ATTENBOROUGH LEARNING TRUST

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026/2027

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Safeguarding staff members of Bridge Junior School



Jason Williamson – Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
Mina Vig and Celeste John – Designated Teachers for Mental Health
Cinzia Moreland – Designated Teacher for SEND
Julie Campanari – Local Authority Designated Officer
Mina Vig– Attendance Champion / Welfare Lead

Introduction

1.1 Bridge Junior School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals must ensure their approach remains strictly child centred and consistently prioritise the best interests of the child or young person. Our establishment cultivates a rigorous culture of vigilance, operating a whole school approach to safeguarding and we promote the child's welfare and consider, always, what is in the best interest of the child and young person. We endeavour to identify concerns early, provide help for children and their family through Early Help and Family Help, and, take into account the child's lived in experience.

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate and our staff members working with pupils to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. This policy sets out how the school and the governing board discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing 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 is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined in WTTSC 2026[1] as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

1.2 Effective safeguarding means professionals should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives. **Bridge Junior School** is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. We believe that:

- All children/young people have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect
- Children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school.
- This means our staff consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the children/ young people.
- Children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse (lived experience)
- All children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs.
- All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other.
- All children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs – a happy healthy sociable child/young person will achieve better educationally.
- Staff and professionals in our school/college are prepared to identify children and young people who may benefit from universal Early Help and targeted Family Help interventions.
- School–can, and do, contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, misogyny, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours; and
- All staff, professionals and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse, harm and neglect.

Bridge Junior School will fulfil local and national responsibilities and accepted best practice as laid out in the following documents: -

[1] Working together to safeguard children 2026

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE Sept 2026)
- What To Do If You Are Worried a Child Is Being Abused March 2015
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 & Amended Regulations 2015; Safer Recruitment in Education including.
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2019 (Rev April 2022) Safer Recruitment consortium
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Information sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people parents and carers (May 2024)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges (March 2025)
- Working together to improve school attendance (August 2024)
- Leicester Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board (LSCPB)
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002 s175/s157
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice (DfE 2018)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Position of Trust offence)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 / Prevent 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003/Updated regulations July 2020
- Safeguarding & Child Protection education procedures in Leicester, notes, information, and training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in schools
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes December 2020, UK Council for Internet Safety (Revised March 2024)
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school July 2022

1.4 The Governing Board takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

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

1.6 All staff[2] believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

1.7 As a school- recognise the pivotal role of local authorities in safeguarding, supporting, and promoting the welfare of all children in our area. We will strengthen and clarify how the local authority and school / trusts will work together, building on best practice from existing partnerships, in order to support our children to thrive and achieve.[3]

2. Overall Aims

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge and protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online

[2] 'Staff' Covers ALL adult staff on site, including temporary, supply and ancillary staff, and volunteers working with children.

[3] Every Child Achieving and Thriving (updated Feb 26)

- This policy will contribute to safeguarding our students and promoting their welfare and mental health by supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience at the same time considering the best interest of the child.
- Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- Raising the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Ensure our staff identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- Providing a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children including Child Missing / Persistently Absent from Education.
- Acknowledging the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils.
- Developing a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Developing effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children including Early Help and intervention.
- Work within the curriculum raising awareness of and promoting safeguarding, to our children/young people including online safety inside and outside of establishment.
- Ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of our facilities.

3. Key processes

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from significant harm, as defined in the Children's Act 1989/2004, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care / CASP Team (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Our school procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the *Leicester City Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board (LSCPB), Multi Agency Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures; (Procedures),* in addition to the statutory requirements as outlined in 1.3.

4. Expectations

4.1 All staff and visitors will be familiar with this safeguarding policy

- Staff will have access to, a copy of, and be well versed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which will also form part of their induction and revisited annually through Whole School Safeguarding Training.
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc.
- For those regular external visitors/providers such as cleaners and caterers; to have shown the school a copy of their H & S and Child Protection Guidelines as best practice and where applicable; and that the school has a statement in main reception notifying external visitors who the schools DSL is and what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Be involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans.
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse (Appendix 1)
- Staff understand that 'harm' can include 'witnessing harm to others' for example cases of domestic abuse.
- Immediately tell the DSL (or deputy) about concerns/disclosures and make an accurate written record using the arrangements in section 4.2.
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with our school procedures; informing the DSL immediately and provide a written account as soon as possible. This includes making the appropriate contact with children's social care / CASP Team. (DSL).
- Record safeguarding information promptly using authorised CPOMS access or the paper safeguarding form as set out in section 4.2.

4.2 Reporting concerns

In our school/college, if a staff member or visitor needs to make a referral to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the following steps are taken:

1. Staff members and visitors must immediately report safeguarding concerns verbally to the DSL or a deputy. If no DSL is available, they must contact children's social care directly where necessary; if a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

2. The reporting adult must promptly make a factual written record. Staff with authorised CPOMS access record directly on CPOMS; other staff use the safeguarding concern form and hand it securely to the DSL for entry onto CPOMS. Recording must not delay protective action.

3. The DSL assesses risk without delay, records decisions and rationale, and determines whether an immediate referral to Leicester City Council children's social care/CASP or the police is needed. Staff may make referrals directly if necessary.

4. The DSL decides whether and when to speak to the child and parents/carers. Parents must not be contacted first where this could place the child at increased risk or prejudice enquiries; advice should be sought from children's social care or police as needed.

5. Where appropriate, the DSL coordinates school-based support, community-based Early Help or Family Help. This must not delay a statutory referral where the threshold is met.

6. The DSL contacts the local authority front door/CASP for advice or referral whenever required by risk or threshold; any referral, discussion, outcome and next action is recorded on CPOMS.

7. The DSL provides proportionate feedback to the reporting staff member, maintaining confidentiality, and ensures follow-up actions are monitored.

4.3 All parents will be familiar with this Safeguarding & Child Protection policy.

- Bridge Junior School prides itself on maintaining communication with parents, carers and the community and continues regular communications through WEDUC/letters and our website and face to face meetings. As such we will ensure the following:
    - Parents/Carers will have access to the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy as part of initial information given to prospective and existing Parents/Carers and will be available through our school's website. Additional copies will be issued as and when required including notifying parents of changes within the document i.e., revised annual policy.
    - We will circulate and embed a link to our Policy in communications we send to our parents/carers informing them of updates and point them in the direction of accessing our Policy via the school/college website.
    - It has been made explicit to parents and carers that they have responsibility to inform the school if a child in their care is a young carer, so that the school/college can fully support the child appropriately with their education
    - Our establishment understands the stigma for some parents and carers in raising this, however, we are an inclusive school/college, and every effort will be made to support the child and family with this. We have communicated with parents to this effect.

4.4 Communicating with parents:

In addition to section 4.3 above, the following statement is highlighted and provided to parents annually (at the beginning of each academic year) to ensure they are aware of the school's/college's responsibilities:

'Our school/establishment ensures children learn in a safe, caring and enriching environment. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe, on and offline, to develop positive and healthy relationships and how to avoid situations where they might be at risk including by being exploited'.

Bridge Junior School has a statutory responsibility *to share any concerns it might have about a child in need of protection with other agencies and in particular police, health and children's services. Schools are not able to investigate concerns but have a legal duty to refer them. In most instances, the school will be able to inform the parents/carer of its need to make a referral or seek advice from Social Care / CASP Team. However, sometimes the school is advised by Children's Social Care / CASP Team or police that the parent/carer cannot be informed whilst they investigate the matter. We understand the anxiety parents/carers understandably feel when they are not told about any concerns from the outset and although the school follows legislation and guidance that aims to act in the best interests of the child, we are more than willing to support parents/carers and family members through referrals processes and meetings where appropriate.*

5. Extended school and before and after school activities

5.1 Where the governing board provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply.

5.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing board should seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

6. Procedures

6.1 Bridge Junior School will ensure that:

- The governing board understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection and safeguarding, who have undertaken DSL training.
- All members of staff are provided with opportunities **annually** to receive Safeguarding Training to develop their understanding of safeguarding and child protection in particular, signs and indicators of abuse.
- All staff are provided with additional in-house safeguarding update training which is undertaken at least annually which will include school procedures for reporting concerns.
- All members of staff, volunteers, and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities regarding child protection procedures through publication of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and reference to it in our prospectus/brochure and home school agreement.
- Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school site at any time.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
- Bridge Junior School is committed to safer recruitment as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- The school will ensure all appropriate checks are carried out for all staff, volunteers and work experience students including online searches as part of due diligence.
- Appropriate checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record which will be audited by Marc Tench, Governor. The school will ensure at least one person who is safer recruitment trained will be part of the recruitment process. All volunteers will undergo a risk assessment. See also the Safer Recruitment policy & guidance.

- All governors / proprietors / trustees will undergo a DBS check and a S128 / Section 128 direction check as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to either the Disclosure and Barring Service or the relevant Government Department/Agency (where appropriate), depending on the nature of the concern, with the advice and support of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and that a member of our SLT has attended LADO training (Managing allegations against staff members) and understands the harms threshold/low level concerns thresholds as set out in KCSIE 2026
- Our procedures will be annually reviewed and updated and ratified by the Governing Board
- The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be clearly shown in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation. (Reception, Staff room, Website etc.).
- All adults, (including supply teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers), new to our school will be given or directed to a copy of; our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, the school's behaviour policy, the school's child absent & missing protocols, the leaflet/DSL poster 'What To Do if You're Worried A Child is Being Abused'[4], Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part 1 in full, online safety policy, low level concerns policy and the name, identity and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies will be explained as part of their induction into the school. In addition to this, all such staff and volunteers will be made aware of the 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings. (Safer Recruitment Consortium).[5]

7. Responsibilities

7.1 All our staff understand that children may not feel ready or know how to disclose that they are being abused, neglected, exploited, or, and may not even recognise their experiences as harmful. Our staff act as the 'eyes and ears' for our children and young people, meaning it is their responsibility to recognise signs and indicators of abuse and respond accordingly, rather than waiting for the child to disclose. Children might feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened, possibly due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation, or language barriers. This does not deter our staff from maintaining professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL(s) if they have concerns about a child. Our staff are also committed to building trusted relationships with children and young people to facilitate open communication and support the child.

We understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns as soon as a staff member or volunteer suspects/knows of a concern that we may have about children. The first point of contact is the DSL or other members of the Safeguarding Team (in their absence). The DSL will inform the Headteacher of any referrals to be made. If the concerns are regarding the conduct of a staff member the report is made to the Headteacher. If the concerns are regarding the Headteacher then the Chair of Governors (Marc Tench) should be informed.

7.2 If a staff member feels they cannot disclose information to their DSL, Headteacher or Governor(s), they must then follow our Trust's whistleblowing procedures to report their concerns.

7.3 All staff will be versed in our Whistleblowing procedure, understand when it is appropriate to use the procedures and will be given details of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

7.4 All staff will be well versed in the Child Missing / Persistently Absent from Education and know and understand that any child that is regularly absent or missing, can be a cause for concern and a possible indicator that the child is at risk of abuse or in need of help and support See appendix 9

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf
[5] https://saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/

8. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Roles and Responsibilities[6]

8.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026, Annex B, outlines specific responsibilities of a DSL (A member of the School's Leadership Team) and their responsibilities within this role. Our lead DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This is also explicit in their job description. We also have a number of deputy designated safeguarding leads who are trained to the same standard and provide the same level of support. Their key areas of responsibilities include: -

Manage Referrals:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse, exploitation and neglect to children's social care/police
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority
- The Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and support staff with this
- Cases in relation to allegations against staff members to LADO including disclosure and barring
- Cases where any crime may have been committed to the Police

Working with Others:

- Act as a source of support, advice, and expertise for all staff
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- Liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Bridge Junior School have designated members of SLT to this role.
- As required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- 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 the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking 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 or college. This includes:

    - ensure that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
    - support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing child protection files.

[6] Keeping children safe in education 2026: September 2026 Annex B, Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead

Our DSL(s) are responsible for ensuring that our child protection files are kept up to date. The information is kept confidential and stored securely. Our records will contain the following information:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Transfer child protection files (including in year transfers) to the new school or college 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, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt will be obtained.
- Where the receiving school /college considers that transferred safeguarding information is unclear or incomplete, Bridge Junior School will seek clarification where necessary to support effective safeguarding

Our DSL(s) will ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or its contents are shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice outlined in government guidance Information Sharing guidance (September 2026). **DfE Information Sharing Duty from 30th September 2026**

Raising Awareness

- Ensure each member of staff (new and part-time) has access to and understands our child protection policy and procedures.
- Ensure our child protection policy is reviewed annually, updated, and reviewed regularly, and work with our governing boards/ proprietors regarding this.
- Ensure our child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation may be made and the role of the school or college in this (section 4.4 above)
- Link with the safeguarding partners ensuring our staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a Social Worker are experiencing, with teachers and school and college leadership staff.
- Ensure all staff, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with pupils in the school and volunteers are informed of the names of the DSL's and the school's procedures for safeguarding children
- Act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns and liaise with other agencies and professionals (where appropriate).
- Children absent / missing from education are monitored and policies are in place
- Ensuring that any pupil currently subject to a child protection plan who is absent without explanation on a number of occasions is reported to their key worker in Children's Social Care

Training Knowledge and Skills

- Understand the assessment process for providing Community based Early Help and Targeted Family Help, statutory intervention, and social care referral arrangements.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference/review conference and attend to these effectively.
- Understand the importance DSL(s) has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners
- Understand and support the school or college staff with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety including filtering and monitoring and be confident to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college.
- Recognise additional risks that children with (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, our DSL(s) knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals throughout the academic year and refreshed to allow DSL's to understand and keep up to date with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

- Ensure our staff are supported during the referrals processes.
- Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, our DSL(s) designated safeguarding leads will be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing Information

Our DSL(s) will be equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and how to comply
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc

Availability

- During term time, our DSL(s) will always be available on school site. The school will implement robust cover arrangements if the Lead DSL/ other DSL's are on unavailable due to illness, training, or leave

- Shared systems will be in place (e mail/recording systems) so that safeguarding concerns are monitored and acted upon without delay in the absence of other staff members
- The school will arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities and trips and in exceptional circumstances, availability will be made via mobile phone and or a virtual meeting.

8.2 Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher of Bridge Junior School will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the governing board trustees are fully implemented, and followed by all staff:
- Specifically, the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct (Trust policy), LADO Procedures in the Staff Code of Conduct, child on child Abuse/Sexualised Behaviour Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy (Trust policy) and other relevant policies are updated annually, ratified by the Governing board trustees annually and that policies are available publicly either via the school website, parents evening, open days or by other means.
- That staff undergo and attend annual Whole School Safeguarding Training (INSET)
- That all staff undergo appropriate online safety training
- That all staff receive regular updates in relation to safeguarding, child protection and online safety.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable DSL's and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children.
- That the Headteacher is aware of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) processes regarding allegations about other staff members, specifically the 'harms' and 'low-level concerns' thresholds.
- That the Headteacher has attended LADO Training and refreshed no later than every 2 years
- That the Headteacher has attended Safer Recruitment Training and that training is refreshed no later than every 3 years; and that at least 1 member of the Governing board / trustees has attended Safer Recruitment Training
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regard to children and processes, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner. (Whole school approach, child centred practice and culture of vigilance)
- All staff consider the best interest of a child and are made aware that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns, promptly and using the proper channels.
- All staff have an understanding of Early Help & Family Help and have the ability to identify children who would benefit from Early Help intervention.
- That regular external visitors/providers such as cleaners, caterers have shown the school a copy of their H & S and Child Protection guidelines as best practice and where applicable; and that the school has a statement in main reception notifying external visitors who the Schools DSL(s) are and what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare
- The DSL's undergo safeguarding and child protection training, which is updated regularly, with advice from the LSCPB, Safeguarding in Education and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026, Annex B
- New members of staff, temporary or permanent including volunteers are given a full induction that includes Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines and names of DSL(s).
- All staff are made aware of their right to whistle blow, have a copy of the whistleblowing procedures, are well versed with the procedures and have been made aware of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

8.3 Roles and responsibilities of the Governing Board / Trustees

Bridge Junior School Governing board have a strategic leadership responsibility for our school's safeguarding arrangements and comply with their duties under legislation. Our governing board ensures policies, procedures

and training in our school/college are effective and comply with the law at all times. Our Lead Governor for Safeguarding is (Marc Tench).

We also will ensure that all our governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. The training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our school/colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Our governors and trustees training will be regularly updated.
Furthermore, the governors~~/proprietors~~/trustees of our school~~/college~~ will ensure that:

- Our school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures in place, and the policy is made available to parents on request and available on the school website Bridge Junior School - Home
- That all school staff members working with children consider the best interests of children and are advised to maintain an attitude of *'it could happen here'* where safeguarding is concerned
- There is a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding and child protection including online safety and the filtering and monitoring systems in place for the establishment (Lead DSL)
- There is an appointed deputy(s) for child protection, in the event of the unavailability of the Lead DSL
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, Governing Board/Trustees/SLT will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide for them.
- That systems are in place, well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, neglect and exploitation, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- The DSL and the appointed deputy(s) for child protection undertakes training for designated safeguarding leads, in addition to inter-agency child protection training, which is provided by, or to standards agreed by, LSCPB, and attends refresher DSL training at two-yearly intervals.
- That clear systems and processes are in place for identifying and responding to potential mental health problems to a child including routes to escalate, referrals and accountability systems.
- The Headteacher, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate training which is kept up to date through Whole School Training (annually); and that new staff, temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. (Through the induction process)
- The Headteacher, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate online safety training.
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers (LADO) and that the thresholds for allegations (Harms Thresholds/Low Level Concerns) against staff and volunteers are understood and reported appropriately by all staff members. (Appendix 3 Procedures / Guidance; Managing Allegations (LADO)
- That Code of Conduct (Trust policy) is up to date, maintained and adhered to by staff so as not to bring the school into disrepute.
- The chair of governors/ ~~proprietors/ trustees~~ (or, in the absence of a chair, the vice chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher, in liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer. (Appendix3)
- That at least 1 member of the Governing board has attended LADO Training as a minimum and is refreshed regularly.
- That at least 1 member of the Governing Board has attended Safer Recruitment Training as a minimum and is refreshed regularly.

- The governing board trustees nor individual governors / trustees will have a role in dealing with individual cases or a right to details of cases except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff.
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to the attention of the governing board trustees are rectified.
- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually, and information is provided to the Local Authority on how the governing board / trustees discharges its duties regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- There is an individual member of the governing board who will champion and lead on issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the DSL, and provide information and reports to the governing board , and that person is appropriately trained to discharge their responsibilities effectively. Our schools Lead Governor for Safeguarding is Marc Tench.
- Will ensure that school creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children (Part three: Safer Recruitment, Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026).
- That the Chair of the governing board completes the Annual Safeguarding Return– supporting the school to exercise their duties in relation to Safeguarding & Child Protection and return the document to the local authority in a timely manner.

Our Governing Board will ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies will operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

9. Supporting Children

Some children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help for various reasons and their experiences of trauma and abuse can lead them to becoming more vulnerable or educationally disadvantaged. When receiving information from the Local Authority that a child has a social worker, our DSL(s) will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interest of a child's safety and welfare, as routine. Our DSL(s), where appropriate, will share information accordingly with relevant partner agencies to safeguard and promote the physical and mental health wellbeing of any child. In addition to this.

- We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal, too aggressive or being withdrawn.

9.1 Our school will support all students by:

- Taking into account a child's wishes when determining what action to take and what services to provide when dealing with a safeguarding concern.
- That systems are in place, well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, neglect and exploitation, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum
- Identifying children who are in need of extra mental health support which includes working with external agencies.
- Identifying children who are or maybe Young Carers and providing relevant support and signposting.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school

- Ensuring children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and know how to get help when they need it. Both, physically, mentally, and online.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children including Early Help /Family Help
- Notifying Children's Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Ensuring that a named teacher is designated for Looked After Children/Children In Need (LAC & CIN) and that an up-to-date list of LAC/CIN is regularly reviewed and monitored.
- Providing continuing support to a student (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Headteacher and Lead DSL at the pupil's new school as a matter of urgency.
- Working with partner agencies to support and safeguard children within; Early Help /Family Help, Children in Need, Child Protection and Looked After Children
- Our Governors and school staff will ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. We recognise that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and children with special educational needs and deaf/disabled children and young people. Aspects include:
    - healthy and respectful relationships including teenage relationship abuse
    - boundaries and consent
    - stereotyping, prejudice and equality including LGBTQ and gender questioning
    - body confidence and self-esteem including eating disorders and self-harm
    - how to recognise an abusive relationship, including misogyny, coercive and controlling behaviour
    - the 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, and
    - what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. (Harmful Sexual behaviours HSB).

10. Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential and the best interest of a child should be considered at all times. However, The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Our staff and practitioners (may) share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner. *It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk.*

10.1 The Headteacher or DSL will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual student/family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared, with whom, and when.

10.2 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.

10.3 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's own safety or well-being, or that of another child as this may ultimately not be in the best interest of the child.

10.4 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents/carers consent unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Children's Social Care/CASP Team.

11. Supporting Staff

11.1 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

11.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties and concerns with the DSL and to seek further support where necessary. This could be provided by, for example, the Headteacher, supervision arrangements, by Occupational Health and/or a teacher/trade union representative as appropriate.

11.3 We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, (Safer Recruitment Consortium).[7] provides advice on this and the circumstances which should be avoided, in order to limit complaints against staff of abuse of trust, and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook/code of conduct.

11.4 We recognise that DSLs should have access to support (as in 11.2) and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised or arranged through the Local Authority/LSCPB

11.5 Where staff and DSLs find situations stressful and upsetting due to safeguarding concerns, our school will ensure staff are supported through supervision and any other support required.

12. Allegations against staff

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

12.2 All staff including supply staff should be aware of the School's Behaviour Policy and Staff Code of Conduct

12.3 All staff including supply staff should be aware of the Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People 2022[8]

12.4 All staff as part of their annual safeguarding training will receive Online Safety Training and will sign the Acceptable Use Agreement. This sets out responsibilities for all staff, ensuring they have an up-to-date awareness of online safety and that all digital communications with students/parents/carers should be at a professional level and only carried out using official school systems. Further information on this can be found in section 41 & 42 of this policy and Appendix 8.

12.5 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

12.6 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher or the most senior teacher if the Headteacher is not present.

12.7 The Headteacher/senior teacher on all such occasions will immediately discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow the process for managing the concern laid down in the current Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland safeguarding partnership procedures for allegations against adults working with children. In addition to this, the Headteacher is aware of the harm's thresholds and difference between low level concerns and harms as set out in KCSIE 2026 and within the schools 'Managing Allegations Procedures'. (Appendix 3)

12.8 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with Children's Social Care, LADO, without notifying the Headteacher first.

[7] https://saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/
[8] https://saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/

12.9 On all occasions identified in 12.7 & 12.8 above, the school will follow the LSCPB/Local Authority procedures for managing allegations against staff and volunteers, a copy of which can be found in the School's Managing Allegations Policy (Appendix 3).

12.10 Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult the LADO (as in 12.8 above) in making this decision.

12.11 In line with this policy and other school procedures for incident reporting/recording, staff and pupils may provide accounts of events, which will be stored under our own secure systems and may be produced in the event of any allegation. However, such accounts must not constitute an official statement and the reporting person must not be questioned over their disclosure at this stage.

12.12 If our school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), as with any safeguarding allegation, where this is the case, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO. Furthermore, our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will manage the suspension of adults where necessary from school premises.

12.13 Our school staff including supply staff are aware of and have an understanding of our 'Guidelines for Avoiding Allegations of Abuse' as outlined in Appendix 5.

12.14 Our school staff including supply staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in raising an allegation against another staff member, following local authority and LSCPB guidance and procedures.

13. Whistleblowing

13.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

13.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to the Chair of Governors or the Local Authority Designated Officer.

13.3 All staff are aware of and understand how to use our trust's whistleblowing procedures.

13.4 All staff have access to the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline

14. Our role in the prevention of abuse

14.1 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

14.2 The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to. This includes considering the best interest of a child and maintaining the ethos of *'it could happen here'.*
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- We will provide opportunities for students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being.
- Relevant issues will be addressed through the PSHE curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationship education, mental/physical health, online safety and bullying.

- Relevant safeguarding issues will be addressed through other areas of the curriculum, for example, circle time, English, History, Drama, Art, ICT and E Safety (includes online and offline safety)
- Other areas of work
- All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example bullying, equal opportunities, handling, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure a whole school approach.
- Our safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

15. Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to extremism

15.1 Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy[9] and (Revised Prevent Duty Guidance 2015[10]), there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and 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 vulnerable to future radicalisation.

15.2 Bridge Junior School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

15.3 The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Bridge Junior School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.
Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in Appendix 6.

15.4 Bridge Junior School seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to religious ideologies, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist extremist and Animal Rights movements.

15.5 Bridge Junior School considers local, regional and national risks relating to radicalisation and terrorism as part of its Prevent risk assessment. The assessment takes account of current local intelligence, the context of the school and its community, online risks and any other relevant school-specific factors. Appendix 11.

15.6 **Risk reduction:** The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead review the school's Prevent Risk Assessment annually, and sooner where significant new information or circumstances require this. The assessment identifies the controls in place to reduce risk and any further action required. **The school's Prevent Risk Assessment is included at Appendix 11 to this policy.**

15.7 When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL in the first instance.

15.8 Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any

[9] *Prevent Strategy 2011* - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf & *CONTEST Strategy 2011* - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97994/contest-summary.pdf
[10] *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance 2015*/Rev 2023 Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023) - GOV.UK

particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

15.9 Our staff have undergone Prevent Awareness Training and understand the steps to follow, via discussions with the DSL, if a referral to the Channel Programme is required.

16. Contextual Safeguarding, Assessment of Risk Outside the Home, Extra Familial Harms (Child Criminal Exploitation)

Designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) will take into consideration whether children are at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

This is known as contextual safeguarding and assessment of risk outside the home, which simply means DSLs will take into consideration wider environmental factors that may be present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and or welfare. This way, schools and colleges are able to provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process to Children's Social Care / CASP as necessary. 0116 454 1004

16.1 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse and occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. Safeguarding incidents and CCE can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

17. County Lines, Child Financial Abuse and Sextortion

17.1 Criminal exploitation of children is a widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. County Lines is a term used when drug gangs from big cities expand their operations to smaller towns, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting children and vulnerable people to sell drugs.

17.2 Common features in county lines drug supply is the exploitation of young and vulnerable people. The dealers will frequently target children and adults - often with mental health or addiction problems - to act as drug runners or move cash so they can stay under the radar of law enforcement.

17.3 People exploited in this way will quite often be exposed to physical, mental and sexual abuse, and in some instances will be trafficked to areas a long way from home as part of the network's drug dealing business.

17.4 We might not immediately think of children when we hear the words 'financial fraud.' But the reality is that more and more young people are finding themselves the victims of financial exploitation. Being groomed online to open bank accounts and launder criminal money. This is known as Child Financial Abuse. (CFB). Criminals befriend young people through social media and online games. They offer them gifts, promise easy money, gaming credits, skins or cryptocurrency. Once they've gained a young person's trust, they force them to carry out fraudulent activities, like opening a bank account for them. This is financial exploitation.

17.5 Sextortion' is a type of online blackmail when perpetrators threaten to share sexual pictures, videos, or information about children and young people unless they pay money or do something they don't want to. (sexual acts/criminal exploitation). Anyone can be a victim of sextortion. However, young people aged between 15 to 17 are often most at risk. Children and young people can still be a victim of sextortion even if they haven't shared sexual images

or information. Perpetrators may have created and edited an existing image of the child into fake images or videos, deepfakes that appear real.

18. Serious Violence, Gang Violence & Youth Crime

Section 18 & 19 of this policy outlines the school-responsibility in supporting children who are involved with Gangs and Knife crime. The same safeguarding procedures will apply if a child is experiencing this including contextual safeguarding. The Home Office have produced additional supporting guidance on Preventing and reducing serious violence[11] to support schools/colleges further.

18.1 A gang is a group of individuals that spends time in public and engages in criminal activity and violence. The group may also be territorial or in conflict with other gangs. Young people involved in gangs have an increased risk of experiencing violence and other types of abuse including sexual exploitation. Gang crime and serious youth violence is also often synonymous with knife crime and other serious violence.

18.2 The vast majority of young people and education establishments will not be affected by serious violence or gangs. However, where these problems do occur there will almost certainly be a significant impact.

18.3 Gangs specifically target children who have been excluded from school to groom them as drug dealers in towns across the UK. Exclusion from school appears to be a highly significant trigger point for the escalation of County Lines involvement for children who might be on the fringes of such activity or who are easily manipulated.

19. Knife Crime

19.1 Knife crime has been receiving countrywide attention after being recognised as a contemporary national threat in the UK. There have been a number of high-profile incidents where teenagers have been killed or injured by someone using a knife as a weapon. Knife crime simply put is any crime that involves a knife. This includes:

- carrying a knife or trying to buy one if you're under 18.
- threatening someone with a knife
- carrying a knife that is banned
- a murder where the victim was stabbed with a knife
- a robbery or burglary where the thieves carried a knife as a weapon

19.2 Bridge Junior School takes such incidents very seriously and we will follow our school/college and governments procedures in dealing with such incidents. Furthermore, where a crime is being committed, our duty of care will also include contacting the Police. Further information on our procedures on this can be accessed in the Trust's Searching and Confiscation policy.

20. Child Criminal Exploitation and Cybercrime Involvement

20.1 Organised criminal groups or individuals exploit children and young people due to their computer skills and ability, in order to access networks/data for criminal and financial gain. There are a number of signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim or is vulnerable to being exploited which include:

- Child Missing / Persistently Absent from Education
- Show signs of other types of abuse/aggression towards others
- Have low self-esteem, and feelings of isolation, stress or fear.
- Lack trust in adults and appear fearful of authorities.
- Have poor concentration or excessively tired.
- Become anti-social.

[11] Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK

- Display symptoms of substance dependence
- Excessive time online computer/gaming forums
- Social Isolation in school with peers
- High functioning with an interest in computing

21. Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

21.1 County Lines criminal exploitation is also synonymous with Child Sexual Exploitation. Criminal activity and Gang Association can lead into CSE through situations such as initiation, peer pressure in addition to sexual favours. Although county lines are mainly criminal, all our staff are aware of the definitions of CSE, signs and impact on vulnerable children. This is further outlined in section 17.1 of this Policy.

22. Modern Slavery & Trafficking

22.1 Slavery is an umbrella term for activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in compelled service. The number of British children identified as potential victims of modern slavery has more than doubled in a year, prompting fresh concerns about child exploitation by county lines drugs gangs.

Someone is in slavery if they are:

- forced to work through mental or physical threat.
- owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse.
- dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'.
- physically constrained or have restrictions placed on his/her freedom.
- 'slavery' is where ownership is exercised over a person.
- 'servitude' involves the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion.
- 'forced or compulsory labour' involves work or service extracted from any person under the menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily.
- 'human trafficking' concerns arranging or facilitating the travel of another with a view to exploiting them.

22.2 Human trafficking

22.3 Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person; (where a child is involved, the above means are irrelevant). For the purposes of exploitation, which includes (but is not exhaustive):

- Prostitution
- Other sexual exploitation
- Forced labour
- Slavery (or similar)
- Servitude etc.
- Removal of organs

23. Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment/Child on Child Abuse

KCSIE 2026, Part 5 is explicit in their definition of Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and its forms. However, within the context of contextual safeguarding, child on child abuse and peer influence has a massive impact on

the child and young person (CYP). If CYP are exposed to other CYP who are known for being exploited, they are more likely to experience child on child abuse and be 'influenced' or 'swayed' to participate in illegal activity, criminal activity and sexual activity. Further information on Child-on-Child abuse and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment is outlined in our school's guidance Appendix 7 of this Policy and within section 28 of this policy.

24. Children and the court system

24.1 Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds. Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Young witness booklet for 12 to 17 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

24.2 Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool Making child arrangements if you divorce or separate: Making child arrangements - GOV.UK with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers. If a child or young person from our school is in a situation where they are required to give evidence, school staff members will support the child and family members where appropriate.

25. Children with family members in prison

25.1 The imprisonment of a household member is one of ten adverse childhood experiences known to have a significant negative impact on children's long-term health and wellbeing, their school attainment, and later life experiences. Children may have to take on extra responsibilities at home, including becoming young carers in some situations.

25.2 These children are at risk of poor outcomes including stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Parental imprisonment is also associated specifically with negative school experiences, such as truanting, bullying and failure to achieve in education and children of prisoners are at a higher risk of mental ill health and have an increased likelihood of experiencing poverty compared to their peers.

25.3 Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year, on any given day, 100,000 children in England and Wales have a parent behind bars, this equates to 1 in 75 children across England and Wales[12]. **Bridge Junior School** Staff members will support children and their family members if children from our school have family members in prison. In such cases, **Bridge Junior School** will remain non-judgemental and supportive towards the child and family so that they can achieve the best whilst in our environment especially if visits are required during school time. Furthermore, if a parent or carer finds themselves in this situation, we encourage you to speak with our DSL so that support can be given as necessary. KCSIE 2026 have also published the Prisoners Family Helpline which we will make available to our parents and carers. 08088082003.

26. Homelessness

26.1 Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Our DSL are aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity if our children and family are experiencing homelessness. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

26.2 Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

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

[12] Children & Young People - Prison Advice and Care Trust

26.4 Furthermore, Bridge Junior School also promote Early Help and Targeted Family Support so that children and families can be identified and supported at an early stage. If a parent or carer and/or their children find themselves in this situation, we strongly urge you to speak to our DSL or member of school staff so that support can be provided.

26.5 Safeguarding CYP is a local and national priority and within Bridge Junior School, protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation is a priority. Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy along with the school's values, ethos and behaviour policies, provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other. Our staff are well versed with local and national guidance and are aware of emerging safeguarding concerns that could potentially harm our children and young people:

- Our school keeps itself up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities, mental health and forms of exploitation.
- Our staff are supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues and include such issues in an age-appropriate way in their curriculum.
- Our staff are aware of emerging issues and contextual safeguarding and take this into consideration when assessing children and young people's needs.
- Our school works with and engages our families and communities to talk about such issues.
- Our school staff are supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.
- Our DSL knows where to seek and get advice as necessary.
- Our school brings in experts and uses specialist material to support the work we do.
- Our school staff fully understand how to raise a concern using the appropriate channels.

26.6 As **Bridge Junior School** staff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves in many different ways, our staff have received annual safeguarding training and additional information to better equip themselves in the knowledge of other forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation as per Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. These are outlined in **Appendix 1.**

27. Young Carers

27.1 A young carer is defined as: "You're a young carer if you're under 18 and help to look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem. If you're a young carer, you probably look after one of your parents or care for a brother or sister. You may do extra jobs in and around the home, such as cooking, cleaning, or helping someone get dressed and move around. You may also give a lot of physical help to a brother or sister who's disabled or ill. Along with doing things to help your brother or sister, you may be giving them and your parents emotional support, too."

27.2 Here at Bridge Junior School we understand the difficulties that young carers face when supporting family members which can range from not completing homework, arriving to school late or not having enough sleep as examples. We are not here to judge, but rather to support the needs and wellbeing of the young person where necessary; our DSL's will support the young person in ensuring relevant support and guidance is given. Where possible, parents and carers should make the schools/college aware if a child they live with is a young carer to ensure relevant support is received as soon as possible.

27.3 Furthermore, additional information can be sought by contacting the schools directly or going direct to Leicester City Council, CASP Team on: 0116 454 1004 and choose option 1 'City', then option 1 'Child' and then option 4 'Young carer' who provide regular and ongoing support to children and young people that are under the age of 18, who care for family members who are physically or mentally unwell, disabled and/or misuses substances.[13]

[13] Support for young carers | Leicester City Council | The Children's Society | UK children's charity

28. Other Forms of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

28.1 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Trafficking.** CSE is a form of abuse and occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationships to serious gang and group exploitation.

28.2 Bridge Junior School staff are aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms and that pupils may not exhibit external signs of abuse. Our staff are also aware that it is an offence carrying a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment where an adult (any adult) intentionally communicates (for example, by e-mail, text message, written note or orally) with a child under 16 (whom the adult does not reasonably believe to be aged 16 or over) for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification. This act forms part of Section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015[14] (offence of Sexual Communication with a Child) and came into force on 3 April 2017.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604931/circular-commencement-s67-serious-crime-act-2015.pdf

28.3 Therefore, our staff are vigilant for the less obvious signs, such as lots of new electronic equipment, when before there was none, seeming to have extra money to spend, moving away from established friendship groups, and the use of language appropriate/inappropriate for the child's age.

28.4 Our school staff are also aware of some of the signs and symptoms of CSE through LSCPB Leaflets[15], staff induction and as part of annual Whole School Safeguarding Training.

28.5 Our school staff follow guidance and procedures as outlined in 'Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland[16]' available on the LSCPB website.

28.6 Our school staff are aware that if a disclosure is raised in reaction to CSE, that it will be reported straight to the DSL/SLT or Social Care / CASP in their absence.

28.7 Sharing Nudes & Semi Nudes (formerly known as sexting) can also form part of CSE both online and offline

28.8 Child sexual exploitation can occur in different ways and in different situations. Many young people are 'groomed' by their abuser, online or face-to-face. Grooming is an action deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, to lower the child's inhibitions with the intention to sexually abuse them.

28.9 Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust through a range of mediums including social media platforms. Section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 (offence of Sexual Communication with a Child) which came into force on 3 April 2017 also applies to Sexting, Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes (including videos and live streams) and Grooming and our staff are fully aware of the legislation[17].

Grooming Models include:

- The relationship / peer model
- Organised / network model & trafficking model
- Inappropriate relationship model
- Gangs model
- Online Gaming / Social Networks

28.10 Our staff are aware of the types of grooming which take place, including grooming models through their annual safeguarding training and information from our DSL.

[14] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circular-201701-sexual-communication-with-a-child-implementation-of-s67-of-the-serious-crime-act-2015
[15] https://www.lcitylscb.org/safeguarding-leaflets/
[16] https://www.lcitylscb.org/safeguarding-leaflets/
[17] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604931/circular-commencement-s67-serious-crime-act-2015.pdf

28.11 Sharing Nudes or Semi Nudes/Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video or use of live stream. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. This can be via child on child or other adults. Nearly 40% of young people in the UK admit to sharing intimate content whilst under the age of 18. In the past, where children have taken explicit pictures of themselves and sent them to others, the youngest has been 5 years old. It is illegal to possess, take or distribute sexual images of someone who is under 18, even if the young person under the age of 18 has taken the image themselves and passed it on themselves. To add to this, new data and research in August 2026 shows an increase in cases where under 18's have reported pictures of themselves are being transformed into nude and sexual imagery through the use of AI (otherwise digitally manipulated)[18].

Bridge Junior School responds to any incident involving the sharing of nudes or semi-nudes as a safeguarding matter, without blaming or shaming children. Staff must report the incident to the DSL immediately. Staff must not view, copy, save, print, forward or delete the imagery, or ask a pupil to do so; any accidental viewing must be reported to the DSL. The DSL will assess the circumstances and risks, including coercion, exploitation, age, consent and any involvement of an adult, in line with UKCIS guidance. The DSL will determine whether to refer to children's social care and/or the police and whether, when and how parents/carers should be informed; notification must not increase the risk to a child. An adult sharing sexual imagery of a child must be referred to the police urgently. Decisions, rationale and support for the children involved will be recorded securely. Staff follow the UKCIS guidance, Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings (updated March 2024).

28.12 Our school- has developed an AI policy which supports our staff and children in the safe use of AI. We understand AI can be an enriching and supportive tool in supporting our staff and children learn and develop, however, we are also aware of some of the dangers linked to misinformation and deep fake images. These have been highlighted within our AI Policy and Online Safety Policy and AI and its safe use is further included as part of our safeguarding curriculum.

28.13 Bridge Junior School staff follow school procedures in reporting such concerns and promote E Safety and dangers of Sharing Nudes, Sexting, use of AI, Grooming and CSE through our safeguarding curriculum, PSHE and assemblies. Our pupils are taught how to keep safe on and offline and E Safety is promoted throughout the school and home environment. Our school have also discussed local and national cases where grooming of young children has taken place such as the Kayleigh Haywood Story/Brecks Game to highlight the dangers.

28.14 Our E safety policy is highlighted to staff, pupils and parents and is available on our school's website including our acceptable usage policy and our staff have undergone relevant online safety at induction and regularly throughout the year.

29. Child on Child Sexual Violence & Harassment including child on child Abuse/Children using Harmful Sexual Behaviour [19] (HSB)

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying).
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual of sharing nudes and semi nudes/sexting
- Upskirting
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

29.1 Sexual violence and sexual harassment (KCSIE 2026, Part 5) can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children

[18] Hundreds of kids say their images have been turned into AI-abuse (Internet Watch Foundation (IWF))

[19&17] Harmful Sexual Behaviour | https://llrscb.trixonline.co.uk

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

29.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQ children are at greater risk. Some risks can be especially compounded where children who are LGBTQ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open with. Our staff therefore understand and endeavour to reduce any additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for our children to speak out or share their concerns.

29.3 Bridge Junior School takes child on child abuse/Child on Child Sexual Violence & Harassment seriously and we understand that some children are more vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. In our school, this kind of abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and as seriously as a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

29.4 Our staff understand that a significant proportion of sexual related offences are committed by teenagers, and, on occasion, such offences are committed by younger children. Our staff therefore understand not to dismiss some abusive sexual behaviour as 'normal' between young people and not to create high thresholds in such cases before appropriate action is taken.

29.5 Our staff will respect confidentiality and anonymity of a child or young person reporting incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment including situations where the child or young person asks staff not to tell anyone about the incident, making referrals against the wishes of the young person and considering the potential impact of social media breaching confidentiality. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.

29.6 Our lead DSL (or a deputy) will endeavour to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the lead DSL (or a deputy) decide to make a referral to children's social care / CASP and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, our DSL and staff will handle all incidents extremely carefully, and the reasons will be explained to the victim, appropriate specialist support will be offered taking into consideration the best interest of the child at all times.

29.7 Where incidents of sexual violence and harassment have been raised, our staff, where applicable, will take into consideration the impact on siblings and understand the importance of intra familial harms.

29.8 Staff and carers of children living away from home need clear guidance and training to identify the difference between consenting and abusive, and between appropriate and exploitative peer relationships. Our school will provide information, guidance and training to relevant staff members to support them with this.

29.9 Children and young people who abuse others should be held responsible for their abusive behaviour, while being identified and responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others and our school has clear guidelines around this. See also point 28.10.

29.10 Our school staff understand that with regard to the alleged perpetrator(s), advice on behaviour in schools[20] is clear that teachers can sanction pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or local authority children's social care are ongoing (if any). The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly. Our DSL or deputy DSL will take a leading role with this.

29.11 Our school also refers to the LSCPB procedures[21] which are written with reference to sexually abusive and inappropriate behaviours. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (Part 5) also makes reference to Child on Child Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment and where there are serious child protection concerns, as a result of non-sexual violence by

[20] Behaviour in schools - GOV.UK
[21] Harmful Sexual Behaviour | https://llrscb.trixonline.co.uk

a child or young person, leading to actual or possible significant harm, our safeguarding and child protection measures will be implemented.

29.12 In supporting children and families, our staff understand Early Help / Targeted Family Support can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. Therefore, it is particularly important that our designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what our local early help process is and how and where to access support.

30. Upskirting

30.1 Upskirting is the act of taking a photograph of underneath a person's skirt without their consent. It is often performed in a public place; public transport or on an escalator, with crowds of people making it harder to spot people taking these photos. It could also happen on the way to and from school and within a school. Being victim to such an incident can cause emotional distress for the young child or young person involved DSL's takes these types of incidents seriously and our staff are aware of the law against 'Upskirting' which came into force on April 12, 2019 in England and Wales. If our staff are made aware of such incidents, the schools will follow its safeguarding procedures in addition to seeking advice from the Police.

30.2 At **Bridge Junior School** all our staff are aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras, upskirting and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them and serious action will be taken.

30.3 If our staff have a concern that a child might have been abused by another child and/or is displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour, staff will in the first instance refer their concerns to the DSL. The DSL will then directly contact Children's Social Care/CASP in accordance with the LSCPB Referrals Procedure to decide how the incident will be managed. Furthermore, our DSL will also seek advice from the Police where necessary. Our staff are aware of what child abuse and Sexual Violence/Harassment is at national and local levels through our annual Whole School Training and our DSL has attended appropriate HSB training to enhance their knowledge in this area further.

31. Domestic Violence and Abuse & Violence between young people (Teen relationships)

31.1 The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is[22]:

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

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

31.2 There have been a number of high profile cases both locally and nationally where domestic violence and abuse has had a significant and direct impact on the child and their mental health and wellbeing. If the school is made aware of incidents of domestic violence which is impacting on a child within the school, (suspicions and allegations of abuse, harm and significant risk to a child), the school will follow Local Authority and Leicester Safeguarding Board guidelines in reporting such concerns to Children's Social Care, Duty and Advice or the Police and will also seek further guidance where necessary.

[22] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse

31.3 Domestic abuse is not limited to adults; there is an increasing awareness of violence from one teenager to another.

- 1 in 5 teenage girls have been assaulted by a boyfriend.
- Young women are more likely to experience sexual violence than other age groups.
- Young women with older partners are at increased risk of victimisation.
- Recent surveys (including NSPCC[23], Zero Tolerance and End Violence Against Women campaign) reveal that approximately 40% of our young people are already being subjected to relationship abuse in their teenage years.

31.4 If Bridge Junior School is made aware of children behaving this way with other children within our school, and violence is apparent between the young people's intimate relationship; this includes issues around the use of social media and Sexting, we will view this as a significant child welfare concern and where necessary, the appropriate agencies will be informed. This includes Children Social Care/ CASP and the Police.

31.5 If such cases are prevalent within our school, whether the incident involves Adult Relationships or Teen Relationships, the school will also work closely with the child and the Headteacher/DSL will endeavour to support the child who has been exposed to this type of violence and abuse with the involvement of (where appropriate) their parents/carers and their boyfriend/girlfriend.

31.6 Furthermore, involvement through Operation Encompass and Early Help / Targeted Family Support can also support the child and parents/carers. The school will ensure communications and multiagency working with Social Care and Early Help / Targeted Family Support is maintained to fully support the child and their family. (Victims). Staff will also work with all the children in our school to ensure information and the importance of healthy relationships is highlighted through assemblies, circle time and PSHE/RSHE lessons.

32. Children Missing/Absent From Education (CME) & Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education

32.1 Children missing in education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. (DFE)[24] This includes children not being home educated and children who are not on school roll. In addition to CME, some children are persistently absent from education or have unexplainable absences (KCSIE 2026)[25].

32.2 Bridge Junior School staff understand the differences set out in 32.1 and procedures to follow. Our staff are aware that children being absent from school for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. Our response to children's absences from school supports identifying such abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a missing child in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to the local authority.

32.3 Children missing from education who are persistently absent from school, are referred to in the wider LCC Educational Welfare Service Policy and LSCPB Procedures[26] for children who go missing from School, Home or Care Education and includes Families who go missing. In addition to this, Bridge Junior School has its own Attendance Policy available on Schools Website which also outlines procedures for pupil absence from our school.

[23] New report shows scale of abuse against teenagers | NSPCC
[24] Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK
[25] Keeping children safe in education 2026: September 2026
[26] Procedures and School's Extranet (leicester.gov.uk)
[26] *FGM Revised Guidance July 2020* - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation

32.4 Should a pupil go missing from Bridge Junior School our Attendance Champion Ms. Vig will inform the DSL/SLT and contact the Educational Welfare Service. The DSL will consider further actions and/or support should it be required and ensure they help identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

32.5 At Bridge Junior School if a child is no longer coming to our school where the parent/carer has removed them for the reason of elective home education, we will ensure that we notify the LA in line with the established procedure. We will also follow procedures where a child is taken out of school to go on holiday or where a child is removed from school as the family are moving away.

32.6 We will notify all relevant partner agencies/services including Education Welfare, correct forms will be completed, information will be recorded, and child folders/information will be passed on to the appropriate person (where applicable).

33 Honour of Faith Based abuse (HBA)

33.1. Honour-based Abuse is a term that embraces a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women) including domestic abuse, which is perpetrated in the name of so called 'honour'. The honour code which it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives and women who do not abide by the 'rules' are then punished for bringing shame on the family. Infringements may include a woman having a boyfriend; rejecting a forced marriage; pregnancy outside of marriage; interfaith relationships; seeking divorce, FGM, Forced Marriage, abuse linked to faith and culture, breast ironing, inappropriate dress or make-up and even kissing in a public place.

33.2 HBA can exist in any culture or community where males are in position to establish and enforce women's conduct. However, males can also be victims, sometimes because of a relationship which is deemed to be inappropriate, if they are gay, have a disability or if they have assisted a victim.

34. Female Genital Mutilation

34.1 Female Genital Mutilation is an illegal operation under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, it is a form of child abuse and as such, is dealt with under the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

34.2 Definition of Female Genital Mutilation[27] (FGM):

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons.

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. Therefore, our staff have been briefed on the importance of FGM through our Whole School Safeguarding training on 9th September 2026 are aware of some of the signs and symptoms.

Responding to FGM - The school will ensure:

- We raise awareness of staff regarding the issues of FGM through Whole School Training
- Staff have a clear understanding of what is FGM.
- FGM is within the schools Safeguarding Policy
- Sex and Health curriculum supports pupils understanding of their bodies and keeping themselves safe.
- Monitoring absences

34.3 The mandatory FGM reporting duty applies personally to teachers who, in the course of their professional duties, are told by a girl under 18 that FGM has been carried out on her, or observe physical signs which appear to show that FGM has been carried out. Such teachers must report the case to the police personally; telling the DSL alone does not discharge this duty. They should also inform the DSL unless there is good reason not to, and children's social care should be involved as appropriate. The mandatory duty does not apply to suspected cases or where a girl is considered at risk of FGM: all staff must report these concerns immediately to the DSL and follow local safeguarding procedures. In an emergency, call 999.

34.4 Any concerns raised including any referrals made will be monitored closely and recorded following our school's procedures by the staff members raising the concern, the DSL or both.

34.5 Furthermore, our school staff are aware that guidance on FGM has been updated in July 2020 and the guidance is available to all staff.

35. Forced Marriage

35.1 A forced marriage is a marriage that is performed under duress and without the full and informed consent or free will of both parties. Duress cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds. Victims of forced marriage may be the subject of physical violence, rape, abduction, false imprisonment, enslavement, emotional abuse, and murder. It is important not to confuse 'forced' marriage with 'arranged' marriage. In the instance of an 'arranged' marriage both parties freely consent.

35.2 Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

35.3 The Government's definition of a Forced Marriage is:

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

35.4 Bridge Junior School staff, through induction and Whole School Training are aware of the importance and impact on a child/student who is involved in such situations.

35.5 In addition, the Forced Marriage Unit have issued guidance on Forced Marriage and vulnerable adults due to an emerging trend of cases where such marriages involving people with learning difficulties. This is not a crime' which is perpetrated by men only, sometimes female relatives will support, incite or assist. It is also not unusual for younger relatives to be selected to undertake the abuse to protect senior members of the family. Sometimes contract killers and bounty hunters will also be employed.

35.6 In such cases, disclosures and concerns relating to Forced Marriage/Honour Based Abuse will be reported directly to the DSL / the Police due to the impact it could have on the child/student in the wider community. Information will be sought from Children's Social Care/CASP and where appropriate and Police and the Forced Marriage Unit.

36. Abuse linked to faith, beliefs and culture

36.1 Child abuse is never acceptable in any community, in any culture, in any religion, under any circumstances. However, some children are subject to certain kinds of child abuse linked to their faith, belief or culture and this includes abuse that might arise through a belief in spirit possession or other spiritual or religious beliefs.

This kind of abuse can also include:

- Belief in the concept of witchcraft, magic or voodoo

- Demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray.
- The evil eye or djinns and dakini
- Ritual or muti murders
- Breast Ironing
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour based violence and Forced Marriage
- Chastisement of a child in a Place of Worship

36.2 Financially motivated sexual extortion (FMSE) can be linked with HBA as well as contextual safeguarding as mentioned under Contextual Safeguarding.

36.3 Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, Bridge Junior School recognises that, such cases are on the increase within the community and as a school, we take such incidents as seriously as any other kind of abuse perpetrated by an adult on a child.

36.4 If the school has been made aware of such a case, the school will follow LSCPB procedures and where appropriate, report the incident to Children Social Care/ CASP or the Police.

36.5 As a school, our staff are aware of some of the signs of this kind of abuse and have attended training to support them further. We also work closely with all our children to promote healthy relationships and British Values. Our code of conduct (Children/Teachers/Parents & Carers), also teaches our children mutual respect of other faith, beliefs and cultures in a positive manner rather than negative. We believe and respect each other in our school and maintain this ethos throughout the teaching and learning environment.

37. Community Based Early Help, Targeted Family Help and Supporting Children and their Families

37.1 Early Help and prevention is about how different agencies work together to help children, young people and their families at any point in their lives to prevent or reduce difficulties. This means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

37.2 At Bridge Junior School, key staff members and DSL's have attended our LSCPB's Early Help Assessment Training, and our staff are prepared to identify any children who may benefit from Early Help. (signpost/refer accordingly).

37.3 Bridge Junior School is working towards and contributing towards the Local Authority's shift and DfE's introduction of the Families First Partnership Programme (FFP)[28] which is a UK government initiative designed to reform and transform children's social care by focusing on early intervention and joined-up multi-agency support.

37.4 Our school staff are appropriately trained to support children and families with:

- **Community based early help which** is universal, open access support available to all families
  - **Who it is for:** All families within the local area, typically available without formal assessment.
  - **What it involves:** Universal services like GP visits, health visiting, support via school (Uniform/trips/form filling/school app)
  - **Goal:** To prevent minor issues from escalating and help families build resilience through self-serve or community resources.
  - **Accessing it:** Parents can usually self-refer or simply walk into local community hubs school can also help and support
- Targeted early help through Family Help which provides co-ordinated multi-agency intervention for families with complex emerging needs who require a more personalised pathway and lead professional
  - **Who it is for:** Families with multiple concerns (Parental MH, DV/DA or school non-attendance)
  - **What it involves:** Coordinated, multi-agency support; formal assessment, a tailored family plan, and a designated lead worker.
  - **Goal:** To actively address complex risk factors before they deteriorate to the point of requiring statutory social care (e.g., child protection).

[28] Families First Partnership programme - GOV.UK

- **Accessing it:** Requires a professional referral and a formal Early Help Assessment (EHA). To view criteria and referral pathways in the surrounding areas

38. Bullying and Safeguarding

38.1 **The Law** (Bullying at school: The law - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) - Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages.
- hate crimes and,

It is against the law to discriminate (Discrimination: your rights: Types of discrimination ('protected characteristics') - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) against anyone because of:

- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- sex
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- age
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave

38.2 Bullying is defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'. Repeated bullying usually has a significant emotional component, where the anticipation and fear of being bullied seriously affects the behaviour of the victim. This includes targeting a child or young person for being lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Children are taught that Bullying is usually many times on purpose and are taught to report any actions that upset them.

38.3 It can be inflicted on a child by another child or an adult. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

38.4 Bridge Junior School has a legal duty to ensure we have an Anti-Bully Policy in place and that all staff, children and parents/carers are made aware of it. This document can be accessed on our school's website Bridge Junior School - Home and sets out clear procedures in managing such incidents within the school. We also deliver work in school about anti-bullying through assemblies and lessons and our staff are trained in appropriately dealing with such incidents.

38.5 However, at times, bullying such as child on child abuse; sexualised behaviour, serious incidents of harm, homophobic behaviours, cyber bullying and Sexting/Use of mobile phones may occur and will be taken seriously and as a serious safeguarding concern especially if the child is at risk of significant harm. In such cases, our Designated

Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher will assess the situation and seek advice and guidance from Children's Social care or the Police especially in relation to illegal activity and outlined in section 38.1 above.

39. Local Priorities

39.1 Within Leicester City, the Local Authority and LSCPB have their own priorities which reflect the area in which Bridge Junior School is based. Some of these include being aware of Knife Crime, Gang Related Issues, Radicalisation, County Lines, Criminal Activity, Antisocial Behaviour, FGM and Contextual Safeguarding. (This is not an exhaustive list).

39.2 Within our local community area, our priorities are:

- Neglect
- Awareness of Domestic Abuse
- Awareness of cultural bias towards seeing Domestic Abuse as acceptable
- Awareness of drug use (including incidents of family members involved in drug dealing /trafficking)
- Awareness of families struggling to accept disabilities in a child
- Awareness of Knife crime
- Awareness of the impact of economic pressures on family life
- Awareness of tensions between groups of citizens, particularly influenced by global / national issues.
- Online behaviours and the potential for pupils to be drawn into being influenced by exploiters.

(This is not an exhaustive list).

39.3 Our SLT, DSL's and staff are aware of these priorities and we aim to raise awareness through a whole school approach and staff training to ensure our children and young people are aware of such issues and that we implement the correct policies and procedures to ensure that our children and young people are safe within school and within the community we serve. We work closely with other agencies including the Police, Community Groups and Social care and where appropriate, Parents and Carers will also be a part of this whole school and whole community approach process. Staff have Prevent training at least every 2 years. Our DSL attends Violence Reduction Network meetings to keep up to date with current issues in the City.

40. Private Fostering

40.1 A private fostering arrangement is one that is made without the involvement of the local authority to look after a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, for 28 days or more and can include those living with extended family members. So, this could be a child living with people as stated below:

Private Fostering **includes** a child living with:	Private Fostering **does not include** a child living with:
Godparents	Mother/Father
Great Grandparents	Brothers/Sister
Great Aunts or Uncles	Grandparents
Family Friends	Aunts/Uncles
Step parents where a couple isn't married or in a civil partnership	Step Parents where a couple is married or in a civil partnership
Cousins	Children and young people who are being looked after by the Authority.
A host family which is caring for a child from overseas while they are in education here	LSCPB | Private Fostering

40.2 It's a legal duty (Children Act 1989) for parents or the private foster carer to notify the local authority of whenever a child is not living with a close relative. This should be done six weeks before the arrangement takes place or immediately if it is unplanned or already happening. This is so the local authority can work with private foster carers to keep children safe and support anyone who is privately fostering.

40.3 Bridge Junior School staff are aware of what Private Fostering is and staff in our school understand their legal duty under the Children Act 1989 to notify the Local Authority/Children's Social Care, they are made aware of such cases. Bridge Junior School understands the apprehension some carers may feel in raising such concerns and the difficulty that some carers may have if faced with this situation. As such, the school and staff will endeavour to support the carers and the child to ensure the wellbeing of the child is maintained and help and advice is made available.

41. Online Safety

41.1 Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and exploitation online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate. See Appendix 8 for additional information.

41.2 Bridge Junior School takes online safety and well-being of staff and children seriously and all our staff are given safeguarding training including online safety at induction. In addition to this, all staff receive, child protection, safeguarding and online safety updates via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Our approach to online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and whilst planning the curriculum, teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

41.3 The school will consider a whole school approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 4G and 5G and the school will carefully consider how this is managed on our premises. The policy will take into consideration the use of all handheld devices and smart watches.

41.4 As part of our ongoing vigilance around online safety and outlined in our Online Safety Policy, we have further introduced a specific policy on the use of AI and Generative Platforms for use in and out of school for our children and staff. This also includes the use of Meta Glasses (AI-powered smart eyewear) which will not be permitted on school sites. Further information can be found in our Online Policy

See ICT acceptable use policy, online safety policy, Behaviour policy and Mobile phone policy in Code of Conduct. Children will not have access to their own devices during the school day. Any devices brought to school will be kept safe for the children until the end of the day. This will be agreed with individual parents.

41.5 **Staff training** - The school will ensure that online safety training for staff will include monitoring and filtering and is integrated, aligned and that AI and its use in and out of school for children and staff is also considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

42. Monitoring and Filtering

42.1 Monitoring and filtering play crucial roles in the responsible use of the internet. With the vast amount of information available online, these tools help ensure a safe and productive online environment. Monitoring involves tracking internet activities to prevent illegal or harmful content, protecting users from cyber threats, and enforcing compliance with policy and guidance. Filtering, on the other hand, enables the customisation of internet access, allowing schools and colleges to block inappropriate content and prioritise educational resources. Both monitoring and filtering are essential in schools, colleges, and homes to safely foster positive internet experience for all users.

42.2 It is the responsibility of our Head Teacher/ DSL Mr Williamson to ensure online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place for Bridge Junior School, Our Head Teacher/ DSL will also ensure ALL our staff receive appropriate training and understand the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering

and monitoring which also ties in with Teachers Standards[29] and staff Code of Conduct Policy and our Governing Board will regularly review its effectiveness. (KCSIE Annex B, Role of DSL).

42.3 Our establishment further understands the importance of regular contact with parents and carers. Where appropriate, these communications will be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online as it is likely that supporting parents and carers will find it helpful to understand what systems we use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. For additional information on monitoring filtering within our establishment, please see Appendix 8 for additional information.
Updates - Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (Updated August 2026)

43. Use of school premises for non-school-activities

43.1 Where governing boards hire or rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

43.2 When services or activities are provided by the governing board under the direct supervision or management of their school or college staff, their arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The governing board ~~or proprietor~~ should therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll or attend the college.

43.3 The governing board should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e., lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

44. Alternative Provisions

44.1 Alternative Provision refers to educational settings outside mainstream and special schools for children who, for various reasons, cannot attend mainstream schooling. These reasons can include behavioural issues, exclusion, health problems, or specific educational needs that mainstream schools cannot meet.

44.2 If Bridge Junior School places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of that pupil and will be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs not only with its provision but with relevant safeguarding documents risk assessments.

44.3 As outlined in 44.1, the pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is therefore also important that governing boards of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. Alternative Provision aims to ensure that every child receives an education that meets their individual needs, supporting their personal and academic development and as such, staff in our school and the staff within the Alternative Provisions are aware of the government's statutory guidance in relation to Alternative Provision:

- Alternative Provision DFE statutory guidance: Arranging Alternative Provision - guide for LAs and schools (Updated Feb 2025)

[29] Teachers' Standards guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK

45. What we do when we are concerned about a child

45.1 Where risk factors are present but there is no evidence of a particular risk, then our DSL/SLT advises us on preventative work that can be done within school to engage the student into mainstream activities and social groups. The DSL/SLT may well be the person who talks to and has conversations with the student's family, sharing the school's concern about the young person's vulnerability and how the family and school can work together to reduce the risk.

45.2 In this situation, depending on how worried we are and what we agree with the parent and the young person (as far as possible).

45.3 The DSL can decide to notify CASP, Early Help or Targeted Family Help Services so that a strategic overview can be maintained, and any themes or common factors can be recognised; and
The school will review the situation after taking appropriate action to address the concerns.

45.4 The DSL will also offer and seek advice about undertaking an Early Help or Targeted Family Help Services and/or making a referral to Early Help services.

45.5 In addition to the above, our school staff will refer to school policy 'Procedure to follow in cases of possible, alleged or suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation, or serious cause for concern about a child' when dealing with a child Disclosure or an allegation of abuse.

46. Policy review

The Governing Board of our school will review the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually.

47. Other Relevant Policies

Bridge Junior School Governing Board's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of the children goes beyond child protection. Their duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies, for instance:

- Children's behaviour Policy
- Attendance
- Staff behaviour and management (Code of Conduct; Safer Working Practice) Trust policy
- Parents behaviour and management (Code of conduct when in school)
- Racist incidents and Homophobic Behaviour(LGBTQ) / Incidents in relation to children who are Gender Questioning
- Anti-bullying (including Child on Child Abuse and Children Using Sexually Abusive behaviour)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (HSB) (Appendix 7)
- Physical interventions/restraint
- Special Educational Needs, Mental Health Issues and Disabled Children
- Trips and visits
- Work experience and work-related learning placements
- First aid and the administration of medicines
- Health and safety & Site security
- Equal opportunities
- ICT and Online safety, including on and offline and acceptable usage (Handheld devices, smart watches and Meta Glasses)
- AI policy – Trust policy
- Extended School Activities

- Mobile phone and camera use (digital equipment)
- Acceptable use
- Searching and confiscation
- Safe crossing of roads procedure
- Designated Teacher Policy (LAC) – Trust policy
- Visitor Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy Trust policy
- Managing Allegations Procedure / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (Appendix 3)
- Monitoring, Recording, Retaining Safeguarding Records Guidance- Trust – data retention
- Whistleblowing Procedures

The above list is not exhaustive and when undertaking development or planning of any kind, Bridge Junior School and our Governors will consider the best interest of our children and any implications for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

48. Useful contact numbers and links

Leicestershire Police	**999 / 0116 2222222**
Childrens Assessment, Support and Prevention – CASP **Email: casp-team@leicester.gov.uk** **Duty & Advice (Includes out of hours) das.team@leicester.gov.uk** **Early Help & Support/early-help@leicester.gov.uk** **If you are experiencing any issues completing the MARF form, or require it in an alternative format please email** early-help-coordinators@leicester.gov.uk. **Please note: alternative formats of the MARF will need to be sent securely to** das-team@leicester.gov.uk.	0116 454 1004
Children's Safeguarding Unit	0116 454 2440
Safeguarding in Education **Julie Chapaneri & Melissa Thomas** **Safeguardingineducation@leicester.gov.uk**	0116 454 2440
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **Katherine Lockwood/ Laura Kew**	0116 454 2440
Leicester Safeguarding Childrens Partnership Board (LSCPB) **LSCPB | Home (lcitylscb.org)**	0116 454 6520
Prevent (Advice / Referral) **City: Ailsa Coull – Ailsa.coull@leicester.gov.uk**	0116 454 6923 07519 069833
UAVA – United against violence and abuse **(Domestic Violence, Abuse between Teenagers and Domestic Violence in BME community) info@uava.org.uk**	0808 80 200 28
Forced Marriage Unit **fmu@fco.gov.uk**	020 7008 0151
Female Genital Mutilation Helpline **fgmhelp@nscpcc.org**	0800 028 3550
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line **help@nspcc.org.uk**	0800 0280285

Useful websites and links
www.thinkuknow.co.uk **www.saferinternet.org.uk** **www.internetmatters.org** **www.pshe-association.org.uk** **www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation** **Children Forced Into Opening Criminal Bank Accounts | The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)** **Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026)**

APPENDIX 1- DEFINITION AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION

Overview

Abuse, as outlined in KCSIE 2026, is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

1. NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger
- Fabricated or Induced Illnesses (Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy)
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness
- Frequently dirty or unkempt
- Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather.
- Poor school attendance or often late for school
- Poor concentration
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour.
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated.
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight.
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially.
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings.
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.

Neglect is a priority for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland LSCPB. Neglect has been identified as a feature in national & local Serious Case Reviews (SCR's), local learning reviews and multi-agency audits. Our local LSCPB have developed a *Neglect Toolkit* to support practitioners identify neglect earlier in families. Key staff members and DSL's in our school are versed with this document and understand when to use it.
http://www.lcitylscb.org/information-for-practitioners/safeguarding-topics/neglect/

2. PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse 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.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt
- Bite marks
- Round burn marks.
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks.
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred.
- Bald patches
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather
- Fabricated or Induced Illnesses (Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy)
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted.
- Fear of medical help
- Fear of changing for PE
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

3. SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex and penetration by an object) 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 (including via the internet). 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 following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- Reluctance to go home.
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness.
- Refusal to communicate.
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse.
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation.
- Unusual compliance

- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately.
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

3a. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives "something" (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) because of the child/young person performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person. Sexual Exploitation can also include Grooming and Sexting.

The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children's social care. The significant indicators are: (not an exhaustive list)

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity)
- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities.
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology; and
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast-food outlets.

4. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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. Verbal abuse such as persistent criticism, belittling or name calling. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly.
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development.
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches.
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing

- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

N.B.: Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as "traumatic mutism") can indicate maltreatment.

5. Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence[30]

Sexual violence
It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003/105 as described below:

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

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

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

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

Sexual harassment

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

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

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

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

[30] Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026) Part 5

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

6. RESPONSES FROM PARENTS

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed.
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development.
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries.
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- Severe chastisement of a child including withholding food and using food as a form of punishment
- Parents request removal of the child from home; or
- Violence between adults in the household.

7. SEND CHILDREN (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Bridge Junior School is an inclusive school that welcomes all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as well as deaf and disabled children and young people, whenever possible and appropriate. We are committed to providing every opportunity for our students to reach their full potential while promoting their self-esteem and valuing their individuality[31].

Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the school. Our dedicated SENCO and teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities.

Key issues for safeguarding children with disabilities include:

- Social isolation
- Reliance on others for personal care
- Impaired capacity to resist or report abusive behaviour.
- Reduced access to someone to tell.
- Especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation.
- More frequently away from home, e.g., in hospital, respite care or residential living

[31] Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | NSPCC Learning and Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning

Our SENCO and teachers have attended appropriate training as part of their CPD; whole school safeguarding training, understand the vulnerability of SEND children and understand that SEND children may be at higher risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Some indicators concerns could include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child, such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child.
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment
- Poor toileting arrangements
- Lack of stimulation
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification e.g., deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication.
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g., callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting; misappropriation of a child's finances
- Invasive procedures which are unnecessary or are carried out against the child's will.
- A lack of knowledge about the impact of disability on the child
- A lack of knowledge about the child, e.g., not knowing the child's usual behaviour
- Not being able to understand the child's method of communication.
- Confusing behaviours that may indicate the child is being abused with those associated with the child's disability.
- Denial of the child's sexuality
- Behaviour, including sexually harmful behaviour or self-injury may be indicative of abuse.
- Being aware that certain health/medical complications may influence the way symptoms present or are interpreted.

Bridge Junior School has a specific SEND Policy. All our staff have access to this policy and key staff members are also aware of the LSCPB Procedures online[32] and NSPCC advice on protecting children with SEN, and deaf/disabled children and young people[33]. As best practice our school will ensure we:

- Provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum.
- Identify and focus attention on action to support the child within the class.
- Use the assessment processes to identify any learning difficulties.
- Ensure ongoing observation and assessments provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning.
- Help disabled children make their wishes and feelings known in respect of their care and treatment.
- Ensure that disabled children receive appropriate personal, health, and social education (including sex education).
- Make sure that all disabled children know how to raise concerns and giving them access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.
- Those disabled children with communication impairments should always have available to them a means of being heard.
- Close contact with families, and a culture of openness on the part of services
- Guidelines and training for staff on good practice in intimate care; handling difficult behaviour; consent to treatment; anti-bullying strategies; and sexuality and sexual behaviour among young people.

[32] http://www.lcitylscb.org/information-for-practitioners/safeguarding-topics/neglect/

[33] Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | NSPCC Learning and Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning

- Guidelines and training for staff working with disabled children aged 16 and over to ensure that decisions about disabled children who lack capacity will be governed by the Mental Health Capacity Act once they reach the age of 16.
- Use specialist service needs/multi-agency approach if as a school we feel additional, support resources and interventions are required.

APPENDIX 2 - PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IN CASES OF POSSIBLE, ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED ABUSE, OR SERIOUS CAUSE FOR CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD: FOR ALL STAFF MEMBERS

Teachers are in a unique position to identify and help children who may be being abused, neglected of exploited. Although all schools are required to have a named designated teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating child protection, this should not diminish the role all teachers have in protecting children. Child abuse usually comes to the attention of teachers in one of four ways:

- a direct allegation from the child being abused,
- a third party (e.g., friend, classmate) report,
- through the child's behaviour
- or through observation of an injury to the child.

When a child makes a disclosure, or when concerns are received from other sources, do not investigate, ask leading questions, examine children, or promise confidentiality. You may ask questions of a clarifying nature – such as 'who, what, where, when and how?' or use the acronym TED – 'Tell me, 'Explain it to me', Describe it to me.'

Incidents should be brought to the attention of a Designated Lead immediately (recording on CPOMS can happen as soon as possible after this). A DSL will be available at all times and can be located in the school by phone. If a DSL cannot be found any member of staff can ring the City Council's Duty and Advice number 0116 4541004 (on the wall in both the Head and Deputy's office) for advice.

Remember, the way in which you talk to the child may influence any subsequent legal proceedings. You need to be open and non-judgemental. Children making disclosures should be reassured and, if possible, at this stage, should be informed what action will be taken next.

As soon as possible write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It is important to act swiftly to avoid delays.

As a general guide, it is important to remember the following:

SECRETS - A child's trust can place a heavy responsibility on teachers, particularly if they want the abuse to remain a secret. You should tell the child that if he or she is being hurt you will need to tell other people. The child may need to be reassured that you will only speak to those who need to know and that they will treat the matter confidentially.

LISTEN - Listen carefully to the child. Take what he or she says seriously as it is rare for a child to make entirely false allegations.

REASSURE - Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell and is not to blame for what happened, but do not promise confidentiality.

RECORD - As soon as possible after talking with the child, make a written record of what was said at the time, when and where the conversation took place and who was present. This must be accurate and not interpretation or assumption. Note any colloquial/slang words used by students and any language/behaviour inappropriate for the child's age – do not convert them into proper terms. Remember this may be used in any subsequent legal proceedings so note down too, how the child was behaving and the way in which they told you what was happening. This may indicate how the child was feeling.

For injuries in specific areas, record the location accurately – DO NOT take photographs or examine the child yourself.

SUPPORT - Get support for yourself. Listening to abused children can be very upsetting, and giving the child help may be difficult, if you are not given support yourself. Experience of working with children is not, in itself, preparation for the distress abuse can raise.

REMEMBER - It takes courage and determination for a child to tell an adult that they are being, or have been, abused. When they do tell someone, it is usually a person who they feel they can trust and whom they feel is reliable. For reasons of confidentiality, only those people who need to know about the abuse should be told, and conversations about the child should always be held in private.

If the concern involves the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer, a visitor, a governor, a trainee or another young person or child, the DSL/Headteacher must be informed asap; if the concern is in reaction to your Headteacher, you must speak to your Governor. If you feel you cannot speak with your Governors, you must use your whistleblowing procedure and contact Duty & Advice/LADO for advice and support. (Appendix 3)

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

APPENDIX 3 - ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF/VOLUNTEERS
Guidance on managing Allegations procedures for Bridge Junior School

As per KCSIE 2026, it is the responsibility of Bridge Junior School to ensure procedures are in place for dealing with concerns and/or allegations against those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges in a paid or unpaid capacity, including, members of staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors. Our procedures are consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance and KCSIE 2026[34].

1. Inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers could take the following forms:

- **Physical**
  For example, the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or rough physical handling.
- **Emotional**
  For example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality.
- **Sexual**
  For example, sexualised behaviour towards students, sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape penetration by an object and rape.
- **Neglect**
  For example, failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.

KCSIE 2026[35] states that LADO procedures are categorised in to 2 main areas:

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold.
2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to as 'low level concerns'.

Managing Allegations Guidance

Section one: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

- If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, raise credible child protection concerns the Headteacher will notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Team.

- The LADO Team will liaise with the Chair of Governors and advise about action to be taken, and may initiate internal referrals within children's social care to address the needs of children likely to have been affected.

- If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, do not raise credible child protection concerns, but do raise other issues in relation to the conduct of the member of staff or the student(s), these should be addressed through the school's own internal procedures.

- If the Headteacher decides that the allegation is without foundation and no further formal action is necessary, all those involved should be informed of this conclusion, and the reasons for the decision should be recorded on the child protection file.

- Where an allegation or concern relates to the Headteacher, staff must report it to the Chair of Governors, Marc Tench, without notifying the Headteacher. The Chair will liaise with the LADO. If the Chair is unavailable or implicated, staff should contact the Vice-Chair or the LADO directly, and may use the Trust whistleblowing

[34] Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026) Part 4 Managing Allegations
[35] Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026) Part 4 Managing Allegations

procedure. For details of the procedure, please refer to the LSCPB Website and refer to your Whistleblowing Procedures (Trust Whistleblowing Policy).

Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to have been malicious or false will be removed from personnel records, unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information. However, for all other allegations, it is important that records of the case will be kept on the file of the person accused as detailed in KCSIE 2026.

Section Two: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (Low Level)

- If allegations are made that do not meet the harm threshold then these low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns will also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible.

- Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, a course of action will be decided on, either through our disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it will be referred to the LADO. Consideration will also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies will be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

- Information, will be retained at least until the individual leaves our employment.

If a staff member is unable to raise a concern about the inappropriate behaviour of another staff member, or any other safeguarding concern, all staff are aware of Bridge Junior School Whistleblowing Procedures

Our school staff (including supply staff and volunteers) understand they have a duty care to raise any concerns or allegations made about another member of staff who pose a risk of harm to children.

APPENDIX 4

Low-Level Concerns Procedure

Introduction

We take safeguarding very seriously. This includes ensuring that adults who work with children do so in a way that is in accordance with the ethos and policies set out by the school, including the Staff Code of Conduct. This policy sets out the detail and processes for staff regarding low-level concerns they may have.

Summary

It may be possible that a member of staff acts in a way that does not cause risk to children, but is however inappropriate. A member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should inform the Head Teacherabout their concern using a Low-Level Record of Concern Form. If the Head Teacher cannot be contacted, the Chair of Governors should be contacted instead.

Keeping Children Safe in Education

The following is taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education

Low-level concerns

As part of their whole school or college approach to safeguarding, schools and colleges should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college(including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

*Creating a culture in which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should:*

- *enable schools and colleges to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early,*
- *minimise the risk of abuse, and*
- *ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.*

What a low-level concern is

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- *is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and*
- *does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.*

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

- *being over friendly with children*
- *having favourites*

- *taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy*
- *engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or*
- *humiliating pupils.*

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Clarity around Allegation vs Low-Level Concern vs Appropriate Conduct

Allegation

Behaviour which indicates that an adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Low-Level Concern

Any concern – no matter how small, even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with an organisation's Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.

Appropriate Conduct

Behaviour which is entirely consistent with the organisation's Code of Conduct, and the law.

Process to follow, Storing and use of Low-Level Concerns and follow-up information

LLC forms and follow-up information will be stored securely within the school's safeguarding systems, with access only by the leadership team. This will be stored in accordance with the Trust's GDPR and data protection policies.

The staff member(s) reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concern withothers apart from the Head Teacher or those aware in the senior leadership team.

Low-Level Concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in disciplinary or misconduct procedures.

Whenever staff leave, any record of low-level concerns which are stored about them will be reviewed as to whether or not that information needs to be kept. Consideration will be given to:

- *whether some or all of the information contained within any record may have any reasonably likely value interms of any potential historic employment or abuse claim so as to justify keeping it, in line with normal safeguarding records practice; or*
- *if, on balance, any record is not considered to have any reasonably likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly.*

Key Reference Document

Read this document for further information about Low-Level Concerns, which is referenced in KCSIE. https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/clients-and-sectors/safeguarding/developing-and-implementing-a-low-level-concerns-policy.pdf

Low Level Concern Form

This form will be available to staff via:

- *The Office*
- *DSLs*
- *The Senior Leadership Team*

Low-Level Record of Concern Regarding a staff member

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- *Is not consistent with the school's Code of Conduct, and/or*
- *Relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has cause a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.*

Where possible please speak with the Head teacher as soon as possible. You need to document your concerns, which can be done using this form and them passed to the Head teacher. If the concern is about the Head teacher, please pass it on to the Chair of Governors.

Your details	
Name	
Role	
Date and Time of completing this form	
Details of individual whom the concern is about	
Name	
Role	
Relationship to the individual reporting the concern, e.g. manager, colleague	
Details of concern	
Please include as much detail as possible. Think about the following: What behaviour and/or incident are you reporting? What exactly happened? Why does the behaviour and/or incident worry you? Why do you believe the behaviour and/or incident is not consistent with our Staff Code of Conduct?	
Details of any children or young people involved	
Name(s)	
Do you believe there is a risk of harm to the above children or young people, either now or in the future, as a result of the individual's behaviour? Explain your answer.	
For use by safeguarding team upon receipt of concern	
Date and time concern received	
Signature of DSL or deputy DSL	
Actions to be taken, e.g. • no action, • investigation • reclassification as allegation meeting the harms threshold	

APPENDIX 5 - GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE: FOR ALL STAFF MEMBERS including VOLUNTEERS

Whilst they may in common law be regarded as acting in loco parentis, teachers / staff and carers in school should remember that they are not able to take the place of parents in providing physical comfort. This is not to say that all physical contact is inappropriate, rather that the professional context demands circumspection and a sense of fitness for purpose.

Teachers of very young children - Key stage 1 age will naturally need to engage in more physical contact than teachers / staff of older children. Comforting a distressed child who may just have started school will not be an unusual occurrence. Similarly, in the special school setting, some children may tend towards demanding physical attention. In such circumstances, the contact by the adult will be for re-assurance and may involve physical closeness (e.g., holding the child's hand or placing hands on the child's shoulders). Hugging and kissing would be inappropriate for other than the parent, even though the child may want to initiate it.

Administration of medicines and first aid requires careful codes of conduct and procedures and an Appointed Staff Member to oversee this. In our School this is Mr Williamson. These should be laid down by local authority or health authority or in individual school guidelines and followed meticulously as outlined in DfE Guidance. As a rule of thumb, teachers / staff should not administer medicines. If the child had an adverse reaction to a medicine given by a teacher, the teacher / staff could be held liable and charged with negligence.

Administration of first aid should be undertaken by a qualified first aider. Where none is available, the minimum steps should be taken to ensure the child's safety and the emergency services should be called.

Teachers / staff may sometimes be called upon to intervene physically if a child or children are in danger of injuring themselves or others - as in a fight in the school yard. It is important that in such circumstances the minimum possible reasonable force is used. Where possible another colleague should be called upon to assist, both to minimise the risk of injury to the teacher intervening and to act as witness that reasonable force and no more was used. After such an event a clear record of what took place should be made, including where possible statements from witnesses. The Headteacher should be informed.

One-to-one situations with pupils need to be carefully and consciously managed. Some teaching, as with peripatetic music staff, may often suggest one-to-one organisation. Where pupils can be paired for such lessons, it is preferable. Where this is not possible and in other situations of individual interviews with pupils, it is advisable to use a room with a window where others can see in or to leave the door open. If confidentiality makes this difficult, then another member of staff should be informed that the interview is taking place.

If a child becomes distressed, support and re-assurance should be offered through calming words rather than through physical contact. Teachers / staff should not become involved with children's personal problems beyond listening and being sensitive to them in order to refer the child to the most appropriate source of help or counselling.

APPENDIX 6 - INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

Vocal or active opposition to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

3. There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

4. Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.

5. Indicators of vulnerability include:

   - Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
   - Personal Crisis – the student may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
   - Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
   - Unmet Aspirations – the student may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
   - Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration; and
   - Special Educational Need – students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

6. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

7. More critical risk factors could include:

   - Being in contact with extremist recruiters
   - Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
   - Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
   - Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
   - Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues; and
   - Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
   - Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
   - Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis

APPENDIX 7 – Bridge Junior School Guidance on child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

****IMPORTANT NOTE:** as per KCSIE 2026, it is the sole responsibility for educational establishments to ensure that they have a 'Guidance on child-on-child sexual violence and harassment' for their establishment in place. The below information is taken directly from KCSIE 2026[36] and all education establishments are required to have guidance in place for such incidents. The information below information is a starting point to support school/colleges to write their own Child on Child Appendix for such incidents. Appendix 7

KCSIE 2026 states that child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment forms part of the statutory guidance about how schools and colleges should respond to all reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school or college premises, and or online.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Bridge Junior School takes such incidents seriously and have strict measures in place to address this kind of behaviour and our staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Whilst our school/college strictly follows statutory guidance and information from the government **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges**, the following measures are in place to support children and staff if such incidents are reported and received in our school/college.

If an incident occurs, the staff will:

- Gather initial information (disclosure) regarding the incident
- Report to incident to a DSL immediately
- Record the incident without using personal opinion
- As with all disclosures advice will be sought from Social Care or the police as appropriate
- KCSIE 2026 details the steps to take to support children (victims/perpetrators/staff) including the appropriateness of risk assessments.

[36] Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026) Part 5 Child on Child Abuse (Sexualised behaviour/Harassment)

Appendix 8 - Monitoring and Filtering, Online Safety & Cyber Crime and Artificial intelligence – Additional information

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

Content: Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes. Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories, (Taken from KCSIE)

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

In order to meet the duties set out in KCSIE 2026, Paragraph 167, Bridge Junior School follows the Department for Education's[37] filtering and monitoring standards where we will;

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet our high safeguarding needs.

Our Governing Board will review the standards and discuss with IT staff, SLT, Lead DSL and service providers what more needs to be done (if anything) to support us to meet the standard set out by the DfE including in part, the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty

Additional resources:

[37] Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring: core standard - Guidance - GOV.UK (Aug 26) and Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026)

Safer Internet Centre: "appropriate" filtering and monitoring. Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring - UK Safer Internet Centre South West Grid for Learning (Safety and Security Online | SWGfL | swgfl.org.uk) tool to check relevant filtering lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content, Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content).

Cybercrime

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

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded.
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area at our school- Our Lead DSL/DSL's will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety. Where such cases arise in our school/college and a crime is possibly being committed, our school will follow our safeguarding procedures and contact the Police and relevant agencies where appropriate. Additional information can be found at: national Crime agency: Cyber Choices - National Crime Agency and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK

In order to safeguard our systems, our IT support, Lead DSL and SLT review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. We follow guidance available from the National Education Network. www.nen.gov.uk

Remote Education[38]

Government Guidance - Safeguarding children and teachers online: Keeping children and teachers safe during remote education is essential. Our teachers when delivering remote education online are aware that the same principles set out in our school/~~college staff behaviour policy/~~code of conduct will apply. There are times where remote learning, virtual lessons, live streaming and recorded videos may be applied within our school and where children to are asked to complete tasks and assignments independently. Where this is the case, our establishment, in line with on Online Safety Policy and CP Safeguarding Policy will ensure our online education is safe for both teachers and children.

As a school when organising live lessons or recording lessons we will, as a minimum endeavour to:

[38] Safeguarding and remote education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- use neutral or plain backgrounds.
- ensure appropriate privacy settings are in place.
- ensure staff understand and know how to set up and apply controls relating to pupil and student interactions, including microphones and cameras.
- set up lessons with password protection and ensure passwords are kept securely and not shared.
- ensure all staff, children, students, parents and carers have a clear understanding of expectations around behaviour and participation.

Important conversations with parents, carers and children

Our school/college pride ourselves in communicating regularly and supporting parents and cares with their child's education. In our communications with parents/carers, we will highlight the importance of their child's online safety in today's digital age. We will support parents/carers to teach their children about the potential risks of the internet and the importance of privacy; to set clear boundaries and guidelines for internet usage, regularly monitor their online activities and keeping any passwords and credentials safe. We will support parents/carers to encourage open communication, so they feel comfortable sharing any concerns. We will highlight to parents the importance of utilising parental controls and safety tools to protect their child from harmful content online. By being involved and informed, we will create a safer online environment for our children both in and out of school.

We understand it is especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do, including:

- sites they will be asked to use.
- school staff their child will interact with

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly present in our daily lives and in education. The following information aims to give staff, parents and carers, and insight into AI including benefits and risks, and ensure all use of AI in our school/college aligns with statutory safeguarding responsibilities and the Online Safety Act 2025 and the 4C's as outlined in KCSIE 2026.

AI refers to computer systems or programs that simulate human intelligence to perform tasks such as problem-solving, learning, language understanding, or decision-making. Common examples include chatbots (like ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot), recommendation algorithms, voice assistants (e.g., Siri, Alexa), and facial recognition systems.

Within our school/college, AI tools may be used for:

- Personalised learning
- Marking or feedback
- Educational chatbots
- Lesson planning

Refer to the TRUST AI policy

Our staff and students have access to AI generated tools, which are used for educational purposes and benefit our staff and students immensely. Our staff are aware of some of the risks associated with using these tools such as misinformation, discrimination, inappropriate use by staff/students and dependence (overreliance). As such, Bridge Junior School aims to mitigate risks associated with AI use through our robust monitoring and filtering process which

also conforms with KCSIE 2026. Our Online Safety Policy also aligns with this Appendix and our standards on monitoring and filtering.

If students use or accesses inappropriate material on school devices, whether inside or outside the school premises, we will follow our schools safeguarding and child protection procedures as set out in this Policy.

Reviewing online Safety

Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve, and change rapidly. Bridge Junior School will consider carrying out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks their children face.

APPENDIX 9

Child missing Procedures

First Day Call

Registers to be checked as normal.

All N coded children – parent to be text messaged via WEDUC.

List of children where parents have been called, printed if appropriate.

Any new messages to answer machine / in person / On WEDUC to be noted, registers updated.

At lunch time any children not accounted for (had no messages)

Ring all known numbers to find out where child is

Alert SLT to list of unknown absences

SLT to decide if further action is necessary

Further action could include home visits, ringing other family members.

If there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) / Social Services or Police will be alerted and support asked for as appropriate.

These procedures should be read alongside the school's attendance policy and 'Children missing in Education: statutory guidance of local authorities – updated September 2025'

Parents should ensure that the school has at least two emergency contacts for their child. This is discussed at induction, contact sheets are regularly sent to parents for checking. If school finds that a contact number does not work, parents are seen face to face to update details.

Appendix 10 Operation Encompass Overview

Section 49a of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a legal requirement on police forces to share Operation Encompass Notifications with schools and other educational establishments. In the House of Lords Earl Howe stated:

'By enshrining the scheme in law, we can ensure that it is consistently applied across all forces. This will help improve early intervention and enable the most vulnerable children to be safeguarded from the harms of domestic abuse'.

Operation Encompass Notification Process

School will receive an automatic notification from Leicestershire Police if they attend a domestic incident where a child on our school roll is present.

Notifications allow our Safeguarding Team (DSLs) who are required to provide appropriate care and support for any child who may need it the next day, such as check ins, pastoral support, or wellbeing monitoring.

Notifications are shared automatically and securely between Leicestershire Police and the school's DSL's. Our DSLs are fully trained in responding to these situations.

DSL to share information with staff member teaching child on the day where appropriate (Silent Support)

Safeguarding Team / DSL's to provide additional support for child if required

Safeguarding Team / DSL's to record information on child's record where appropriate

Teacher Helpline: Operation Encompass Professionals National Advice and Guidance line on **0204 513 9990**. Monday to Friday, 8am-1pm

Parents: If you require further information on Operation Encompass, please contact our school on: 01162536092

Home: Operation Encompass
Duty on police forces in England and Wales to notify education establishments of domestic abuse incidents: Operation Encompass

Appendix 11

Attenborough Learning Trust

Prevent Risk Assessment 2026/27

[SCHOOL NAME]

Date completed / reviewed by Headteacher:	[Name and date]	**Date of next review:**	[Date]	**Academic year:**	**2026/27**

Purpose

This risk assessment forms part of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. It demonstrates our awareness of the risks of radicalisation and the measures we have in place to reduce those risks, in line with the Prevent duty and statutory guidance.

Current national and regional context

Current Counter Terrorism Policing information for the East Midlands identifies Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism and Extreme Islamist Terrorism as continuing priorities. Young people continue to form a significant proportion of casework. Schools should also be alert to mixed, unstable or unclear ideologies and to harmful or violent narratives that may not fit neatly within one ideology. Key radicalising influences relevant to schools include less-regulated online spaces and gaming platforms; extremist material or ideology shared by family or peers; negative online influencers; and grievances linked to global events, government policy or local issues. This assessment takes account of the May 2026 East Midlands Counter Terrorism Update.

Our school context

Briefly describe any relevant features of the school and community that may affect Prevent risk, for example: local or community tensions; previous Prevent concerns (if any); particular online issues; or significant local, national or international events affecting pupils.

[Insert brief school context here. "No additional school-specific factors identified" is acceptable.]

Risk assessment

Review the controls in each row and amend them only where they do not accurately describe the school. Rate the residual risk after controls are taken into account. Record "None" where no further action is required.

Risk area	Risk / What could happen?	Controls already in place	Risk rating (L/M/H)	Any further action required? (if yes, by whom and by when)
1. Leadership, staff knowledge and partnership working	Leaders, governors or staff may not understand the Prevent duty, current risks or how to access advice and support.	• Prevent is part of safeguarding and Headteacher/DSL oversight is in place. • Staff receive Prevent/safeguarding training and updates. • Governors receive safeguarding assurance through the annual policy approval and wider safeguarding oversight. • DSLs use current local intelligence and know how to access Leicester/Prevent advice and support.	L / M / H	None / [action, owner and date]
2. Pupil susceptibility and safeguarding culture	Changes or concerns indicating possible susceptibility to radicalising influences may not be noticed, shared or understood in context.	• Staff are alert to concerning changes in behaviour, language, relationships, interests and online activity and report concerns to the DSL. • Concerns are considered holistically and without stereotyping. • Pupils have trusted adults and routes to raise worries. • SEND and other vulnerabilities are considered only where relevant to the individual child.	L / M / H	None / [action, owner and date]
3. Curriculum and building resilience	Pupils may lack the knowledge, critical thinking or safe opportunities needed to recognise and challenge harmful or extremist narratives.	• PSHE/RHE, online safety, assemblies and the wider curriculum promote age-appropriate critical thinking, media literacy, respect and British values. • Pupils learn about different beliefs and cultures. • The school provides safe opportunities to discuss difficult local, national or international issues. • Pupils know how to seek help.	L / M / H	None / [action, owner and date]
4. Online radicalisation	Pupils may encounter extremist, hateful or violent material online, including through social media, video content, messaging or gaming platforms.	• Filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place and reviewed, with DSL oversight. • Prevent risk informs filtering and monitoring. • Online safety teaching addresses harmful content, misinformation/disinformation and safe use of technology. • Staff supervise children's use of school technology and concerns are followed up.	L / M / H	None / [action, owner and date]

Risk area	Risk / What could happen?	Controls already in place	Risk rating (L/M/H)	Any further action required? (if yes, by whom and by when)
5. Visitors, external organisations and use of premises	Visitors, speakers, external organisations or users of school premises could expose pupils to extremist, hateful or divisive narratives.	• Safeguarding arrangements apply to visitors and external providers. • Leaders consider the suitability of speakers, organisations and materials. • Lettings/community-use arrangements include appropriate checks and expectations, with concerns escalated to senior leaders.	L / M / H	None / [action, owner and date]
6. Responding to concerns	Prevent concerns may not be escalated, assessed, recorded or referred appropriately.	• Staff report concerns to the DSL using safeguarding procedures and a Notice–Check–Share approach. • The DSL checks relevant context and records decisions and rationale. • Prevent advice is sought or a referral made where appropriate. • Information is shared lawfully and proportionately; immediate risk is referred to police/emergency services.	L / M / H	None / [action, owner and date]

Reference note. This assessment should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current Prevent guidance. Broader local safeguarding priorities remain within the wider safeguarding policy and are reflected here only where relevant to Prevent risk.

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