

HONYWOOD SCHOOL

Coggeshall Road, Coggeshall, Essex

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

2026 / 2027

Compliant with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Approved by the Governing Body	September 2026
Date implemented	1 September 2026
Amended	17 September 2026 — to reflect the Essex Model CP Policy v3 (15.09.26)
Next review date	September 2027 (or sooner if statutory guidance changes)
Policy owner	Designated Safeguarding Lead / Headteacher
Statutory basis	Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

This policy applies to the whole school community and is publicly available on the school website.

Key safeguarding personnel

Honywood School is highly committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our learners, and we place high expectations on everyone connected with the school to share in this commitment. The following individuals hold particular responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. There is always a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy available to staff during term time.

Role	Name	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Designated Teacher (LAC/previously LAC)	Daniel Smith Assistant Headteacher	dsmith@honywoodschool.com
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Senior Mental Health Lead	Kerry Nichols Non-teaching Safeguarding Lead	knichols@honywoodschool.com
Deputy / Alternate DSL	James Saunders Headteacher	jsaunders@honywoodschool.com
Deputy / Alternate DSL	Scott Caygill Deputy Headteacher	scaygill@honywoodschool.com
Deputy / Alternate DSL	Jo Hickford Deputy Headteacher	jhickford@honywoodschool.com
Safeguarding Link Governor	Mel Cork	mcork@honywoodschool.com
Chair of Governors	Helen Mulley	hmulley@honywoodschool.com

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm

Act immediately. Do not delay. If a child is in immediate danger call 999.

Report any concern to a DSL or Deputy DSL in person and record it on CPOMS the same day.

You do not need to be certain — it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place, only to report your concern without delay.

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1. Introduction, ethos and aims

Honywood School and all our staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children described in the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2026). Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff make sure their approach is child-centred and consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

For the purposes of this policy, **safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as: providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment, whether inside or outside the home, including online; preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. **A child** is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

We recognise that all adults in school — including temporary and supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors 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. Our school provides a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment in which children can learn, and in which they feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

Aims of this policy

- To support each child's development in ways that foster security, confidence and independence, and to provide an environment in which children feel safe, valued and respected, and know how to approach a trusted adult if they are in difficulty.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of their responsibility to identify and report possible cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation, exercising professional curiosity at all times.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and to contribute to inter-agency assessments and support.
- To establish clear procedures, understood and followed by the whole school community, for responding to concerns about a child's welfare.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, particularly children's social care, the police and health services.
- To ensure that all adults who work with children in our school are appropriately and safely recruited, checked and supervised.

Wherever the word “*staff*” is used in this policy it covers all staff on site, including teaching and support staff, ancillary, supply and self-employed staff, trainee teachers, contractors, volunteers working with children and governors.

2. Statutory framework and related guidance

This policy has been written to comply with **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026)**, the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges in England that came into force on 1 September 2026, and with **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)**. It should be read in conjunction with Part one (and Annex A) of KCSIE 2026, which all staff are required to read.

Working Together to Safeguard Children places a shared and equal duty on three safeguarding partners — the local authority, the police and health (through Integrated Care Boards, ICBs) — to work together under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In our area these arrangements are led by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB); the statutory partners are Essex County Council, Essex Police and the relevant Integrated

Care Board. In Essex, all professionals work in accordance with the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures (2025).

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. The Governing Body takes this responsibility seriously, and works with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place to identify, assess and support children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, harm.

This policy is informed by, and should be read alongside, the following legislation and guidance (not an exhaustive list):

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2026)
- SET Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2025) and Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB)
- Education Act 2002; Children Act 1989 and 2004; Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG)
- Information Sharing Duty (DfE, 2026)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Prevent duty) and Prevent duty guidance
- Serious Crime Act 2015; Modern Slavery Act 2015; Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended by s.74 Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and Operation Encompass statutory guidance
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026; Victims and Prisoners Act 2024; Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Children Missing Education – statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE); Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE)
- Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE); Behaviour in schools (DfE); Mobile phones in schools (DfE)
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings (UKCIS)
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance (Home Office)
- Teaching online safety in schools and Generative artificial intelligence in education (DfE)
- Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings; What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG)

3. A whole-school approach to safeguarding

Honywood School adopts a whole-school approach in which keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do and underpins all of our systems, processes and policies. Our safeguarding culture is one in which staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', professional curiosity is expected, and any concern about a child — or about the behaviour of an adult — is shared without delay. We know that abuse, neglect and exploitation are rarely stand-alone events; in most cases multiple issues overlap and cannot be captured by a single label.

This policy is one part of a suite of school policies that together give effect to our safeguarding duties. It should be read alongside the Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct), the Behaviour Policy (which includes anti-bullying measures), the Attendance Policy, the Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies, the Relationships

and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy, the Safer Recruitment Policy, the Responding to Child-on-child Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy, and the Low-level Concerns / Allegations procedures.

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- an effective child protection policy is in place — reflecting the whole-school approach to child-on-child abuse, describing procedures in accordance with government guidance, referring to the locally agreed multi-agency arrangements, incorporating online safety and SEND, reviewed at least annually, and published on the school website;
- a Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct) is in place covering low-level concerns, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, acceptable use of technologies (including mobile devices and social media) and staff/pupil relationships;
- a Behaviour Policy is in place that includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- appropriate safeguarding arrangements respond to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods;
- a senior member of the leadership team is appointed as Designated Safeguarding Lead, with the role explicit in their job description and with the status, time, funding, training, resources and support to carry it out effectively;
- robust cover arrangements are in place so that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay whenever the DSL is unavailable;
- safer recruitment procedures are followed and that at least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training;
- there are procedures for managing allegations and low-level concerns about adults, and for making referrals to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency where a person has caused harm or poses a risk of harm to children;
- all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, receive safeguarding and child protection information at induction and regular updates thereafter (at least annually), and can access Part one of KCSIE 2026;
- children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through a broad and balanced curriculum;
- the school contributes to multi-agency working, shares and stores information appropriately, and that any weaknesses in safeguarding are remedied without delay;
- a nominated governor (usually the Chair) liaises with the local authority in the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, and that the policy is reviewed annually.

Safeguarding training

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and all Deputy DSLs undertake Level 3 safeguarding training and update it at least every two years, in line with the Essex training expectations.
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction — including this policy, Part one of KCSIE 2026, the Staff Behaviour Policy, the role of the DSL, and the safeguarding response to children missing education — with regular updates (at least annually) and interim briefings as issues emerge.
- All staff receive training on online safety and on the school's filtering and monitoring systems, and on how to recognise and respond to child-on-child abuse.
- Governors receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role, including safer recruitment training for those on recruitment panels (renewed at least every five years).

4. Roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them, promote an inclusive and anti-discriminatory culture, and provide a safe environment in which children can learn and thrive. Within this shared responsibility, specific roles and bodies hold defined duties, set out below.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place. This is explicit in the role holder's job description. Any Deputy DSL is trained to the same standard as the DSL. During term time a DSL or Deputy is always available to staff to discuss a safeguarding concern; the school operates robust cover arrangements — including a confidential shared safeguarding mailbox monitored by the safeguarding team — so that concerns are received and acted upon without delay when a DSL is unavailable through illness, leave or other circumstances.

The DSL's responsibilities include:

- acting as the central point of contact and support for staff on safeguarding matters, and managing and coordinating individual cases;
- making referrals to Essex children's social care via the online Request for Support portal (essexeffectivesupport.org.uk), and to the police where a crime may have been committed, and supporting staff who make referrals;
- understanding the difference between community-based early help and targeted early help delivered through Family Help, and ensuring children who would benefit receive help at the right time;
- keeping detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns and referrals on CPOMS, even where no immediate referral is made;
- liaising with the safeguarding partners, the local authority and other agencies, attending or contributing to child protection conferences, core groups and multi-agency meetings;
- holding and using the information that a child has, or has had, a social worker, so decisions are made in the child's best interests;
- acting as, or working closely with, the Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and the Senior Mental Health Lead;
- overseeing the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements and the safeguarding of children placed in alternative provision;
- ensuring child protection files are maintained and transferred securely when a child moves school;
- raising the awareness of all staff, ensuring safeguarding induction and updates take place, and providing an annual safeguarding report to the Governing Body.

All staff

Every member of staff has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, to be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and to act on any concern immediately. Staff should never assume that a colleague or another agency will act; they must report a concern to a DSL or Deputy the same day and record it, and should follow up if they feel a concern has not been actioned appropriately. If a child is in immediate danger, staff call 999. Staff should also be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and to support children's social care and other agencies after a referral.

Our staff recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination, and understand the effect these experiences can have on a child's welfare. This is treated as a form of harm in its own right, with the same seriousness as any other safeguarding concern.

All staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who: is disabled, has a health condition or special educational needs (whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care plan); has a mental health need; is a young carer; is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, gangs or county lines; is frequently missing from education, home or care; has experienced multiple suspensions or is at risk of permanent exclusion; is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation; is at risk of radicalisation; has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending; is in a family affected by substance misuse, adult mental ill-health or domestic abuse; is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves; is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage or FGM; or is privately fostered.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher ensures that the safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented and followed by all staff, that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities, and that safeguarding concerns and allegations are handled appropriately. Where a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harm, or of posing a risk of harm, is made about a member of staff, the Headteacher considers whether an onward referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is required.

The Governing Body and Safeguarding Governor

The Governing Body provides strategic oversight of safeguarding, ensures the school fulfils its statutory duties, and reviews this policy at least annually. The nominated Safeguarding Link Governor champions safeguarding at governor level, meets regularly with the DSL, and reports to the full Governing Body. The Chair of Governors handles any allegation made against the Headteacher. Governors receive an annual safeguarding report covering policy changes, training undertaken, and anonymised data on the number and type of concerns and cases.

5. Types of abuse and specific safeguarding issues

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside the home, inside and outside school, and online. KCSIE 2026 describes four categories of abuse; staff should also be alert to the wider safeguarding issues set out below. Appendix A gives more detailed indicators.

The four categories of abuse

- **Physical abuse** — may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse** — the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- **Sexual abuse** — involves forcing, causing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities and the production of, or involvement with, sexual images, and can occur online. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males — women and other children can also commit it.
- **Neglect** — the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, or access to medical care or treatment.

Extra-familial and contextual harms

All staff, and especially the DSLs, understand that children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation); domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse — including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and stalking); criminal exploitation (including financial exploitation); serious youth violence; county lines; and radicalisation. We refer to this understanding of harm beyond the family as contextual safeguarding, and we respond to it as part of our whole-school approach.

Child-to-parent or carer abuse. Staff should also be aware that children may cause harm to other family members. This is often referred to as child-to-parent or care-giver abuse, and can be a safeguarding concern for the whole family.

Modern slavery, child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal or sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence. Exploitation can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and adults or other children, and can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang — victims may identify as part of that group. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents, and can take place in person or online, even where the activity appears consensual.

Some forms of CCE include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, or committing vehicle crime or serious violence. CCE and CSE can amount to modern slavery, and staff should be alert to the indicators. Where exploitation is suspected, the DSL will make a referral to children's social care and the police, and will consider whether a referral to the National Referral Mechanism is appropriate. Staff should be aware that children who are victims of exploitation may themselves be criminalised for actions they were coerced into, and should be treated first and foremost as victims.

Child-on-child abuse

All staff understand that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse), that it is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, that it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated, and that it is preventable. It can happen inside and outside of school and online. It 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, which may involve serious physical harm or threats involving weapons; sexual violence and sexual harassment; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (including those generated using AI); upskirting; and initiation or 'hazing' type violence.

We adopt a zero-tolerance approach and never dismiss child-on-child abuse as 'banter', 'having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Staff are trained to recognise the signs, including that some groups are more at risk — evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children can be disproportionately affected. All concerns are reported to a DSL, recorded, risk-assessed, and managed under this policy and the Behaviour Policy, with the police and children's social care involved as appropriate.

Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex, in person or online, and can be perpetrated by an individual or a group against an individual or a group. They exist on a continuum, may overlap, and are never acceptable. When a report is made, staff report immediately to a DSL, who manages each case on its own facts, reassures and supports the victim, takes their wishes into account, puts in place and keeps under review risk assessments to keep the victim, the alleged perpetrator and others safe, and considers the welfare of all children involved. Our curriculum creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, racism, sexual violence and harassment, and derogatory or other forms of physical violence and conflict. Full procedures are set out in the Responding to Child-on-child Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy and in Part five of KCSIE 2026.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a pattern of incidents and may be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse — they may see, hear or experience its effects at home, or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships — and this is recognised as a form of harm with a long-term impact on health, wellbeing, development and learning. Honywood School is signed up to Operation Encompass, so that we receive notification from the police of domestic abuse incidents and can put timely support in place for the child according to their needs.

Serious violence

All staff are alert to the indicators that a child may be at risk from, or involved in, serious violence: increased absence; a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups; a decline in performance; signs of self-harm or a change in wellbeing; signs of assault or unexplained injuries; and unexplained gifts or new possessions, which may indicate involvement with criminal networks or gangs and a risk of criminal exploitation. Concerns are reported to a DSL and managed in line with this policy and the multi-agency serious violence arrangements.

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM)

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse encompasses crimes committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community, including FGM, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. All forms are abuse, regardless of motivation, and are handled and escalated as such. Staff must never attempt to intervene, mediate or approach the family directly, but must report to a DSL and record on CPOMS. Teachers are reminded of the mandatory reporting duty to report to the police any case where, in the course of their work, they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Fuller guidance and indicators are at Appendix C.

Prevent and radicalisation

Under the Prevent duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015), the school has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. We safeguard against radicalisation in the same way as any other vulnerability, promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance, and provide safe spaces in which pupils can discuss sensitive issues. Staff who are concerned that a child may be at risk of radicalisation follow the usual safeguarding procedures and report to a DSL, who will consider a referral to the Channel programme. Fuller guidance is at Appendix F.

Online safety, the ‘4 Cs’ and generative AI

Our whole-school approach to online safety protects and educates pupils and staff in their use of technology, and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate concerns. The breadth of online safety risks can be categorised into four areas — the ‘4 Cs’:

- **Content** — being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact** — being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, or with generative AI applications that simulate this, for example peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising, and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct** — online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example making, sending and receiving explicit images (including those generated using AI) and online bullying.
- **Commerce** — risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams.

Online safety is a running theme through our curriculum, policies and training. Where the school chooses to use generative AI, either teacher-facing or pupil-facing, it does so in line with the DfE guidance ‘Generative artificial intelligence in education’, giving particular attention to safeguarding, data protection, and the risk of AI-generated child sexual abuse material and deepfakes. Filtering and monitoring arrangements are set out in Section 15.

Mobile phones

In line with the DfE guidance ‘Mobile phones in schools’, Honywood School is a mobile phone-free environment by default: pupils are not permitted access to their mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, between lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime, other than by specific exception (for example a documented medical need). This supports a calm, focused and safe environment and reduces the risk of online harms, including child-on-child abuse, during the school day. The arrangements are set out in full in the Behaviour and Mobile Phone policies.

Children missing education

Absence from education, particularly prolonged or repeated absence, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual or criminal exploitation (particularly county lines), mental ill-health, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage. We follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education, work with the local authority where absence indicates a safeguarding concern, and notify the local authority when a pupil is removed from roll or leaves without a destination school being named. Where reasonably possible we hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil. See also the Missing Child Protocol at Appendix E and the Attendance Policy.

Mental health

The school has an important role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils. All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation, and can in some cases develop into a safeguarding concern — for example self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or suicide. Only appropriately trained professionals attempt to diagnose a mental health problem; staff promote good wellbeing, identify children who may be experiencing difficulty, ensure early targeted support, and refer to specialist services where needed. Where a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern, staff take immediate action and follow the usual procedures. Where support is needed, the DSL (or a Deputy) considers whether to inform parents or carers to support the child’s wellbeing, provided doing so would not place the child at additional risk. Kerry Nichols is the Senior Mental Health Lead; concerns are recorded on CPOMS and referrals are made to internal support and to CAMHS, the Mental Health Support Team and the crisis team as required.

6. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

While all children are protected, we recognise that some groups are potentially at greater risk of harm, both online and offline, and we reflect this in our procedures. The following list is not exhaustive.

Children who need a social worker (child in need and child protection plans)

Children may need a social worker because of safeguarding or welfare needs arising from abuse, neglect, exploitation or complex family circumstances. Where the local authority shares that a child has a social worker, the DSL holds and uses this information so that decisions are made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes, informing our response to attendance, behaviour and pastoral and academic support.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We prioritise support for our looked-after and previously looked-after children. The Designated Teacher (Daniel Smith) promotes their educational achievement and ensures staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding — including of the impact of trauma — to keep these children safe, working closely with the Virtual School Head, whose role includes strategic oversight of the attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. Support includes personalised education plans, check-ins, tutoring and mentoring.

Children with SEND, disabilities or medical conditions

Children with special educational needs and disabilities, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional safeguarding challenges. Our procedures reflect the additional barriers to identifying abuse in this group, including: assumptions that indicators such as behaviour, mood or injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration; these children being more prone to peer isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) without outwardly showing signs; communication barriers and the risk that a child does not understand, or cannot report, that what is happening to them is abuse; the need for intimate care; and greater dependence on adults for care. Reports of abuse involving a child with SEND require close liaison between the DSL and the SENCO, and we provide extra pastoral support and appropriate communication support.

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) would not in itself warrant a safeguarding referral; a referral would only be needed where an incident suggested the child might be at increased risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation because of their condition — for example where essential information or medication is repeatedly withheld.

Young carers

We are alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can affect attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Early identification is essential so that young carers receive support at the right time and from the appropriate services, including external partners and local authority and health services.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender-questioning

Being LGB or gender-questioning is not in itself a risk factor, but these children can be vulnerable to discriminatory or prejudice-based bullying and may feel less able to seek support. We provide a safe, non-judgemental environment in which any child can talk to a trusted adult, and we address homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and behaviour through our behaviour and curriculum work. Where a child is questioning their gender, staff engage sensitively and in the child's best interests, involving parents unless doing so would place the child at risk of harm, and seek advice from the DSL.

Other groups

- **Homelessness** — the DSLs know the referral routes into the local housing authority and raise concerns of homelessness, or risk of homelessness, at the earliest opportunity.

- **Privately fostered children** — the school notifies the local authority of any private fostering arrangement it becomes aware of (see Appendix G).
- **Children with a family member in prison** — we work with the family to support the child, who may be at risk of poorer outcomes, and handle information sensitively and on a need-to-know basis.
- **Children with multiple protected characteristics** — we consider the additional risks and promote an inclusive culture in which every child can speak out.

7. Responding to a safeguarding concern

The school is an agent of referral, not of investigation. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor who has a concern about a child's welfare, receives a disclosure, or suspects abuse, neglect or exploitation, must act immediately and follow the steps below. Full step-by-step guidance for staff is at Appendices B and D.

- Respond calmly to the child, listen without interrupting, do not investigate or ask leading questions, reassure the child, and be clear that you cannot keep the information secret.
- Report to a DSL or Deputy DSL in person the same day (if a child is in immediate danger, call 999 first).
- Record the concern accurately as soon as possible on CPOMS, using the child's own words where possible, noting the date, time and location, describing any injuries factually (a body map is available on CPOMS), and signing and dating the record. If CPOMS is unavailable, use the paper disclosure form from the main office and transfer it to CPOMS as soon as possible.
- The DSL decides on the appropriate action — including whether to make a referral to children's social care (via the Essex Effective Support portal), seek early help, consult the Children and Families Hub, or contact the police — and records the decision and rationale.
- Do not assume someone else will act. If you believe a concern has not been handled appropriately, escalate to the Headteacher and, if necessary, to the LADO or the NSPCC whistleblowing line.

Where a concern relates to a member of staff, follow Section 11 (allegations) rather than the routine referral route. Where the concern involves possible FGM that a teacher has discovered in the course of their work, the mandatory reporting duty to the police applies (Appendix C).

8. Confidentiality and information sharing

All matters relating to child protection are treated as confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis. Staff must never promise a child that they will keep a disclosure secret, and must always pass a disclosure to a DSL. Data protection law — the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 — is not a barrier to sharing information for the purposes of keeping a child safe. Fears about sharing information must never be allowed to stand in the way of promoting the welfare and safety of a child.

We work in accordance with all statutory requirements, including the Information Sharing Duty (DfE, 2026), and ensure that any information shared is focused, proportionate and always in the child's best interests.

Where there are concerns about a child's safety, timely and proportionate information sharing between agencies can reduce the risk of harm. The DSL will share information, and undertake and record any necessary risk assessment, in accordance with the SET procedures and government information-sharing advice. We will normally share our intention to refer a child to children's social care with the parents or carers, unless to do so would place the child at greater risk, impede a criminal investigation, or where advised otherwise by the Children and Families Hub.

9. Records and record keeping

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. Every safeguarding record includes a summary of the concern, the action taken, the decisions made, the rationale for those decisions, and any outcomes. Child

protection records are kept on CPOMS, separately from the child's educational record, are stored securely and confidentially, and are retained until the child's 25th birthday (in line with retention guidance).

When a child moves to another school or college, their child protection file is transferred securely to the receiving DSL — electronically where both settings use CPOMS, or by secure means marked 'Confidential – for the attention of the DSL' — as soon as possible, and within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of a new term. We obtain confirmation of receipt and retain evidence of the transfer. When a child joins Honywood, we request their child protection records from the previous setting if none are received.

10. Supporting children and staff

We recognise that a child who has been abused, neglected or exploited, or who has witnessed violence, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and may behave in ways ranging from withdrawn to aggressive; for some children, school provides the only stability in their lives. We support all children through a nurturing ethos, a curriculum that equips them with the skills to stay safe, strong relationships with trusted adults, and close working with external support services. We continue to support a child about whom there have been concerns when they leave the school, by transferring information securely and promptly to their new setting.

We also recognise that safeguarding work can be stressful and upsetting for staff. Staff involved in a distressing case can talk through their concerns with a DSL and access further support (for example through the Employee Assistance Programme or occupational health) as appropriate.

11. Safeguarding concerns and allegations about staff

Honywood School has procedures for managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against anyone working in or on behalf of the school in a paid or unpaid capacity, including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors. Staff take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position; guidance on safe practice, including the safe use of mobile phones and technology, is given at induction through the Staff Behaviour Policy. The school distinguishes between concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold and lower-level concerns that do not.

Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold

These are cases where it is alleged that an adult who works with children has: behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm; or behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including transferable risk from behaviour in their personal life).

- Any such allegation or concern is reported immediately to the Headteacher, who acts as case manager. If it concerns the Headteacher, it is reported to the Chair of Governors without informing the Headteacher first.
- The Headteacher (or Chair) discusses the nature, content and context of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) — 03330 139797, lado@essex.gov.uk — normally within one working day, and follows the Essex procedures for managing allegations.
- A DSL ensures the welfare of any child involved and makes any necessary referral to children's social care and the police.
- A child is not sent home pending an investigation, and suspension is considered only as a last resort and after advice from the LADO and HR.
- Where an adult is dismissed, resigns, or ceases to be used because they have harmed or may harm a child, the school makes a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and, where relevant, to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any concern — no matter how small, even if no more than a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ — that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Behaviour Policy, including inappropriate conduct outside work, but that does not meet the harm threshold. We promote an open, transparent and reassuring culture in which such concerns are shared responsibly with the Headteacher, recorded and dealt with promptly. This allows the early identification of concerning behaviour, helps to keep children safe, and supports staff to maintain clear professional boundaries.

Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to raise concerns about the management of safeguarding, including the attitude or actions of colleagues. Concerns should be raised with the Headteacher; concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors (Helen Mulley). Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern internally, or feels it has not been addressed, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk. Parents, carers or others with concerns can contact the NSPCC helpline on 0800 800 5000.

Use of school premises by other organisations

Where the school hires out its premises to an organisation running activities for children (for example community groups or sports providers), it seeks assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding arrangements and a named safeguarding contact. Any safeguarding allegation arising from such use is managed under this policy, including informing the LADO where appropriate, and the school has a procedure to suspend a hire agreement where a concern arises.

12. Safer recruitment and vetting

The school follows safe recruitment practice, as set out in Part three of KCSIE 2026 and the Safer Recruitment Policy, to help deter, identify and reject people who might pose a risk to children. At least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training. We verify identity, right to work, qualifications and professional status, obtain references, explore any gaps in employment history, and carry out the appropriate pre-appointment checks — including an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information for those engaging in regulated activity, and, for teaching posts, a check of the DfE’s ‘Check a teacher’s record’ service for any prohibition, sanction or restriction.

The definition of regulated activity is set out in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Crime and Policing Act 2026. Staff and volunteers engaging in regulated activity with children — including, on a frequent basis, teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or providing advice or guidance on wellbeing — are subject to an enhanced DBS check with barred list information. We maintain a Single Central Record of all checks, ensure volunteers are appropriately checked and supervised, and apply the same rigour to supply staff (obtaining written confirmation of checks from agencies) and to any provider of alternative provision.

13. Opportunities to teach safeguarding (preventative education)

Our curriculum ensures that children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education are delivered through timetabled lessons and reinforced across the curriculum, are fully inclusive and age- and stage-appropriate, and follow the statutory RSHE guidance. Preventative education is most effective within a whole-school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia,

biphobia, sexual violence and harassment, and derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict.

Through the curriculum, children learn about:

- healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries, consent and how to recognise and report abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour;
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they are always unacceptable; the law relating to consent, exploitation, grooming, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, so-called honour-based abuse and FGM;
- online safety and the '4 Cs', including that material shared online may be shared further and is difficult to remove, the impact of viewing harmful content, and the risks of sharing nudes and semi-nudes;
- the dangers of child criminal exploitation, county lines, gangs, radicalisation and serious violence;
- how to seek help, who to turn to, and where to access support.

The school uses quality-assured resources, including PSHE Association-approved materials, to support this teaching, and provides a monitored wellbeing route through which pupils can request support.

14. Use of reasonable force and restrictive intervention

There are limited circumstances in which it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children — ranging from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to breaking up a fight or preventing a child from harming themselves or others. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is necessary, for the least amount of time. The school does not operate a 'no contact' policy; the decision to use reasonable force is a matter of professional judgement within the law and depends on the individual circumstances, and is made in line with the DfE guidance 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools'. When responding to incidents involving children with SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions, staff recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups, plan positive and proactive behaviour support (including individual behaviour plans agreed with parents), and have regard to the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010. Any use of reasonable force is recorded and reported to parents.

15. Online safety governance, filtering and monitoring

The school has appropriate filtering and monitoring in place on school devices and networks to limit children's exposure to harmful online content without unreasonably restricting teaching and learning. Roles and responsibilities for managing these systems are clearly assigned. The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring is reviewed at least annually by the SLT member responsible, with the support of the DSL and IT, including checks that filtering is working on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record is kept of these checks. Leaders and relevant staff understand the systems in place and how to escalate concerns. Online safety is reinforced through the curriculum and through communication with parents and carers.

Alternative provision

Where the school places a child in alternative provision, Honywood remains responsible for the child's safeguarding. The DSL ensures the placement meets the pupil's needs, obtains written confirmation that the provider has carried out the appropriate safer-recruitment checks, and reviews the safety and suitability of the placement, including attendance monitoring, on a regular (at least half-termly) basis.

16. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the Governing Body, and updated sooner if statutory guidance or the school's circumstances change, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learned. Safeguarding practice is monitored and evaluated through, but not limited to:

- the annual safeguarding report and file audit presented to governors;
- governor visits, and meetings between the Safeguarding Link Governor and the DSL;
- SLT 'drop-ins' and conversations with children and staff, and pupil surveys and questionnaires;
- scrutiny of attendance, behaviour, suspension and bullying data, and of risk assessments;
- review of parental concerns and feedback.

The policy also links to the school's policies on: Staff Behaviour (Code of Conduct); Behaviour and Anti-bullying; Attendance; Online Safety and Acceptable Use; RSE and Health Education; Responding to Child-on-child Harmful Sexual Behaviour; Safer Recruitment; Confidentiality; Managing Allegations and Low-level Concerns; Intimate Care; Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions; Administration of Medicines; and Drugs Education.

Appendix A — Recognising the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation

The factors below are frequently found in cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but must be regarded as an indicator of the possibility of significant harm and justifies careful assessment and discussion with a DSL. The absence of these indicators does not mean abuse has not occurred. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and report any concern.

General (non-specific) signs

- significant or sudden change in behaviour; extreme anger, sadness or withdrawal; attention-seeking or aggressive behaviour;
- unexplained or suspicious injuries with inconsistent explanations; lack of self-esteem; self-injury or self-harm; depression;
- age-inappropriate sexual behaviour, knowledge or language; running away or going missing; unexplained gifts or money.

Physical abuse — indicators of concern

- an injury inconsistent with the explanation given, or several different explanations for the same injury; unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- any bruising to a pre-mobile baby; bruising in or around the mouth; two simultaneous bruised eyes without forehead bruising; the outline of an implement (belt, hand, cord); grasp marks; bruising behind the ear;
- cigarette-type circular burns; scalds with a clear immersion line; burns of uniform depth over a large area;
- fractures in a non-mobile child, or a vague or inconsistent history for a fracture; multiple scars of different ages.

Emotional abuse — indicators

- developmental delay; abnormal or indiscriminate attachment; 'frozen watchfulness'; low self-esteem and lack of confidence;
- aggressive behaviour towards others; being scapegoated within the family; withdrawal or difficulty relating to others;
- witnessing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse (which is itself emotional abuse); persistent verbal abuse, criticism, belittling or name-calling directed at the child.

Sexual abuse — indicators

- sexually explicit behaviour, play, conversation or knowledge inappropriate to the child's age; continual inappropriate masturbation;
- self-harm, eating disorders or suicide attempts; an anxious unwillingness to remove clothes (allowing for cultural or physical factors);
- pain, itching, bleeding or injury to the genital or anal area; sexually transmitted infection; pregnancy where the identity of the father is concealed.

Neglect — indicators

- failure to meet basic needs (food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical or dental care); a child who is listless, apathetic or failing to thrive;
- frequent absence from school; being left with unsuitable carers or alone for excessive periods; poor supervision and repeated accidental injury.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE) — signs

- unexplained gifts, money, clothes, or multiple/expensive mobile phones; unaffordable new possessions; going missing or being found out of area;
- getting into cars with unknown adults; associating with older individuals or anti-social groups; older 'boyfriends' or 'girlfriends';
- changes in behaviour, mood or appearance; disengagement from education; self-harm; drug or alcohol misuse; injuries from assault or restraint;
- involvement in gangs or crime, or recruiting other young people; repeat sexually transmitted infections or pregnancies.

Appendix B — Procedures for responding to concerns at Honywood School

The school takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children in its care and recognises that it is an agent of referral, not of investigation. All action is taken in line with KCSIE 2026, the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the SET procedures (2025), the Essex Children and Families Hub guidance and Section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

If a child discloses, or you suspect abuse

- Listen; do not question the child in depth or ask leading questions; reassure them and do not promise confidentiality.
- Report immediately to a DSL — Daniel Smith or Kerry Nichols — or, if unavailable, to an Alternate DSL: James Saunders (Headteacher), Scott Caygill or Jo Hickford (Deputy Headteachers). In their absence, report to the most senior member of staff.
- Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible (paper pink disclosure forms are available from the main office if CPOMS is unavailable).
- The DSL decides whether to contact the Children and Families Hub / children's social care, the police, or early help, and makes that contact. It is important that one named person liaises with the Hub over each case.

Making a referral (Essex)

- Consultation and non-urgent referrals: online Request for Support at www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk.
- Where a child is in immediate danger, the DSL can make an immediate referral via the priority line: 0345 603 7627 (out of hours 0345 606 1212), and/or call the police on 999.
- Essential information includes the child's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, and the name of the person taking the referral; written confirmation is signed and dated.

If the concern is about a member of staff

Do not use the routine referral route. Report immediately to the Headteacher (or, if it concerns the Headteacher, to the Chair of Governors). The Headteacher/Chair consults the LADO (03330 139797, lado@essex.gov.uk) and the Essex safeguarding team (01245 436744) and follows Section 11 of this policy. Mel Cork is the Safeguarding Governor (mcork@honywoodschool.com); Helen Mulley is the Chair of Governors (hmulley@honywoodschool.com).

If you feel a concern is not being dealt with properly

Report immediately to the Headteacher. If you have serious concerns that safeguarding is not being handled appropriately, contact the Essex LADO (03330 139797) or the NSPCC whistleblowing line (0800 028 0285).

Appendix C — So-called ‘honour’-based abuse, forced marriage and FGM

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and breast ironing. All forms are abuse, regardless of motivation, and are escalated as such. Staff must never attempt to intervene, mediate or approach the family; if in any doubt they speak to a DSL and record on CPOMS.

Forced marriage

Forced marriage is entirely distinct from arranged marriage and is a human rights abuse falling within the definition of domestic abuse. Young men and women can be at risk; a disclosure may come from a younger sibling or be signalled by changes in behaviour. Staff must never attempt to intervene directly but must refer to a DSL.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Warning signs may include a child talking about a ‘special ceremony’ or a long trip abroad, a family from a practising community, prolonged absence, or a marked change on return from abroad; signs a child may have undergone FGM include difficulty sitting or walking, bladder or menstrual problems, and reluctance to take part in physical activity.

FGM mandatory reporting duty (s.5B Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003)

If a teacher, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 (through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence), the teacher must personally report this to the police (call 101, or 999 in an emergency).

The teacher should also, unless there is good reason not to, discuss the case with a DSL and involve children’s social care.

The mandatory duty does not apply to ‘at risk’ or suspected cases, or where the person is 18 or over — in those cases staff report their concerns via a referral on CPOMS. Non-teaching staff report all FGM concerns to a DSL via CPOMS.

Appendix D — Child protection guidelines for all staff

(For inclusion in the staff handbook and issued to all staff — teaching and non-teaching — annually.)

We have a duty in law to act upon any concern or information about a child protection issue, which may include accidental injury, neglect, ill-treatment, sexual abuse, exploitation or online harm. Every member of staff must know the procedure to follow and the people involved.

In the case of a disclosure

- Receive what the child says without displaying shock or disbelief; listen rather than question; do not investigate.
- Reassure the child but do not promise confidentiality; explain that you must pass the information on to keep them safe.
- As soon as possible, contact a DSL (Daniel Smith or Kerry Nichols) or an Alternate DSL (James Saunders, Scott Caygill or Jo Hickford) and complete a referral on CPOMS.
- The DSL takes responsibility for deciding whether the Children and Families Hub / social care are contacted and makes any such contact.

In the case of suspicion

- Complete a referral on CPOMS; the safeguarding team will liaise with the relevant pastoral lead or a child-protection-trained colleague as appropriate.
- If there is sufficient cause for concern, the same procedure as for a disclosure is followed.
- The DSLs retain responsibility for contacting the police or social care where appropriate.

Statement for the parents' handbook (issued annually)

"Our first concern is your child's welfare, and there may be occasions when our concern means we have to consult other agencies before we contact you. The procedures we follow have been laid down by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board. If you want to know more, please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy."

Appendix E — Missing child protocol

Definition (Essex): ‘anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and their wellbeing confirmed’ (College of Policing). A child going missing may be a one-off, but frequent missing episodes can indicate underlying exploitation or other abuse and are treated as a child protection concern.

When a child goes missing during the school day

- Act immediately: search the premises and surrounding area, attempt to contact the child by phone/text, and contact parents/carers.
- If the child is not located, report them missing to the police by dialling 101 (or 999 if there is a belief the child is at immediate risk of significant harm), informing the police of the checks already made.
- Inform the child’s parents/carers and any allocated social worker that the child has been reported missing.
- Pass any further information to the police, quoting the incident number; officers will continue searching until told of the child’s return.

When the child is found

Notify the police immediately (101, or 999 in an emergency), as the child remains classified as missing until seen by the police. Each child who returns is offered an independent ‘return home interview’ (‘missing chat’) facilitated by the local authority. Useful contacts: Shane Thomson, ECC Missing Coordinator (shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk); Lucy Stovell, ECC Missing Chats (lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk).

Appendix F — Prevent and anti-radicalisation

Under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, the school has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty). We teach a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes British values and community cohesion, provide safe spaces to discuss sensitive issues, and safeguard against radicalisation in the same way as any other vulnerability. Channel is the national programme providing early support to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism; staff understand how to identify those who may benefit and how to refer.

Notice — Check — Share

Staff NOTICE vulnerabilities (for example difficult personal circumstances, isolation, low self-esteem, exposure to extremist material or propaganda, peer pressure, or mental ill-health) and warning signs (for example changes in friendship groups, behaviour, appearance or routine; references to weapons or violence; concerning comments in work or conversation; or unexplained trips abroad). Staff CHECK concerns with a DSL — James Saunders, Daniel Smith, Kerry Nichols, Scott Caygill or Jo Hickford — who, if appropriate, SHARE the concern with the local Prevent lead and consider a Channel referral.

Prevent referrals are made in line with normal safeguarding procedures. Concerns can be discussed with Essex Police at PREVENT@essex.pnn.police.uk. The confidential anti-terrorist hotline is 0800 789 321.

Appendix G — Private fostering and children with a family member in prison

Privately fostered children

Private fostering is when a child under 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for and accommodated for 28 days or more by an adult who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility, or close relative. The school has a duty to notify the local authority of any private fostering arrangement it becomes aware of, so that the local authority can carry out its safeguarding responsibilities.

Children with a family member in prison

The school supports children and young people who have a parent or close relative in prison, recognising that they can be at greater risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health and poor attendance. We work with the family to find the best ways of supporting the child, treat information in confidence and on a need-to-know basis, and work to minimise the risk of the child not achieving their potential.

Appendix H — Key contacts

Service	Contact
Emergency (child in immediate danger)	999
Essex Children and Families Hub / Effective Support	www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk
Essex priority line (child in immediate danger)	0345 603 7627 (out of hours 0345 606 1212)
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	03330 139797 · lado@essex.gov.uk
Essex Education Safeguarding team	01245 436744
Police (non-emergency)	101
NSPCC whistleblowing advice line	0800 028 0285 · help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC helpline (parents / public)	0808 800 5000
Prevent (Essex Police)	PREVENT@essex.pnn.police.uk
Anti-terrorist hotline (confidential)	0800 789 321
ECC Missing Coordinator (Shane Thomson)	shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk
ECC Missing Chats (Lucy Stovell)	lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk

Appendix I — Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention

Essex's local escalation framework, the 'Windscreen of Need', sets out three levels of need and the response expected at each. It is a reference point for the DSLs alongside this policy's own procedures for responding to a concern (Section 7 and Appendix B).

- **Additional needs** — best supported by those who already work with the child, such as the school or a Family Hub, organising additional support with local partners as needed. An Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional help coordinate this support and keep information shared appropriately.
- **Intensive needs** — usually call for a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach, using an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment, with a Lead Professional working closely with the child and family — for example, children's mental health services or Family Solutions.
- **Specialist needs** — where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or support their development — for example, Children's Social Care or the Youth Offending Service.

All partners aim to work at the lowest level of intervention consistent with the child's needs, so that timely, coordinated support at the Additional or Intensive level prevents escalation to statutory or specialist services wherever possible.

Source: Essex Education Safeguarding & Wellbeing Team, "Model CP Policy — schools and settings" (v3, 15.09.26), Appendix B.

This policy was rewritten in full to ensure compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and approved by the Governing Body in September 2026, and was further amended on 17 September 2026 to reflect the Essex Model CP Policy v3 (15.09.26). It will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or the school's circumstances change.