems are in place to protect students from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Where students are accessing online information via their own 3G/4G/5G data networks, staff will monitor use and provide education around responsible, acceptable and safe use of internet through PSHCE and ICT curriculum.
- Where staff become aware of unblocked online extremist content or other inappropriate online content they must report it to a senior member of staff.
- Students will learn about online safety through the curriculum, including in the context of Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce (the '4Cs').
- The Registrar will maintain student records ensuring that at least two emergency contact numbers are held for each student. This goes beyond the legal minimum requirement.
- The Attendance Officer will follow the statutory guidance, in liaison with the local authority, in monitoring attendance carefully, liaising with parents/carers when students are not in school, and reporting students who are missing from education.
- To liaise with the School Business Manager in the organisation of volunteers working regularly with students at Highdown School to ensure correct checks are completed in advance of working with students.
- If a member of staff discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a female under the age of 18, that member of staff must report this to the police directly.
- If staff have a mental health concern that is also a safeguarding concern about a student, they must inform the Safeguarding Team immediately via CPOMs.
- If staff have safeguarding concerns about another member of staff, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) posing a risk of harm to children this must be referred to the Headteacher. If there are safeguarding concerns about the Headteacher, these must be referred to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk to the Governors.
- The Designated Teacher to work with looked after children [CLA] or previously looked after children at Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is Mr D Clawson. It is their role to work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered students.
- Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home (Elective Home Education), the school will work with the local authority and other key professionals, where possible, as this would mean the young person would be less visible to the services there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.
- To inform the Safeguarding Team if staff become aware of a 'private fostering' arrangement.

2. Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Team:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). During term-time the DSL is available (during academy hours) for staff in the academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- There will be a member of the safeguarding team on call for emergency work with CSPoA and Brighter Futures for Children, during school holidays.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that practice and procedures are robust, in line with guidance, including the latest Ofsted framework.

- To undertake appropriate training at least every two years and keep informed of any developments relevant to the role through e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads/officers, or taking time to read safeguarding materials/documentation/guidance/advice.
- The Safeguarding Team will be trained to the same level as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- To ensure staff with responsibilities linked to safeguarding have up-to-date information and guidance.
- To ensure all staff, including governors, receive support, up-to-date information and regular training on issues of safeguarding and child protection (including online safety training, which includes outlining expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring), and their role in fulfilling their duties, including as part of induction for new staff. Training for governors will equip them to assure themselves that safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the academy are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.
- To update Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and protocols annually.
- To foster an ethos within the academy where all adults feel confident, competent, comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention to the Safeguarding Team.
- To update and share with all staff a protocol on action to be taken should a child make a disclosure and understand how to make a referral.
- To ensure all staff are aware of systems within the academy which support safeguarding and to include the following aspects as part of staff induction:
 - the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
 - the Behaviour policy
 - the Employee Handbook and Code of Conduct
 - the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education (for repeat occasions or prolonged periods) – see annex B
 - the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and officers
- To expect all staff read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) part one and annex A, in addition to 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners' (DfE, 2015), which are made available to all staff at the start of the academic year.
- To ensure all staff, governors and volunteers, have undergone relevant checks at appropriate level.
- The School Business Manager will keep and maintain a Single Central Register [SCR] of all people who are employed by the academy
- The Head's PA will keep and maintain a record of completed safeguarding training.
- To manage referrals and concerns regarding individual children and young people and liaise with Reading MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), via Reading Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA), and the Headteacher, as appropriate. If there are concerns that a student is at risk of harm and the concerns are not taken seriously, the DSL/Headteacher must contact the LADO.
- To refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and support staff who make a referral to the Channel programme
- To ensure staff have access to, and are able to use, CPOMS to record their concerns for the Safeguarding Team.
- To accurately record in CPOMS communication, decisions, actions, and the reasons for these. Records will remain confidential.
- To develop effective links and communication with other agencies, such as Brighter Futures for Children, police and health care providers to contribute to inter-agency enquiries, Section 17 (CIN) and/or section 47 (CP) assessments, safeguarding meetings and child protection conferences.

- To liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues, in particular ongoing enquiries under Section 47 and Police investigations. This will include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult as outlined in PACE Code C 2019 when investigated by the Police.
- To work with pastoral leaders to ensure any specific responsibilities or tasks required in the care of students on a child protection/child in need (Child in Need is defined as a young person who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or if a young person is disabled) plan are fulfilled, including monitoring absence and reporting absence to Social Worker for students on a Child Protection Plan.
- To take the lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues 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 at school by sharing information with staff, as appropriate, and external agencies to identify and tackle all forms of abuse and neglect.
- To work with pastoral leaders to foster an environment where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- To ensure information regarding safeguarding and child protection will only be shared with appropriate parties, including with new educational institutions where a student transfers to a different school. Where a student transfers to a new school or college, records will be shared as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. The DSL will ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt is received. Safeguarding records will be transferred separately from main student files.
- To take steps to ensure the safety of all members of the school community from the presence of visitors on site. For visitors in a professional capacity, their ID and DBS will be checked/confirmed.
- To make parents/carers aware of the academy's responsibilities in safeguarding.
- To follow-up any referrals made with the other agencies involved and to keep relevant staff informed.
- To develop ways in which the curriculum can be used to prevent child abuse and ensure that students are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with the PSHCE Coordinator to ensure the following are taught as part of the PSHCE curriculum:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships
 - Boundaries and Consent
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
 - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
 - Concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, honour-based violence such as Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support
- To liaise with MASH, via Reading Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA), where a child has been part of a private fostering arrangement (where a child under 16, or under 18 if registered disabled, has been cared for and provided accommodation by someone who is not a close family relative, i.e. grandparent, sibling, uncle or aunt) for more than 28 days.

- To be alert to children and young people within the academy who are at risk of: physical/emotional/sexual abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, being missing in education [See Appendix 2], child trafficking, radicalisation and bullying.
- To be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with specific educational needs and young carers.
- To provide a safe space and trusted adult for students who are LGBT to whom they can be open. This will be the STAR Centre and the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion. The Academy Student Leadership also hold a weekly LGBTQ+ provision.
- To create an immediate needs and risk assessment, which will be recorded and kept under review, when there has been a report of sexual violence. If a young person asks for confidentiality, the school may conduct a 'no names consultation' with CSPoA in the first instance. However, rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. The young person will have the reasons for a referral explained to them. Reports to the Police will be in parallel with a referral to CSPoA. Risk and needs assessments needs to consider:
 - the victim, especially their protection and support
 - the alleged perpetrator
 - needs of sibling(s) of either victim or alleged perpetrator
 - all the other young people at the academy and actions that are appropriate to protect them
 - time and location of the incident
 - how to make the location of the incident safer
- To have a working knowledge of how the local authority conducts a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively, when required.
- To provide support and guidance for parents/carers regarding safeguarding, particularly relating to online safety.
- To work with the Virtual Headteacher, who has overall responsibility to promote the education of children with a social worker.

3. Responsibilities of the Governing Body:

- To ensure that an effective safeguarding and child protection policy is in place and is reviewed annually in line with the latest version of KCSIE.
- To ensure that staff working directly with young people read **at least** Part one of the KCSIE guidance.
- To ensure the academy creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopts recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.
- To ensure that at least one member of an appointing panel will have completed safer recruitment training.
- To ensure the academy maintains an up-to-date Single Central Record [SCR] for all staff, governors and volunteers, and the dates for all appropriate safeguarding checks.
- To monitor the adequacy of resources committed to safeguarding and child protection, and to staff and governor training.
- To recognise that neither it, nor individual governors, have a role in pursuing or managing the processes associated with individual cases of child protection, nor a right to know details of such cases, except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect to allegations against staff.
- To make sure the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available to parents/carers.

- To prioritise the welfare of children and young people and creating a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- To give consideration as to how children and young people may be taught about safeguarding as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To ensure the academy has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems¹ in place and to regularly review and monitor effectiveness, e.g. do the filters include latest terminology and languages used by the school community?
- To undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their statutory safeguarding duties.
- To ensure the Employee Handbook (Code of Conduct) and Low-Level Concerns and Allegations of abuse against staff policy reflect the latest KCSIE guidance.
- To ensure that **all** staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training should be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.
- To review with the senior leader responsible for Whole School ICT and Network Manager cyber security measures in place.
- To recognise that some groups of young people are potentially more at risk of harm than others, both online and offline, e.g. young people who need a social worker (CIN/CP), children absent from education, young people with mental health support, looked after children or previously looked after children.

The appointed safeguarding governor should agree with the Governing Body how these responsibilities should be monitored and reported. They will also liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead concerning training for governor's strategic knowledge and understanding of safeguarding across the academy.

Safeguarding Issues

All staff, governors and volunteers should be aware of the main categories of abuse below, and of the potential signs/indicators of abuse in Appendix 1:

1. Abuse:

A form or 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 for 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.

2. 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, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

so-called 'honour-based' abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

3. 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Witnessing domestic abuse, e.g. slapping, punching, kicking, bruising, rape, ridicule, threats, manipulation, sleep deprivation, social isolation and other controlling behaviours all count as abuse.

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.

4. Sexual abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation [CSE]:

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

Child Sexual Exploitation [CSE] involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person receives 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, e.g. being persuaded to post images on the internet/mobile phone without immediate payment or gain. Violence, coercion, and intimidation are common. CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Involvement in exploitative relationships is characterised by the child's limited availability of choice, as a result of their social, economic or emotional vulnerability or vulnerability through aspiration. A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine relationship. CSE also applied to 16-17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationship where sex is exchanged for affection to gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups: (1) **Inappropriate relationships** usually involve just one abuser who has inappropriate power – physical, emotional or financial – or control over a young person. The young person may believe they have a genuine friendship

or loving relationship with their abuser. (2) **Boyfriend/girlfriend** is where the abuser grooms the victim by striking up a normal relationship with them, giving them gifts and meeting in cafés or shopping centres. A seemingly consensual relationship develops but later turns abusive. Victims may be required to attend parties and sleep with multiple men/women and threatened violence if they try to seek help. (3) **Organised exploitation and trafficking** is where victims are trafficked through criminal networks and forced or coerced into sex with multiple men/women. They may also be used to recruit new victims. This serious organised activity can involve buying and selling of young people.

5. Child Criminal Exploitation [CCE]:

Child Criminal exploitation [CCE] is where an individual takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or to 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. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons, e.g. knives, or begin to carry a knife for sense of protection from harm from others. Both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

6. 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.

7. Child on Child abuse:

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. This can happen both inside and outside of school. Child on Child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory-based
- physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, etc.
- sexual violence and sexual harassment [See section 16 below]
- sharing of nude/semi-nude images (previously youth produced sexual imagery/sexting) [See section 13 below]
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children ('teenage relationship abuse')

Young people are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Online abuse may take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages. Furthermore, it may involve the non-consensual sharing of indecent images

in chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

Staff must remember that this is abuse and must never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse. Inappropriate behaviours will be challenged – we have a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Whilst boys are more likely perpetrators and girls victims, all child on child abuse are unacceptable. This can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, and unsafe environment for young people, and can normalise abuse. Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre will not tolerate child on child abuse – allegations will be recorded, they will be investigated and they will be treated seriously.

It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a student, some of the following features may be found. The allegation:

- is made against an older student and refers to their behaviour towards a younger student or a more vulnerable student
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other students in the academy
- indicates that other students may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the academy may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

- Bullying
- Physical abuse: violence (particularly, pre-planned), forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- Emotional abuse: blackmail, extortion, threats and intimidation
- Sexual abuse/violence: indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assault, forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting.
- Sexual harassment: sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- Sexual exploitation: encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties, photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos (sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Up skirting is a criminal act, (Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019).
- Initiation/hazing type violence/rituals

Our policy on Child-on-Child abuse and bullying is set out in our Anti-Bullying and Discrimination policy. Our policy on racist incidents is set out in our Behaviour policy. In cases of sexting, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS): ‘Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people’. Students will be supported via the pastoral system and STAR Centre provision. Allegations will be recorded through behaviour and safeguarding records.

Staff and students should be aware that there is a helpline, run by the NSPCC, to provide children and adult who are victims of sexual abuse in schools with the appropriate support and advice. This includes how to contact the police and report crimes if they wish. The helpline will also provide support to parents and professionals. The phone number is **0800 136 663**.

8. Serious violence:

Staff should be aware of indicators, which may be a signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships
- Relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or significant change in well-being
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

9. Radicalisation and extremism:

Students should know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. Radicalisation is where groups/individuals attempt to persuade young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them susceptible to future radicalisation. Extremism is defined in the 2015 Prevent Strategy as vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of susceptible people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity that supports terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people susceptible to future manipulation and exploitation.

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015), schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'. We will ensure that all our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. Through work in PSHCE and assemblies we will ensure that pupils are informed about the dangers of extremism and radicalisation, and that they know who they should talk to if they have any concerns. The academy will also make use of the 'Educate Against Hate' website which was launched by the government to support education and training.

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is susceptible to radicalisation, but there are a number of signs that together increase the risk. Signs of vulnerability include:

- Underachievement
- Poverty
- Social exclusion
- Traumatic events
- Global or national events
- Religious conversion
- Conflict with family over lifestyle
- Confused identity

- Victim or witness of hate or race crime
- Rejection by peers, family, social group or faith

Where there are concerns staff must report any issues to a DSO or Headteacher. If the matter is urgent then Thames Valley Police must be contacted by dialling 999. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for staff to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be susceptible to radicalisation. Referrals must be made in the usual way to the Designated Safeguarding officers.

10. Forced Marriage [FM]:

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or other forms of coercion are used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into a marriage. 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 18th birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic abuse. Young people may not refer to 'forced marriage' in conversations but may refer to older siblings being 'sent back home' to marry a relative or family friend. Staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit [FMU] if they need advice or information: 0207 008 0151 or email fmf@fco.gov.uk.

11. Female Genital Mutilation [FGM]:

FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school holidays as this is a time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they are at risk of FGM. *There is a mandatory legal reporting duty which requires staff to report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s to the police.* The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make the report. It should not be transferred to the Safeguarding Team, however, the DSOs must be informed and a report to the police must be made by the close of the next working day by the member of staff personally. Staff must not examine the student themselves. Victims of FGM are likely to be from a community that is known to practise FGM (such as Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians, Eritreans, Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani).

12. 'Honour'-Based Abuse [HBA]:

Encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, FM, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBA are abuse and should be handled and escalated as such.

13. Sharing of nude/semi-nude images [previously Youth-produced sexual imagery / Sexting]:

Many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet'. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and presents a range of risks. Types of incidents may include a child creating a sharing sexual imagery of themselves to a peer under the age of 18, a young person sharing sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult, or a person under age of 18 in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

14. County Lines:

County lines is a form of CCE and is used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs, e.g. crack cocaine and heroin, into one or more importing areas within the UK. It is a geographically widespread form of harm in which gangs and organised crime networks groom and exploit young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. These gangs and organised crime networks use dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and/or store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can easily become trapped as gangs create drug debts (or 'debt bonds') and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

15. Domestic Abuse [DA]:

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Defined as a single incident or pattern of incidents of physical or sexual abuse, controlling, coercive, threatening or violent behaviour, economic abuse, psychological/emotional abuse between people who are 'personally connected' to each other, i.e. through marriage or civil partnership (or planned), through intimate relationship with each other, through shared parental responsibility, or they are relatives. This applies to children if they see or hear or experience the effects of the abuse and they are related to the abusive person, as well suffering domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships ('teenage relationship abuse'). Exposure to Domestic Abuse can have a long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on young people. Highdown School works with Thames Valley Police as part of 'Operation Encompass' to receive reports where a young person has been present at a location where DV has been reported. The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge, 24 hours a day, on 0808 2000 247.

16. Child on Child sexual violence and sexual harassment:

This can occur between two young people at any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of young people sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single young person or group of young people. There is a continuum and these may overlap, they can occur online and offline and are never acceptable. All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows females, young people with SEND and LGBTQ persons are at a greater risk. Any behaviours related to these issues will not be tolerated and will not be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. Staff at Highdown School maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act (2003) and includes rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. **Consent** is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Students at Highdown have focused sessions on the meaning of consent through PSHCE curriculum.

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. 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. Sexual harassment can include: sexual comments, sexual jokes/taunting, physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothing or displaying pictures/photos/drawings of a sexual nature, non-consensual sharing of sexual images/videos, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments

on social media, and/or sexual exploitation. If staff have a concern about a young person or a student makes a report to them, staff must complete a referral to the Safeguarding Team in the usual way.

Upskirting is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously and students will be reassured of this and will be supported and kept safe. Students will learn about what constitutes sexual violence/harassment, what is meant by harmful sexual behaviours (HSBs) and how to avoid these as well as the law through the PSHCE curriculum.

Students/adults should report sexual violence/harassment through the usual mechanisms. Reports will be reviewed and assessed on a case-by-case basis. However, there are four likely options: (1) manage internally, (2) make an Early Help referral, (3) report to social services via CSPA, or (4) report to the Police. If a report is found to deliberately inventive or malicious, the academy will consider whether disciplinary action is required through the Behaviour Policy.

17. Mental Health:

Where young people have suffered abuse and/or neglect, or other potentiall traumatic adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. ACEs might include one or more of the following: abuse, familial mental illness, parent separation/divorce, substance misuse in the household, incarcerated relative, domestic abuse/violence, etc. It is key staff are aware of these and how they may impact a young person's mental health, behaviour and education. More information can be found in our Young People's Mental Health Policy.

18. Other aspects of risk requiring highlighting:

Information and additional links to many of these topics can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023): Children and the Court System, Drugs, Fabricated/induced illness, Homelessness, Faith abuse, Gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG), children with family members in prison, cybercrime and modern slavery.

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between young people outside the academy. All staff, but particularly the Safeguarding Team, will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur within the wider community. This is known as **contextual safeguarding** [meaning assessment of young people should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a young person's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare].

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, and the persons named above as members of the Safeguarding Team are not available, a referral must be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

Young people with SEN, Disabilities or Certain Health Conditions

All staff must recognise the additional safeguarding challenges this group can face:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as changes in behaviour, mood and injury relate to the student's disability
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other young people
- the potential for students with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

At Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, we provide additional pastoral support and attention for these students, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place, e.g. through support from the Learning Inclusion Team.

Use of Force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use **reasonable force** to safeguard young people. The term reasonable force refers to a broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm to break up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.

When using reasonable force in response to risks by incidents involving students with SEND or with medical conditions, staff should consider the risks carefully to recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups.

Power to Screen, Search and Confiscate Prohibited/Illegal Items

In accordance with [government guidance](#), school staff have a statutory power to search students or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited item. These include knives/weapons, alcohol, drugs, stolen items, smoking paraphernalia, fireworks, pornographic images, any item likely to be used to commit an offence or cause injury or damage. Staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules. School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

Highdown School works closely with our local Police authority to educate young people about personal safety, for example with regard to carrying knives, or similar, and concerning possessing or using drugs. This will, at unannounced times, involve the use of Safety Arches to screen students and the deployment of a 'drugs dog' to screen students and our estate. On occasion, an alternative agency may be used for

provision of a 'drugs dog'. Such activities will be complemented by our PSHCE curriculum and parents/carers will be informed after the event.

Information Sharing

Information sharing between professionals and external agencies is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse. GDPR does not provide a barrier to sharing information pertaining to keeping young people safe from harm or neglect. Records relating to students will be maintained securely beyond their time on roll should records need to be accessed in the future. Records will be transferred securely as required if students change schools, either by encrypted email or recorded postal delivery. Information will be shared with the CSPoA via secure email.

The DSL is responsible for keeping the confidential files of students on the Child Protection register and for keeping the list of students up to date. Information should be obtained from primary schools on the transfer of students into the academy.

The need for confidentiality and the dissemination of information on a 'need to know' basis should be recognised. Members of staff must not discuss information concerning a student in any public place but should respect the privacy of the child and his/her family.

Safeguarding records are now maintained digitally adding levels of security. Previous hard-copy records are securely locked.

Parents and Carers

The Designated Person making a referral will consult Social Services as to whether it is appropriate to inform parents/carers that a referral has been made, as this may prejudice the investigation by Social Care or the police.

Our duty to safeguard and promote young people's welfare extends to caring for young people staying with exchange student families in the UK. When arranging **homestay**, we will consider the suitability of the adults in the respective families who will be responsible for the visiting young person during the stay. The responsible adults will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity for the period of the stay. An enhanced DBS with barred list information will be completed and can be obtained free of charge. If there are other people in the family aged over 16, then Highdown can decide whether they will do an enhanced DBS check for those 16- and 17-year olds who live in the house.

Any member of the public can make a referral to Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA) via <https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/concerned-about-a-child/> or by contacting 0118 937 3641 if they have any specific safeguarding concerns about a young person.

Private Fostering

Such an arrangement is one that is made privately (without involvement of the local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (18, if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative

(grandparent, sibling, uncle or aunt, step-siblings and step-parents), in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence. There is no legal requirement to inform the school, however, it must be clear to the school who has parental responsibility. On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the student who is being registered.

Highdown School has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where we are aware, or suspect, that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement.

Safer Recruitment

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre will ensure all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone working in the academy. All recruitment panels will include a member of staff who has completed the Safer Recruitment training. The academy's commitment to safeguarding and child protection will be explicit throughout the recruitment process. Safer recruitment practice also includes scrutinising applications, verifying identification and qualifications, references and checking previous employment history. All required checks, e.g. Enhanced DBS, Children's barred list, and Prohibition Checks will be completed in advance of employment. Highdown School will also conduct, or arrange via a third-party, an online search as part of due diligence processes for shortlisted candidates seeking employment with Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre. This is intended to check information that is publicly available online (not private/locked social media content) over a period up to 5 years (recommended), for example an individual's views shared on social media, posts that have been liked/shared, or reference to incidents or issues, that could harm the reputation of the academy or make a candidate unsuitable to work with children. These might be explored further as part of the interview process as part of values-based interviewing.

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children and young people may use volunteering to gain access to children. For this reason, any volunteers in the academy, in whatever capacity, are expected to follow the policies and procedures in the same way as paid staff. Volunteers will not be allowed to work unsupervised with students without appropriate checks in place.

Staff involved in regulated activity (responsible on a regular basis for teaching, training, instructing, caring for, or supervising students; or carrying out paid or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in the academy where that work provides opportunity for contact with students; or engaging in overnight care even if only once) are required to have an enhanced DBS with barred list check completed. For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with students who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check without barred list check is required. A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after young people in the academy are not in regulated activity.

In addition to obtaining a DBS certificate, any member of staff who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching. For those engaged in management roles an additional S128 check is required. This includes governors, headteacher, Senior Leaders and department heads.

Prior to appointment and start of employment all checks are completed, including a candidate's mental and physical fitness to work, verification of their right to work in the UK, overseas check of good character, and verification of professional qualifications, with at least two references being checked.

Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis teach or look after young people regularly, will be in regulated activity. Highdown School will obtain an enhanced DBS including barred list certificate. Highdown School will undertake a risk assessment (which will be recorded) for each volunteer based on:

- the nature of the work with young people
- what Highdown knows about the volunteer, including formal and informal information offered by staff, students, parents and other volunteers
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on suitability
- whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.

For training teachers, DBS checks are conducted by the initial training teacher provider. For agency staff, DBS checks are conducted by the agency company. In both cases, written notification of checks completed will be provided.

Governors of Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre are required to have an enhanced DBS certificate. Governance does not require a barred check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they are involved in regulated activity.

Contractors working at Highdown School will be expected to have an enhanced DBS certificate. The identity of contractors will be checked upon their arrival at the academy. Highdown School will set out our safeguarding requirements in the contract between the academy and the contractor(s).

Where alternative provision is in place for students, their safeguarding remains the responsibility of Highdown School. Highdown School will expect to have written confirmation that all appropriate vetting and barring checks have been completed at the alternative provider for individuals working there.

Work experience placement providers will be expected to ensure policies and procedures are in place to protect young people from harm. Barred list checks may be required on some people who supervise a young person under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. Consideration will be given to the nature of the supervision and activity to determine what, if any, checks are required, e.g. will the supervisor be unsupervised themselves, will the person be providing training/supervision frequently (more than 3 days in a 30 day period or overnight). If the person is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the young person, the work is likely to be regulated. In this case, the employer providing work experience would be expected to ensure the person is not a barred person. Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is not able to request an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for staff supervising young people aged 16 or 17 on work experience.

All checks are recorded and maintained with the Single Central Record [SCR] by the School Business Manager. This is maintained electronically and is limited in accessibility to the School Business Manager and Headteacher. The DSL will regularly review the SCR alongside the School Business Manager. The Single Central Record will include for all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and 3rd party supply staff, governors and volunteers:

- Pre-appointment checks
- Identity check
- Standalone children's barred list check
- Enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Checks on people who have lived or worked outside of the UK
- Professional Qualifications check
- Right to work in the UK check
- Name of the person who carried out each check

The details of an individual will be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre

Guidance and procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in the separate 'Low Level Concerns and Allegations of abuse against staff' policy. Staff members and volunteers are encouraged to raise any concerns that they may have regarding poor or unsafe practice directly with the academy's senior leadership via the Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Procedure (Employee Handbook).

If there are concerns about an existing member of staff, then Highdown School will carry out all relevant checks as if the member of staff were new. Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre has a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a young person where:

- the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual
- the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence
- the individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

Where a teacher has been dismissed or Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre no longer uses the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, they will be referred to the Secretary of State as required by sections 141D and 141E of the Education Act 2002.

Safe Working Practices

All staff will take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child/young person. Staff advised to:

- Avoid physical contact with student (unless absolutely necessary)
- Hold one to one conversations in a public space, where possible, or with door open and student nearest door.
- Do not communicate with students or former students via Social media or personal email accounts
- Do not post anything on social media that you wouldn't want a family member want to see

Remote Learning Section

Where students are working remotely due to school closure or attendance restrictions, they (or their parents/carers) should continue to report to the Safeguarding Team in the same way as usual, e.g. through safeguarding@highdown.reading.sch.uk (from school email account) or dso@highdown.reading.sch.uk (from personal email account) if they have concerns. Staff working remotely should continue to report concerns to the Safeguarding Team via CPOMs.

If accessing real-time lessons, e.g. via Microsoft Teams, students should have their microphone and cameras turned off. If attending a virtual meeting, there should be an adult present (or aware of the meeting but not necessarily in the same room, as appropriate) and students should be dressed appropriately. Communication between staff and students must only be via school-based communication channels.

The academy would also be in regular contact with parents/carers to reinforce importance of young people being safe online and to check student welfare.

In the unlikely event of further local attendance restrictions being implemented, a more detailed addendum to this policy will be published based on the specific arrangements of the restrictions.

Use of Academy Estate for Non-School Activities

When services or activities are provided by the academy, under the direct supervision or management of the academy staff, Highdown School safeguarding procedures will apply. When services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not the case. In the latter case, the Governing Body or senior leaders will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place. This applies regardless of whether or not the young people who attend are students on roll at Highdown School. The Governing Body or senior leaders (including School Business Manager/Estates Manager) will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, e.g. lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and that failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement. Guidance² on Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings outlines safeguarding arrangements that these providers are expected to have in place.

Allegations may be received by the academy relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children. The Academy will follow safeguarding procedures, including informing the LADO.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice/keeping-children-safe-during-community-activities-after-school-clubs-and-tuition-non-statutory-guidance-for-providers-running-out-of-school-settings>

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL in conjunction with the Senior Leaders and will be overseen by the Full Governing Body.

The implementation of the policy will be reviewed during the academic year via the Link Governance procedures with the allocated Safeguarding Governor.

Appendix 1: Indicators of harm and/or abuse and extremism/radicalisation

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Bruising:
 - In or around the mouth
 - Two simultaneous bruised eyes and/or haemorrhaging behind eye lashes
 - Repeated or multiple bruising in places unlikely to be injured accidentally, e.g. back, mouth, ear, stomach, under arm, neck
 - Outline of object used, e.g. belt mark, hand prints or hair brush
 - Linear bruising, e.g. on buttocks, back or face
 - Bruising or tears around/behind ears
 - Grasp marks on arms or leg
- Fractures:
 - Grounds for concern if history provided is vague or inconsistent, there are associated old fractures, or medical attention is sought after a delay.
 - Rib fractures
 - Skull fractures
- Poisoning: Ingestion of tablets may be self-harm.
- Fabricated or induced illness by carer:
 - Discrepancies between reported and observed medical conditions
 - Attendance at various hospitals
 - Development of eating disorders
 - Abnormal attitudes to own development
 - Does not put on weight/grow
 - Dislike of close physical contact by others
 - Low self esteem
 - Poor quality or no relationships with peers because social interactions are restricted
 - Poor attendance and under-achievement
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds, e.g. circular burns from cigarettes, linear burns from hot metal rods/fire elements, burns of uniform depth over a large area, scalds that have a line indicating poured liquid.
- Scars, e.g. large number of unusually shaped scars
- Emotional/behavioural presentation:
 - Refusal to discuss injuries
 - Admission of punishment which appears excessive
 - Fear of parents being contacted and fear of returning home
 - Arms/legs kept covered in warm weather
 - Fear of medical help
 - Aggression towards others
 - Frequently absent from school
 - Explanation inconsistent with injury
 - Different explanations for injury

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Child scapegoated within the family
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' – difficulty relating to others
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate response to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour, e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Air of detachment, 'don't care' attitude
- Depression, withdrawal
- Attention-seeking, poor attention, hyper-activity
- Hyper-vigilance

NEGLECT

- Physical presentation:
 - Failure to thrive, e.g. shorter stature
 - Underweight
 - Frequent hunger
 - Dirty, unkempt condition
 - Inadequately clothed, clothing in a poor state of repair
 - Red/purple mottled skin (hands and feet) in winter due to cold
 - Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal
 - Abnormal voracious appetite
 - Dry, sparse hair
 - Recurrent/untreated infections/skin conditions, e.g. eczema, head lice, diarrhoea
 - Poor dental hygiene
- Development:
 - Delayed speech and language
 - Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
- Emotional/behavioural presentation:
 - Absence of normal social responsiveness
 - Emotionally needy
 - Compulsive stealing
 - Constant tiredness
 - Frequently absent or late to school
 - Poor self esteem

- Destructive tendencies
- Thrives away from home environment
- Aggressive and impulsive behaviour
- Disturbed peer relationships
- Self-harming behaviour

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Physical presentation:
 - Urinary infections
 - Recurrent pain on passing urine or faeces
 - Blood on underclothes
 - STI/STD
 - Pregnancy in younger girl where identity of father is not disclosed
 - Bruising to lower body
 - Throat infections
- Emotional/behavioural presentation:
 - Makes a disclosure
 - Demonstrates sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
 - Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
 - Self-harm – eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts
 - Poor self-image, self-hatred
 - Reluctant to undress to PE
 - Running away from home
 - Poor attention/concentration
 - Sudden changes in schoolwork habits, becoming truant
 - Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
 - Inappropriate sexualised conduct
 - Wetting or other regressive behaviours, e.g. thumb sucking
 - Draws sexually explicit pictures
 - Depression
 - Acting 'like a baby'
 - Tendency to cry and/or to cling

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION [CSE]

- Involved in abusive relationship, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Hang out with groups of older people, or antisocial groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- Associate with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- Get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- Isolation from peers/social networks
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Spend time at places of concern, e.g. hotels or known areas for sex work (e.g. brothels)
- Go missing from home, care or education or are regularly late home at night
- Show signs of sexual abuse or grooming

- Unexplained money, gifts, mobile phones or possessions
- Becomes pregnant
- Misuse drugs or alcohol
- Reluctance to engage with technology in school
- Unexplained absences from school
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour/STIs
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- Concerning use of the internet or other social media
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION [FGM]

- Severe pain or discomfort, e.g. between legs
- Shock
- Bleeding
- Wound infections, e.g. tetanus, HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C
- Inability to urinate and/or spending long periods of time away from the classroom whilst at toilet
- Has frequent bladder, menstrual or stomach problems
- Difficulty sitting, walking or standing
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM
- A child may express anxiety about a 'special ceremony' or refer to a 'special procedure' or 'becoming a woman'
- Change in behaviour pre- and post- summer holiday
- Evident discomfort in PE lessons post-holiday
- Prolonged/repeated absence from school with noticeable behaviour changes on return, e.g. withdrawal or depression
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations

RADICALISATION/EXTREMISM

- Changing style of dress
- Day to day behaviour increasingly centred around extremist ideology
- Possession of materials associated with extremism
- Insulting or derogatory names or labels for other groups
- Justifying extremism or any offending on behalf of a group
- Condoning/advocating any violence and showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Using extremist views to explain personal disadvantage
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths and cultures
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Changes to peer relationships
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- Making remarks/comments about extremist events or rallies outside school
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups

- Secretive behaviour
- Intolerance of difference, e.g. faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Advocating violence against others

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION [CCE] AND/OR COUNTY LINES

- Missing episodes (from home and/or school)
- Found in areas some distance from their home or in accommodation they have no connection with, e.g. 'trap house' or 'cuckooing'
- Regularly coming home late
- Change in social/peer groups
- Change in engagement
- Change in behaviour(s)
- Additional and unexplained money, gifts or possessions
- Associate with other children involved in exploitation
- Misuse of drugs and alcohol
- Changes in emotional well-being
- Victim or perpetrator in serious violence, e.g. knife crime

CONDUCT BY ADULTS

- Inappropriate conduct inside/outside of work, e.g. inappropriate physical contact, communication via social media, etc.
- Being overly-friendly with children
- Having 'favourites'
- Taking photographs/recording video of children on personal mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Appendix 2: Children who are absent from education or missing education

All children, regardless of circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education.

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of issues, including neglect, CSE or CCE. The academy's response is important to help prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. It may also indicate mental health problems or risk of substance abuse.

Staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and FM.

At Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, we monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. In response to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), the academy has:

- Staff, including specialist Attendance Officer and Behaviour/Attendance Advocate, who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
- Appropriate procedures and responses for students who are absent, or go missing, from education
- Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take students off-roll when they:
 - Leave academy to be home educated
 - Move away from academy's location
 - Remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - Are permanently excluded
 - Are in custody for 4 months or more (and will return to school afterwards)