



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

*Approved by the Governing Body: September 2025
Next review: September 2026*

School details

Honywood School is highly committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our learners. We place high expectations on everyone to share in this safeguarding commitment.

However, key individuals hold particular responsibilities:

Job Title	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Daniel Smith, Assistant Headteacher	dsmith@honywoodschool.com
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kerry Nichols, Non-teaching Safeguarding Lead	knichols@honywoodschool.com
Alternate Safeguarding Lead	James Saunders, Headteacher	jsaunders@honywoodschool.com
Alternate Safeguarding Lead	Scott Caygill, Deputy Headteacher	scaygill@honywoodschool.com
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Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025

In September 2025, the Department for Education updated the statutory guidance on safeguarding:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

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1.0 Introduction

Honywood School and all our staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. In order to ensure a robust and child centred policy, this policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the following:

There is government guidance set out in Working Together (DfE, 2026) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements are formalised by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In Essex, the statutory partners are Essex County Council, Essex Police and five of the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering the county.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (Section 157 for Independent schools) places a statutory responsibility on the Trustees to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the school.

In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (ESCB, 2022). Our school works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (this is not an exhaustive list):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2025\)](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(DfE 2026\)](#)

[Education Act \(2002\)](#)

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex \(ESCB\)](#)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015 \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Children and Social Work Act \(2017\)](#)

[Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE, 2024\)](#)

[Sexual Offences Act \(2003\)](#)

[Education \(Pupil Registration\) Regulations 2006](#)

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(HMG, 2024\)](#)

[Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Searching, screening and confiscation \(DfE, 2023\)](#)

Children Act (1989)

Children Act (2004)

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017)

When to call the police NSPCC

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

Preventing youth violence and gang involvement (Home Office, 2015)

Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance (Home Office, 2018)

Teaching on-line safety in schools (DfE, 2019)

1.2 The Governing Body 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.

1.3 We recognise that all adults (including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors) have a full and active part to play in protecting our learners from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

1.4 All staff 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.

1.5 The aims of this policy are:

1.5.1 To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

1.5.2 To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be listened to.

1.5.3 To raise 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, neglect and exploitation (Reference Appendices 1 and 2)

1.5.4 To provide 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 packages for those children.

1.5.5 To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.

1.5.6 To develop a structured procedure within the school to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation.

¹ Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc, and governors

1.5.7 To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, particularly the Police and Social Care.

1.5.8 To ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory CRB/DBS check (according to guidance)², and a central record is kept for audit.

2.0 Safe School, Safe Staff

2.1 We will ensure that:

2.1.1 All members of the governing body understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- there is a Child Protection policy together with a Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- the school operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training
- the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and to make a referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have had they not resigned
- a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is a Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- on appointment, The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Safeguarding Leads undertake Level 3 Safeguarding Training and an 'update' course every 2 years
- all other staff have Safeguarding training updated as appropriate
- any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately
- a member of the Governing Body, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the LA on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher
- Child Protection policies and procedures are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection policy is available on the school website or by other means
- the Governing Body considers how children may be taught about safeguarding. This may be part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal social health and economic education (PSHE) and/or for maintained schools through sex and relationship education (SRE).
- that enhanced DBS checks are in place for Chairs of Governors of independent, academies, non-maintained special schools

2.1.2 Dan Smith, Assistant Headteacher, and Kerry Nichols, Non-teaching DSL, are the Designated Safeguarding Leads. James Saunders, Headteacher, Scott Caygill, Deputy Head Teacher and Jo Hickford, Deputy Head Teacher are Alternative Safeguarding Leads. These members of staff have undertaken the relevant training followed by biannual updates, and these roles are explicit in their job descriptions.

2.1.3 SLT involved in recruitment and at least one member of the governing body will complete safer recruitment training to be renewed every 5 years.

²Guidance regarding CRB checks recently updated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

2.1.4 All members of staff and volunteers are provided with child protection awareness information at induction, including in their arrival pack, the school safeguarding statement so that they know who to discuss a concern with.

2.1.5 All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in e- safety and reporting concerns

2.1.6 All other staff and governors have child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2.1.7 All members of staff, volunteers, and governors know how to respond to a learner who discloses abuse, neglect and exploitation through the information shared during safeguarding training.

2.1.8 All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and reference to it in our Parents' Handbook.

2.1.9 Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.

2.1.10 Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.

2.1.11 We will ensure that child protection type concerns or allegations against adults working in the school are referred to the LADO³ for advice, and that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal, or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer.

2.2 Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.

2.3 The name of the designated members of staff for Safeguarding, will be clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

2.4 All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding statement, and child protection policy, with the safeguarding staff's names clearly displayed, as part of their induction into the school.

2.5 The policy is available publicly either on the school website or by other means. Parents/carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy of it via the parental handbook and school's website.

2.6 Schools may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school 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, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

³ LADO Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations against staff. AEO Area Education Officer

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Safeguarding at Honywood School is the responsibility of all staff. All staff at Honywood School recognize that any child may benefit from early help and that early help and support will be provided for all children as soon as problems emerge. Importantly, all staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

3.1.2 All staff are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. We know that exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

3.1.3. All staff recognise that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

3.1.4. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) understand the importance of considering whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families, including harassment and exploitation, domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

3.1.4.1 Honywood School has signed up to Operation Encompass, to ensure that the school receives notifications of incidents of domestic abuse from the police force, so we can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

3.1.5. All staff recognise that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist 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.

3.1.5 We recognise the importance of protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online. We look to understand, and respond to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Practitioners refer to this idea as 'contextual safeguarding'. This is important as the relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence, abuse and exploitation. Parents and carers might have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse or exploitation can undermine parent-child relationships. As a result, we recognize the important role we play as a school in understanding and responding to the 'contextual safeguarding' of our learners.

3.1.6 All staff recognise the importance of promoting good attendance, monitoring attendance and reporting non-attendance. Our attendance policy can be found here: <https://www.honywoodschool.com/school-policies> Attendance staff and the designated safeguarding leads and deputies are aware that Children being absent from education 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, and the significant role we play in early intervention and referrals to other agencies to stop children from becoming missing from education.

3.1.7 Our attendance policy and ongoing efforts to maintain a high level of school attendance follows the statutory guidance from Working together to improve school attendance 2024. As a school, we know that it is essential that we must work with children's services including health and social services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

3.2 The designated safeguarding leads take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). During term time there is always a DSL or deputy DSL available to discuss any safeguarding concern. Other responsibilities include:

3.2.1 Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, neglect and exploitation, to the Local Authority, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals should be made online using the Request for Support Form <https://www.essex.gov.uk/request-support-from-us>

3.2.2 Keeping, maintaining and reviewing written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

3.2.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records, until the child's 25th birthday, and are copied on to the child's next school or college.

3.2.4 Ensuring that an indication of the existence of the additional file in above is marked on the pupil records.

3.2.5 Liaising with other agencies and professionals.

3.2.6 Ensuring that either they or the staff member attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report which has been shared with the parents.

3.2.7 Ensuring that any learner known to be placed on a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team.

3.2.8 Organising child protection induction, and update training every 3 years, for all school staff with an annual refresher training session.

3.2.9 Providing, with the Headteacher, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the safeguarding staff, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register (anonymised)

3.2.8 Be responsible for the internet monitoring and filtering systems in the school to ensure children are safe online.

3.2.9 When the school places a child in an alternative provision provider, the DSL ensures the placement meets the pupils needs and ensures that Honeywood School continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of the child. The DSL is responsible for ensuring half termly reviews of alternative education settings for children, that their needs are being met and that the setting is safe. The DSL also ensures that there is written confirmation from alternative education settings that full safer recruitment steps have been taken at the alternative provision.

4.0 Supporting Children

4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused, neglected, exploited or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self - worth.

4.2. We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused, neglected or exploited or who are at risk of harm.

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

4.4. Our school will support all children by:

4.4.1 Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.

4.4.2 Incorporating into the curriculum, activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, neglect or exploitation in all contexts, including:

- How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe and how to seek help or advice.
- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control

- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- About online risks, including that any material someone provides has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removed potentially compromising material placed online
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- The impact of viewing harmful content
- That specifically explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM and how they can affect current and future relationships.
- The dangers they face in their communities including child criminal exploitation, and county lines.
- Further ways that the curriculum is used to support the safeguarding of children at Honeywood School is explained in the "Opportunities to teach about safeguarding" section of this policy.

4.4.3 How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent and how and when that can be withdrawn (in all contexts including online). Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.

4.4.4 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.

4.4.5 Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.

4.4.6 Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority, in accordance with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022.

4.5 We 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.

4.5.1 We recognise the additional challenges that SEND children face and the potential barriers to identifying abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children (as referenced in KCSIE Part Two, paragraphs 199-202). This might include:

- Assumptions that indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

4.6 The designated safeguarding leads are aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns of homelessness at the earliest opportunity. Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

4.7 We recognize the additional risks to harm for children with multiple protected characteristics and we carefully consider how we are supporting their learners with regards to their particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race. We promote an inclusive culture within the school for all protected characteristics, where pupils can speak out or share any concern with staff.

4.9 As a school we prioritise the support all our looked after and previously looked after children. Dan Smith, Designated Safeguarding Lead, is the Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children and has the responsibility of promoting the educational achievement of these children. For our looked after children, we provide additional support through personalised education plans, daily check ins, tutoring and mentoring. We understand the trauma that young people in the care system have faced and the important role school plays to provide care and stability for these children. Considering the trauma these children have faced, we ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. In addition, we know the importance of the role of school in supporting children returning home to their families from care.

5.0 Children requiring mental health support

5.1 We fully recognise the important role that we as a school have in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our learners. Kerry Nichols, Non-teaching Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Schools Senior Mental Health Lead.

5.1.1 We understand that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

5.1.2 Staff understand the importance of early intervention and referral for mental health issues. We deploy a highly skilled mental health practitioner to work with our children who are facing significant mental health issues, and work with a range of other agencies to ensure all children who need it can access mental health support.

5.1.3 We highlight, track, monitor and evaluate mental health concerns on our child protection online management system and use this data to target early intervention.

5.1.4 As part of our response to mental health concerns, including anxiety, depression, low mood and self harm, we as a school always request that families seek GP support and medical guidance.

5.1.5 Where families or school staff have concerns that a child is at immediate risk of harm, the guidance we provide to families is to attend A+E and request Crisis Team support.

5.1.6 As a school, we have access internally to; a level 5 trained psychodynamic counsellor, the Essex Mental Health Support Team, Boxing mentor, Staff and Peer mentors, the School Nurse. We will make referrals to CAMHS and the Crisis Team where required. We record all concerns on CPOMS and refer to internal and external support as required, and evidence these referrals on CPOMS.

6.0 Confidentiality

6.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

6.2 The Headteacher or safeguarding staff will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

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

6.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. A disclosure must always be shared with the safeguarding staff.

6.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with Essex Children and Families HUB on this point

7.0 Records and Information Sharing

7.1 Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. A child's personal data should not be shared where the 'serious harm test' is met i.e. where releasing data will or may result in harm to the child. In these cases, independent legal advice should be sought.

7.2 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

7.3 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse, neglect or exploitation or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation, will make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or safeguarding staff), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

7.4 Any records related to child protection are kept in an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file) in chronological order. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the learner's date of birth. As with all personal data, we ensure we comply with data protection law and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

7.5 Where a learner transfers from our school to another educational provision, their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead,

with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our school. If the new educational setting makes use of the CPOMS system. The records will be transferred electronically. The transfer of this information will be completed in accordance with the guidance detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, which recommends information is transferred 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 to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives.

7.6 Where a learner joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

8.0 Supporting Staff

8.1 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.

8.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

9.0 Allegations against staff (including volunteers and contractors)

Honywood School has procedures in place for managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against those working in or on behalf of the schools in a paid or unpaid capacity, i.e. members of staff, including volunteers and contractors.

9.1 All school 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.

9.2 All Staff should be aware of Guidance on Understanding and Supporting Behaviour (ESB, Summer 2021), and the school's own Behaviour Management and Bullying Policy.

9.3 Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction.

9.4 We understand that a learner may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher.

9.5 The Headteacher or DSL on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 03330 139797.

9.6 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 as in 8.6 above, without notifying the Headteacher first.

9.7 The school will follow the Essex LA procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a consultation with the LADO.

9.8 Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and HR Consultant in making this decision.

9.9 In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice as in 8.8 above. In the absence of the Chair of Governors, the governor with safeguarding responsibility will be consulted.

9.10 We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context.

9.11 Distinction is made between concerns / allegations that **may** meet the harm threshold and concerns / allegations that **do not** meet the harm threshold, referred to as 'low-level concerns'.

Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold

Guidance outline in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 is followed in relation to allegations against staff. Concerns or allegations of this nature are in relation to anyone working in the school that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including volunteers and contractors and has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

- **Looking after the welfare of the child** - the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation to the local authority children's social care as described in Part one of this guidance.
- **Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation** - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (referred to as 'low level concerns')

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.

The Honywood whole school approach to safeguarding ensures the promotion of an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

We aim to create a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. This enables the school leaders to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

10.0 Whistle-blowing – see also the Staff Code of Conduct (section 6)

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

10.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. These concerns should go to the Headteacher. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

10.3 If any member of staff feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk Parents / carers or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on 0808 800 5000 (24-hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

10.4 Whistle-blowing regarding the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body, Helen Mulley, hmulley@honywoodschool.com

11.0 Anti-Bullying and Child-on-child abuse – see also the Behaviour Management and Bullying Policy

11.1 Our school policy on anti-bullying is set out in Behaviour Management and Bullying Policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and sex/gender related bullying, whether gender assigned or gender preferred. We keep a record of reported bullying incidents. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse.

11.2 Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; up skirting part of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act, April 2019) and initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an

important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use learning sessions and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. All child-on-child abuse is dealt with according to the school's anti-bullying / Child Protection procedures and the police / social care involved as appropriate.

All forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. This includes a 'zero-tolerance approach to abuse' and it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children (as referred to in KCSIE Part Two, paragraph 157)

The school will therefore:

11.3 Create a whole school protective ethos in which child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

11.4 Provide training for staff about recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse, with girls more likely to be victims and boys' perpetrators.

11.5 Ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up.

11.6 Include within the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from other children and online.

11.7 Provide high quality Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and/or enrichment programmes including teaching about consent.

11.8 Ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of child-on-child abuse.

11.9 Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk.

12.0 Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment – see Responding to Child-on-child Harmful Sexual Behaviours policy

12.1 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

12.2 Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. 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.

The school will:

12.3 Be clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

12.4 Provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. It is important that when staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse they should speak to their DSL

12.5 Make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

12.6 Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, offer appropriate support and take the wishes of the victim into account when making decisions.

12.7 Implement measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and if necessary other children and staff members, safe. Record any risk assessments and keep them under review.

12.8 Give consideration to the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations.

12.9 Liaise closely with external agencies, including police and social care, when required. 12.10 Refer to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five', 2024, 'Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment,' (DfE, September, 2024) for full details of procedures to be followed in such cases. Also see [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, DfE, December 2024](#)

13.0 Prevention

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

13.2 The school community will therefore:

13.2.1 Work to establish and maintain an ethos where learners feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.

13.2.2 Include regular consultation with learners e.g. through annual questionnaires

13.2.3 Ensure that all learners know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

13.2.4 Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE and Relationships and Sex Education, opportunities which equip learners with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular this will include anti-bullying work, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training.

13.2.5 Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

13.2.5 Provide a monitored wellbeing chat for learners to request wellbeing support.

14.0 Opportunities to teach safeguarding

14.1 Our curriculum ensures that children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

14.2 Our Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education is delivered through regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. The programme is fully inclusive and age and stage of development appropriate. Our RSE policy can be found here:

<https://www.honywoodschool.com/school-policies> Our RSHE curriculum follows the statutory guidance for RSE and includes:

14.2.1 healthy and respectful relationships

14.2.2 boundaries, consent and kindness

14.2.3 stereotyping, prejudice and equality

14.2.4 body confidence and self esteem

14.2.5 how to recognise and report concerns about an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour

14.2.6 the concepts of, and laws relating to - all forms of sexual harassment, and abuse, and how to access support.

14.2.7 what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

14.3 Our curriculum provides opportunities within both RE and RSHE to teach about the dangers of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment, and this is reinforced in the school's behaviour policy to create a culture of zero tolerance towards these issues.

14.4 Our PSHE, Computer Science and assembly curriculum provides significant opportunities to teach children about online safety, including the following areas of risk:

14.4.1 The dangers of being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

14.4.2 The dangers of being subjected to harmful online interactions 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.

14.4.3 The dangers of online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying).

14.4.4 The risks of commerce, online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

15.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

15.1 Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be monitored and evaluated by, but not limited to:

Governing Body visits to the school

- Annual monitoring report for Governors

- Annual Child Protection file audit
- SLT 'drop ins' and discussions with children and staff
- Learner surveys and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of Attendance data
- Scrutiny of range of risk assessments
- Scrutiny of LGB minutes
- Logs of bullying/racist/behaviour incidents for SLT and LGB to monitor
- Review of parental concerns and parent questionnaires

This policy also links to our policies and procedures on:

Behaviour Management and Bullying

Staff Code of Conduct (5.1: Whistleblowing; 7: E-Safety, including staff use of mobile phones)

Responding to Child-on-child Harmful Sexual Behaviours

Confidentiality

Allegations against staff

Attendance

Curriculum

PSHE

Administration of medicines

Drugs

Education

Sex and Relationships

Risk assessment

Recruitment and selection

Child sexual exploitation: see Appendix 1 Intimate care

16.0 Internet filtering and monitoring

16.1 We recognise that the school has a significant responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our learners and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn. So we ensure we are doing all that we can to limit learners' exposure to any harmful online content. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for overseeing internet filtering and monitoring.

16.2 As a school, we identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage our internet filtering and monitoring systems.

16.3 As a school, we review our filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.

16.4 Our filtering and monitoring system blocks harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning, to ensure that learners are safe whilst using their devices online.

16.5 Our monitoring strategies in place ensure that the school is safeguarding children online.

16.6 As a school we are in regular contact with parents and carers. Within these communications we reinforce the importance of children being safe online.

16.7 Our PSHE and computer science curriculum further reinforces online safety.

16.8 We ensure that all staff also receive training on online safety and internet filtering and monitoring to keep children safe online whilst in school.

Appendix 1

Recognising signs of Child Abuse

Categories of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Signs of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation in Children

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation

Evidence of fabricated or induced illness

Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse, neglect or exploitation. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Social Care

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse, neglect or exploitation has not occurred. In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation
- Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scape-goated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a "loner" – difficulty relating to others
- Witnessing, hearing or experiencing the effects of Domestic Abuse (DA) is regarded as emotional abuse.

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Encouraging children to watch pornographic materials or sexual acts between adults constitutes sexual abuse.

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

Child- on-child abuse

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. it may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educational inputs may be enough to address the behaviour. Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

‘Sexting’ and the use of mobile technology

The circulation of pornographic images by mobile technology or the internet can in many situations constitute a criminal offence. It is an offence to send by means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or menacing. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else - young people may not aware that they could be breaking the law as these offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

The making and distribution by mobile technology of images of a person in a state of undress is referred to as ‘sexting’ and is often inadvertently entered into by children who are trying to establish relationships with others of a similar age. In some cases children, particularly girls, are coerced into sending provocative or indecent images or videos of sexual acts. These can easily be distributed amongst large groups of other young people and can quickly end up in the hands of paedophiles.

Assessment of child-on-child abuse and sexting

In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- **Equality** – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- **Consent** – agreement including all the following:
 - Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
 - Knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed
 - Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
 - Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
 - Voluntary decision
 - Mental competence
- **Coercion** – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide.

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods
- Evidence of children with fabricated or induced illnesses

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/ or take place online. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual or criminal exploitation.

Signs include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint or sexual assault
- associating with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern that is also a safeguarding concern, IMMEDIATE action should be taken, and the usual procedures followed.

Serious violence

All staff are aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a

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

Appendix 2

Procedures for responding to Child Protection Concerns at Honywood School

Principles

This school takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the learners in its care.

As part of the ethos of the school, the staff and governors are committed to:

- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers and working in partnership with them
- Listening to and valuing the learners
- Ensuring all staff, both teaching and support, are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse, know the correct procedure for referring concerns or allegations and receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out these requirements.
- Maintaining a safe school environment for all learners
- Exercising their duty to work in partnership with other agencies and to share information with them.

We recognise that teachers and support staff, because of their contact with and knowledge of the learners in their care, are well placed to identify abuse and offer support to children in need.

The school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

Procedures for Referral (see also attached 'Child Protection Guidelines for staff') All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2024
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Essex Local Authority audit tools and guidance
- Children and Families Hub guidelines for referral
- DfE guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002

Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Kerry Nichols) or if unavailable to an Alternative Safeguarding Lead, James Saunders, headteacher, Jo Hickford, Deputy Headteacher or Scott Caygill, Deputy Headteacher. In the absence of the above members of staff the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

The DSL **may** seek initial advice from the Family Operations Hub by asking for the **Consultation Line**, or, where the child is in immediate danger, can immediately make a referral by asking for the **Priority Line**: telephone: **0345 603 7627** (out of hours 0345 606 1212)

Referrals should be made in writing using the online Family Operations Request for Support form accessible via the portal: www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk click on the link for 'requesting support'. Essential information will include learner's name, address, date of birth, family composition, reason for the referral, name of person receiving the referral and any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.

To refer non-urgent CP issues or to access Family Solutions support you need to complete an online request for support <http://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk>

Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual learners/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

Alleged Abuse by Staff

When concerns or allegations involve members of staff, the procedure for referral stated above remains the same. In addition, the Safeguarding Team will need to be informed tel: 01245 436744 and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) tel: 03330 139797 If the concerns or allegations involve the DSL they should be reported to the Headteacher. If the concern relates to the Headteacher they must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors who will make the referral to Social Services and to Safeguarding. Mel Cork is the Safeguarding Governor and can be contacted by email mcork@honywoodschool.com Helen Mulley is the Chair of Governors and can be contacted by email hmulley@honywoodschool.com

Concerns by staff that safeguarding issues are not being dealt with appropriately by the Safeguarding Team

If a staff member has a concern that the DSL, Deputy DSL or members of the safeguarding Team are not following up concerns in an appropriate manner then they should report this immediately to the Headteacher.

If they have serious concerns they should contact the Essex LADO (03330 139797). There are four LADOs for Essex who work on a shift pattern. The names of the Essex LADO can be found at

https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Safeguarding/Managing_allegations_in_the_Childrens_Workforce/Pages/ManagingAllegationsInTheChildrensWorkforce.aspx

The duty email address of the LADO is: lado@essex.gov.uk

Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context and giving the date, time and location.

All records relating to child protection concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential. They do not form part of the pupil's educational records and are not required to be disclosed to parents/carers except by agreement.

All referrals should be recorded on CPOMS. A copy of the skin map is a useful aid to recording marks or injuries and could be included as an appendix, this is available on CPOMS. If the system is down the school will temporarily revert to the Google Doc disclosure forms. These are printed on pink paper and available from the main school office.

Parental Involvement

This school is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all learners.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the school's child protection policy via the school prospectus and initial meetings with parents of new learners.

Where possible, concerns should be discussed with parents/carers and the DSL should seek agreement to making referrals, unless to do so would place the learner at increased risk of significant harm, or if advised against doing so by a member of the Children and Families HUB.

Training

The DSL or an Alternative Safeguarding Lead will attend Learning Services Directorate and Essex Child Protection Committee training events as appropriate, and receive Level 3 training every two years.

Child Protection Training

DSL Level 3 Training;

Dan Smith
Kerry Nichols

Level 3 Safeguarding Training

James Saunders
Jo Hickford
Scott Caygill

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Training

Kerry Nichols - NSPCC Managing sexualised behaviour in secondary schools (September 2021)
All staff training - **September 2021**

Child-on-child Abuse - September 2022

All staff

Train the trainer - Trauma Perceptive Practice training

Kerry Nichols, Dan Smith, Clarissa Vaughan **2023**

Teaching and support staff training

All teaching staff, support staff and LSAs received full Level 2 training in **September 2024**
All learning support staff received Trauma Perceptive Practice Training in **2024**.

The Role of the Local Governing Body

The governors will receive an annual report on changes to child protection policy or procedures; training undertaken by the DSL, other staff and governors; the number of child protection incidents/cases (without detail or name); and the place of child protection issues in the curriculum.

The Chair of Governors (or designated governor for child protection, if they are not the chair), in liaison with the nominated SLT lead, will ensure that the school has a child protection policy and procedures in place, and that these are known to all members of staff.

(LGB training updated September 2024)

Statement for inclusion in the Parents' Handbook which is issued annually:

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Our first concern is your child's welfare, and therefore there may be occasions when our concern about your child means that we have to consult other agencies before we contact you. The procedures we follow have been laid down by the Education Safeguarding Service. If you

want to know more about this procedure, please speak to Kerry Nichols Designated Safeguarding Lead, or an Alternative Safeguarding Lead.

Appendix 3

Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation

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

All forms of so-called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to Kerry Nichols and complete a referral on CPOMS We all need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Breast Ironing

Breast Ironing also known as 'Breast Flattening' is the process whereby young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education.)

Forced Marriage (FM)

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistle-blowing may come from younger siblings. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly but refer to Kerry Nichols (DSL), Jo Brook (Deputy Headteacher) or Scott Caygill (Assistant Headteacher).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

Is FGM legal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is **illegal** in most countries including the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

What is FGM?

GM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 types of procedure:

Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris

Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora

Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia

Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Makes childbirth easier

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM Countries where FGM is practised include: Kenya; Senegal; Gambia; Mali; Malaysia; Egypt; Nigeria; Eritrea; Yemen; Afghanistan; Kurdistan; Iraq; Somalia; Pakistan; Indonesia; Sri Lanka; India; Sierra Leone; Colombia; Sudan; Oman.
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:
- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinary tract infection
- Disclosure

The 'One Chance' rule

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that action is taken **without delay**.

FGM mandatory reporting duty: Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must personally report this to the police. A member of the Safeguarding Team will assist individual teachers with contacting the police. Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should report their concerns or suspicions via referral on CPOMS. Non-teachers should report all concerns –

where FGM has been carried out, there is a suspicion that FGM has been carried out or where a girl is at risk of FGM - via a referral on CPOMS. You can contact the Essex Police to discuss any concerns on 101 or report a crime using the Essex Police online reporting portal found here: <https://www.essex.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

Appendix 4

Child Protection Guidelines for Staff for inclusion in the Teachers' Handbook and issued to all staff annually

(Teaching and Non-Teaching)

We have a "duty in law" to act upon concerns/information received concerning child protection issues. These may include accidental injury, neglect, ill treatment or sexual abuse. It is extremely important that every member of staff (teaching and non-teaching) is aware of the procedures they might need to adopt and the personnel who are directly involved.

Procedure in the case of disclosure

Disclosure is when a child openly informs you about incidents of this nature which they claim to have experienced. If a child discloses directly to you, the procedure you should follow is laid out below:

- Once a learner has disclosed, do not **question them in great depth over matters of detail** but immediately contact Kerry Nichols, DSL, James Saunders, Headteacher, Jo Hickford, Deputy Head Teacher or Scott Caygill, Deputy Headteacher. As soon as possible complete a -referral on CPOMS
- Kerry Nichols, James Saunders, Jo Hickford or Scott Caygill take responsibility for the decision as to whether or not the Children and Families Hub are contacted **and make any contact themselves**. This may be delegated to another member of staff if appropriate for example a Cohort Leader by the above. It is very important that we do not have different people liaising with the Children and Families Hub/ Social Care over different cases. In the absence of the above colleagues please contact another senior member of staff.

Procedure in the case of suspicion

In the case of suspicion, things are much less clear-cut but it is important that members of staff alert relevant colleagues if they have worries in this area. If you are concerned that a child in your care is at risk in some way then it is important that you:

- Complete a **referral on CPOMS and the Safeguarding Team** will liaise with the Cohort Leader or another CP trained colleague as appropriate.
- The Cohort Leader should liaise with Kerry Nichols and the Learning Group Leader/ other colleagues as appropriate.
- If it is felt that there is sufficient cause for concern then the same procedure as for disclosure should be followed (see above).
- Kerry Nichols, James Saunders, Jo Hickford, Scott Caygill still retain the responsibility for contacting Police/ Social Care if it is deemed appropriate.

Appendix 5

Missing Child Protocol

Arrangements for Children Who Go Missing During the School Day

Definition of Missing

The definition of missing used in Essex is 'anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and his or her well-being confirmed'.

(College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice Guidance)

Introduction

This guidance sets out the procedures to follow when children go missing from schools/academies and other educational settings, hereafter referred to as educational settings.

Missing children are among the most vulnerable in our community. Sometimes children go missing from educational settings; when this occurs, it is important that action is taken quickly to address this, and in line with local procedures.

This document should be read in conjunction with the educational setting's Child Protection Policy, and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures (SET Procedures).

[Essex Schools Infolink](#) – for the model Child Protection Policy and other resources

[Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) – for the SET Procedures and other resources

A child going missing could be a 'one-off' incident that, following investigation, does not need further work. However, a child going missing frequently could be an indicator of underlying exploitation or other forms of child abuse.

Educational settings should consider missing episodes like any other child protection concern and take action as appropriate, for example, by contacting parents/carers, the Children & Families Hub consultation line, and in an emergency, the priority line or the police. It may be appropriate to use the Early Help Procedures (including holding a Team Around the Family meeting) to address the issues and prevent escalation. Advice should be sought, and concerns should be escalated if there is no improvement.

Where children missing frequently are open to Children's Social Care, a Missing Prevention Plan may be in place. Where this is the case, the educational setting may be set actions as part of the Missing Prevention Plan and should receive a copy if consent has been provided.

When a Child Goes Missing

When it is suspected that a child is missing from an educational setting this must be addressed immediately. Active steps to locate the child should be taken, for example, searching the premises and surrounding areas, contacting the child by phone, text and social media, and contacting their parents/carers. If none of these actions locate the child, then they must be reported missing to the Police by dialling 101, or 999 if there is a belief that the child is immediately suffering significant harm. It is important that the police are informed of any

checks already completed as it may save time and prevent duplication of tasks set by the police to locate a child.

Staff at the educational setting must inform the child's parents/carers that the child has been reported missing. Where there is a Social Worker allocated to the child, they should also be informed.

After a child has been reported missing, any further information should be communicated to the police by telephoning 101 and quoting the incident number that the police would have provided following the initial report. Further information must be passed to the police as soon as possible, as officers will continue to search for the child until informed of their return.

When the Child is Found

If the child is found by educational setting staff, or if the child returns to the premises of their own accord, the police must be notified immediately by dialling 101 or 999 if the matter is an emergency. It is important that this action is prioritised, as the child will remain classified as a missing person until seen by the police.

Essex Police

On receiving a report of a missing child, Essex Police will classify the child as missing and will respond based on the level of risk involved. Essex Police will conduct a vulnerability interview for all children who have been missing and have returned. It may be that the child refuses to engage or speak with police. On these occasions the parents/carers can assist by reporting to officers their observations on the child's return, e.g., did the child shower, have gifts, appear unwell or under the influence of any substance, etc. The setting may also be able to contribute to this process and should provide the police with any relevant information or observations.

Each child that returns from missing will be offered a 'missing chat' (an independent return from missing interview) by a person not involved in their care. This will be facilitated by the Local Authority with responsibility for the child. Missing chats are offered to all children from Essex who go missing.

Useful contacts:

Shane Thomson, ECC Missing Coordinator: shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk

Lucy Stovell, ECC Missing Chats: lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk

Appendix 6

PREVENT Anti-radicalisation

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. **This duty is known as the Prevent duty.**

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Our staff understand how to identify those who may benefit from this support and how to make a referral.

PREVENT Safeguarding Objectives: a national initiative

Within this overall framework the Prevent strategy will specifically:

- respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

Schools can help to protect children from extremism and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol. The purpose must be to protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values. Awareness of Prevent and the risks it is intended to address are both vital. Staff can help to identify, and to refer to the relevant agencies, children whose behaviour suggests that they are being drawn into terrorism or extremism. Schools of all kinds can play a role in enabling young people to explore issues like terrorism and the wider use of violence in a considered and informed way. Schools can facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government. These are important for reasons which go far beyond Prevent but they connect to the Prevent agenda. PREVENT referrals should be reported in line with other safeguarding procedures.

All action is taken in line with the guidance provided in the HM Government Document:

'Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent'

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

PREVENT is part of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy. preventing people from becoming radicalised and involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. It also covers involvement with other groups which could be considered extreme: ISIL, Animal Rights, Environmental, terrorism related to Northern Ireland.

As a school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability. At Honeywood School, all staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

As a school we need to follow the **NOTICE, CHECK, SHARE** principles from the PREVENT initiative:

As a school, we must **NOTICE** the vulnerabilities which might be exploited by extremist organisations:

- difficult personal circumstances (relationship breakdown, family issues)
- financial concerns or concerns regarding unemployment
- changes in friendship groups
- difficult experiences linked to their faith (i.e. victim of racist comments, sense of guilt, injustice, grievance)
- issues with drugs / alcohol
- lack of parenting (neglect, no boundaries / curfews)
- personality traits (low self-esteem)
- lack of knowledge / education; naivety
- social exclusion
- inappropriate use of social media / TV / video games (exposure to violence and propaganda)
- peer pressure
- mental health

As a school, we must also **NOTICE** the signs which might indicate that a member of our community is becoming involved in an extremist organisation:

- changes in friendship groups
- changes in behaviour at school (language, emotions, paranoia, fixated on a subject, withdrawn, depressed)
- references to weapons or violence
- changes in appearance (clothing, uniform, personal appearance, tattoos)
- changes in routine or absence from school (lengthy or unexplained trip abroad)
- learner talks about a specific individual (perhaps an influential figure with strong views), political issues or global events in a concerning way
- comments or views expressed in work done which give cause for concern (e.g. inflammatory comment, extreme religious or political statement)
- comments about what learners are going to do in the future after leaving school which give cause for concern

Any staff with concerns regarding a member of our community should then **CHECK** these concerns by referring to James Saunders (Headteacher), Dan Smith (DSL) Kerry Nichols (DSL), Scott Caygill (Deputy Headteacher) or Jo Hickford (Deputy Headteacher).

These members of staff will consider the referral and seek information from Honywood School colleagues. If appropriate, they will **SHARE** this with the quadrant Prevent Champion:
Jo Barclay jo.barclay@essex.gov.uk

She will then decide whether they should be referred to Channel. The referral form is available on www.escb.co.uk. They should be emailed to PREVENT@essex.pnn.police.uk.

You can contact the Essex Police to discuss any concerns on
PREVENT@essex.pnn.police.uk
DC Rachael Harris Tel: 01245 452196
Essex Police: 101
Confidential anti-terrorist hotline number: 0800 789 321

Appendix 7

Privately Fostered Children

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16, (under 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or relative in their own home for 28 days or more.

The school will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements and refer to the Specialist Fostering Team.

Essex County Council Private Fostering Statement of Purpose 2018

Children who have Family Members in Prison

The school is committed to supporting children and young people who have a parent or close relative in prison and will work with the family to find the best ways of supporting the child. The school recognises that children with family members in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including: poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health and poor attendance.

The school will treat information shared by the family in confidence and it will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

The school will work with the family and the child to minimise the risk of the child not achieving their full potential.