

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

FOR

ABBOTS HALL PRIMARY ACADEMY



Approved by Governors: September 2023

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Policy to be reviewed: July 2024

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):	Jack Arnold – Headteacher
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):	Stuart Holmes – Deputy Headteacher
Named person for safeguarding	Dawn Smith – Family Support Worker
Designated safeguarding Governor	Rita Garner – Chair of Governors

Version control

Date	Version no.	Key changes from previous version
9/2021	V2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job title changes • Changes to peer-on-peer abuse (incl sexual harassment) • Changes to EHE procedures to include a meeting with parents and removal of the 2-day cooling off period
3/22	V3	Updated key persons to reflect change in HT
10/22	V3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to reflect updated KCSIE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer-on-peer altered to 'child on child' - KCSIE '21 updated to KCSIE '22
9/23	V4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated key personnel - Updated key documents (KCSIE '23) and some vocabulary (vulnerable to susceptible, missing to absent) - Added table of contents - Adapted layout of policy - Removed Covid-19 appendix

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1. INTRODUCTION

Schools and their 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 practitioners and school staff should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2023)

This Safeguarding Policy applies to all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2023)
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- The role of the designated Safeguarding Lead (Annex C of KCSIE).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – everyone under the age of 18 - is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- 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.

Our school has a whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do, and underpins all systems, processes and policies. Our school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation. Only by working in partnership, can we truly keep children safe.

2. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Abbots Hall Primary Academy takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. “The welfare of the child is paramount” (the Children Act 1989). Section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the governing board to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the [Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership \(LSCP\)](#), Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL. Telephone 01375 652 813 or email: lscb@thurrock.gov.uk

In Thurrock, all professionals must work in accordance with the [SET Procedures](#) (Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures 2022) .

Our school also works in accordance with [‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’](#) (DfE, 2023), [‘Working Together’](#) (DfE, 2018)

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends, and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school therefore aims to:

- Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships.
- Include in the curriculum materials that will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regards to childcare and parenting skills.
- Make parents/carers aware of the school policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.

All School staff

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. Our staff are aware of the types of abuse and safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm, so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. In addition, we recognise that any child may benefit from additional help and all staff members are aware of the local early help process and our role in it. All staff members are aware of, and follow, school processes and are aware of how to contact external agencies if there is a need to do so. Staff understand that, if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) – we never assume that others have taken action.

Named person for safeguarding

Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Headteacher

The designated safeguarding lead in school has ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection., ensuring all staff are appropriately trained, leading on online safety and raising awareness of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that any referrals to Thurrock Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are made in a timely way and in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and the TLSCP as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) - Headteacher

The deputy designated safeguarding lead is trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy designated safeguarding lead/leads will act in their absence.

The governing board

The governing board ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually. The governing board ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place (also named in key personnel). The Governing board will receive safeguarding updates at least annually, detailing key policy changes and training undertaken by staff.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named in the key personnel area of this policy This governor takes strategic responsibility at governing board level for safeguarding arrangements in our school.

The governing board ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The governing board ensures that all adults in our school who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate and that it is regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.

The governing board ensures our pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The governing board and school leadership team are responsible for:

- ensuring we have in place safer recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children
- ensuring we meet statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and have recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Recruitment Procedure' for further information)
- ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised in school

4. PROCEDURES

Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support (through a Child in Need or a Child Protection plan).

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred, must report it immediately to the DSL (or, in their absence, the DDSL)

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance:

- Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Any staff member or visitor to the school must refer any concerns to the DSL or DDSL. Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to the Thurrock MASH and / or the Police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to Thurrock MASH. The school may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern if we are unsure how to respond to it.

A telephone referral to Thurrock Social Care Direct must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours on an inter-agency referral form. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given.

Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place a child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If it is necessary for agency to meet with a child in school, we will always seek to inform parents or carers, unless we are advised not to by that agency. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Thurrock MASH and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers. All staff understand that, if they continue to have concerns about a child, or feel a concern is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, they should press for re-consideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Named Person for Safeguarding.

Safeguarding contact details will be kept prominently displayed in the school to ensure that all staff have unfettered access to safeguarding support, which can be found in the staff room.

5. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

In line with statutory requirements, the DSL, DDSL and Named person for Safeguarding undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. In addition, all staff members and other adults working with children in our school receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. New Governors will undertake safeguarding training as part of their induction.

Records of any child protection training undertaken are kept for all staff and governors. The school ensures that the DSL and DDSL also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate.

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of our school's Safeguarding policy, staff handbook and told who our DSL, DDSL and Named Person for Safeguarding is. They receive training on how to report concerns via MyConcern (see section 9 Records and Monitoring).

Staff are kept informed about safeguarding responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings, and awareness training. There may be other adults in the school who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the school staff. However, the Headteacher will ensure they are aware of the school's policy and the identity of the DSL and DDSL.

6. INFORMATION SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret as, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know' basis only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held treated confidentially.

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 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 information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot (and will not) stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

7. RECORDS AND MONITORING

To report Safeguarding concerns, our school uses MyConern



Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding 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 passed over to other agencies.

MyConcern is a simple safe and secure solution for recording and managing all safeguarding concerns within school. All members of staff have a secure individual login and password to be able to report their own concerns.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen (if appropriate using a body map to record), putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. This will be recorded onto MyConcern. Once recorded, it will then be sent straight to DSL, DDSL and named person for safeguarding who will then decide on appropriate action. Any file notes are scanned and uploaded onto MyConcern and then shredded.

If a pupil transfers from the school, these files will be copied and forwarded to the pupil's new educational setting, marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. INTERAGENCY WORK

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and a report submitted to, any child protection conference for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare, and presentation. If the school are part of the core group then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure that the school is represented and contributes to the plan at these meetings; that there is a record of attendance and issues discussed. All concerns about the child protection plan and / or the child's welfare should be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting unless the child is at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead must inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so, and the actions agreed.

9. TYPES OF ABUSE/SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Keeping Children Safe in Education describes abuse as 'a form of maltreatment of a child'. It sets out that:

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children"

The guidance refers to four main categories of abuse:

- Physical: a form of abuse causing physical harm to a child – this includes where an adult fabricates or deliberately induces illness in a child
- Emotional: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development
- Sexual: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities (through actual physical or online contact)
- 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.

In addition, Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education contains important information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. In Thurrock, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the

age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.

We recognise that our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered, harm and trauma. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and that this may happen in school, or outside of it. We understand there are many factors which may lead a child to display abusive behaviours towards other children, and that these matters are sensitive and often complex. Any incidents of child on child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and we will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as necessary and ensure that appropriate agencies are involved when required.

Our school understands that even though child on child abuse / harmful sexual abuse may not be reported, it is likely that it is occurring and we are clear there is a zero tolerance approach to inappropriate or abusive behaviour. We understand the barriers which may prevent a child from reporting abuse and work actively to remove these.

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence / sexual harassment, 'up-skirting', 'sexting' or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate harmful behaviour of any kind in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs, challenging inappropriate behaviours when they occur – we do not normalise abuse, nor allow a culture where it is tolerated.

Children missing/absent from education

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing/absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and we follow the procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in school, children may be susceptible to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents/carers and other partners to keep children in school whenever possible. Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to.

Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (School Attendance Support Team, Social Care or Police). Our school must inform the local authority of any pupil who has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. We work in accordance with the Thurrock Protocol for children who go missing during the school day (see Appendix 4), to ensure that there is an appropriate response to children who go missing.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can involve a wide range of behaviours and can include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. We understand that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, and that it can take place inside or outside of the home.

Our school recognises that exposure to domestic abuse (either by witnessing or experiencing it) can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and we receive / share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

Harmful sexual behaviour

We understand that children's sexual behaviours exist on a continuum, ranging from ageappropriate / developmental to inappropriate / problematic / abusive. We also understand that harmful sexual behaviour and child on child abuse can occur between children of any age and gender, either in person or online. We recognise that children who display harmful sexual behaviour may have experienced their own abuse and trauma, and we will support them accordingly.

Our school has a 'zero-tolerance' approach to harmful sexual behaviour of any kind, and any inappropriate behaviour is challenged and addressed. We work in accordance with all statutory guidance in relation to such behaviours and with other agencies as appropriate.

Through our PSHE curriculum, we seek to teach our pupils about healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries and consent, equality, the law and how to keep themselves safe (on and offline).

Mental health

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that the school plays a key part in this. Our school aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience. Our 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. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents/carers to support the wellbeing of our pupils. We expect parents/carers, if they have any concerns about the wellbeing of their child, to share this with us, so we can ensure that appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

Our school has a Senior Mental Health and Well-being lead who leads a team of pupil well-being champions, staff well-being team and learning mentor. We work closely with the Local Authority Mental Health Support Team.

Online safety

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. Whilst this presents many positive and exciting opportunities, we recognise it also presents challenges and risks, in the form of:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, suicide, racist or radical and extremist views
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and / or financial scams.

All staff in our school are aware of the risks to children online. We understand any child can be vulnerable online, and that their vulnerability can vary according to age, developmental stage and personal circumstances. We aim to equip all our pupils with the knowledge they need to use the internet and technology safely, and we want to work with parents to support them to keep their children safe online.

While using the internet in school, children are protected from harmful content, contact, conduct and commerce by filtering and monitoring from Schools Broadband and Senso. Updates to specific websites are managed by BIS Solution (IT Support).

Prevention of 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.

Schools are required to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils 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 susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. If a child on roll at our school is referred to the Channel Panel, a representative from the school may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with an assessment and support plan. Our school operates in accordance with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to, Social Care and/or the Channel Panel.

County Lines

All staff are aware of the risk factors and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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. We understand that this form of abuse often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of FGM where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school operates in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

10. CHILDREN POTENTIALLY AT RISK OF GREATER HARM

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- that they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- the potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

11. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A MEMBER OF STAFF

It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regards to alleged child abuse by parents, are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse. Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Care Services, the Police or in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, or any adult working with children, must be referred directly to the headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher in their absence). Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.

The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out in the SET procedures. Where an allegation against a member of staff has been made, the Head Teacher or another senior manager will telephone the Children's Safeguarding Service on **01375 652921** immediately, or not later than within 1 working day. A Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to pupils and parents.

12. BEHAVIOUR, USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND REASONABLE FORCE

Our Behaviour and Relationships Policy sets out our approach to behaviour for all children and also for those with more difficult or harmful behaviour. We recognise there are some children who have needs that require additional support and a more personalised approach and we always consider all behaviour, and our response to it, in the context of safeguarding.

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with children and young people for a variety of reasons, this may include:

- to comfort a child or young person in distress (appropriate to their age and individual specific needs)
- to direct a child or young person
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Music, Drama etc)
- in an emergency, to avert danger to the child or young person or others

The guidance produced by the Department for Education Use of Reasonable Force (DfE, 2013) states that:

*"Schools **should not** have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a child or young person or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a child or young person causing harm."*

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

13. WHISTLEBLOWING

All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues in line with the schools Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy. Any staff member can press for re-consideration of a case if they feel a child's situation does not appear to be improving. They must refer their concerns to Social Care directly if they have concerns for the safety of a child.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285. The line is available from 8.00 AM to 8.00 PM, Monday to Friday and email help@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix 1: MASH

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

As part of Thurrock's vision to provide the most effective services to children within its resourcing capability we have agreed to implement a pathway to service model known as MASH.

What is MASH?

MASH acts as an intelligence hub, in which each agency identifies what information they hold on a child/ young person and the adults around them. Each agency then assesses whether it is appropriate for their information to be shared (in line with the Information Sharing Arrangement) with partners in the hub as well as outside of the hub. Collectively an agreement will be made on the best course of action for that referral. Core agencies will ensure that their representatives either sit in the MASH office on specific days or have 'virtual' contact.

All information will be decided on a case-to-case basis and is subject to the Information Sharing Agreement (ISA).

The Mash Vision

'To identify and make safe at the earliest opportunity all vulnerable people in our communities through the sharing of information and intelligence across the safeguarding partnership'.

The MASH will:

Inform partners in the MASH about the level of need or risk at the first point of contact – this means assessing the concerns the professionals and the public have about a child or young person in order to make informed decisions about their level of vulnerability.

- Play a lead role in supporting and promoting information sharing. This will improve information sharing and risk assessment at the point of referral.
- Ensure that the advice and information to parents, carers and partner agencies is appropriate when signposting to services. Based on this information Children's Social Care will decide on what actions are appropriate to the referral.

MASH – The three outcomes

1. Early identification and understanding of risk & harm
2. Victim identification and intervention
3. Harm identification and reduction

The 5 core elements

1. All notifications relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to go through the hub.
2. Co-location of professionals from core agencies to research, interpret and determine what is proportionate and relevant to share.
3. The hub is fire walled, keeping MASH activity confidential and separate from operational activity and providing a confidential record system of activity to support this.
4. An agreed process for analysing and assessing risk, based on the fullest information picture and dissemination of a suitable information product to the most appropriate agency for necessary action.
5. A process to identify victims and emerging harm through research and analysis.



Abbots Hall Primary Academy

‘Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children.’

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, Sept 2023)

If you have any concerns, please report it straight away to a staff member below:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Jack Arnold

Deputy Safeguarding Lead:

Stuart Holmes

Named Person’s for Safeguarding:

Dawn Smith

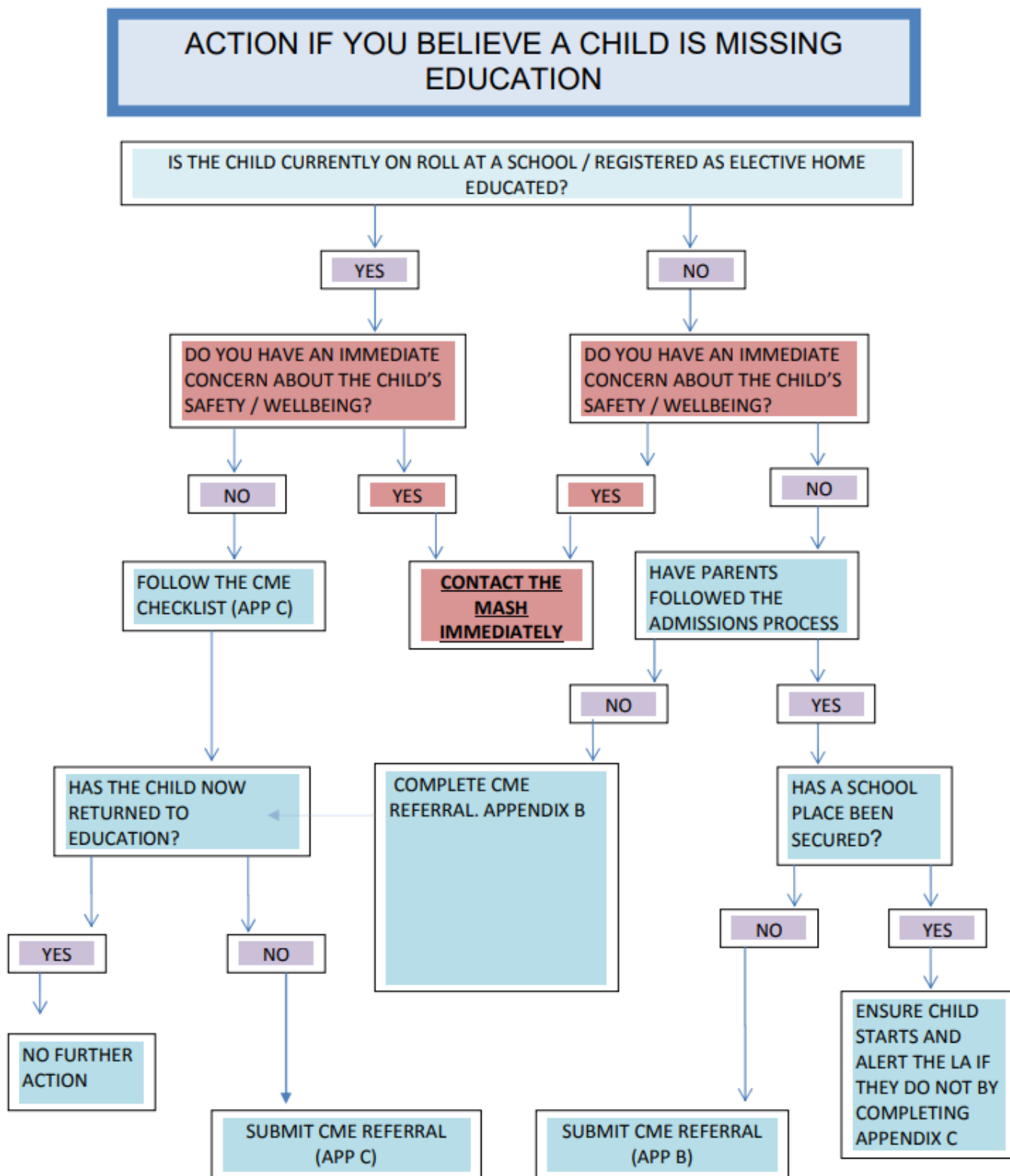
Governor for Safeguarding:

Rita Garner

If you have immediate concerns regarding a child, please call MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) on 01375-652802, out of hours 01375 372468.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-ordinator and LADO - 01375 652921

The below document is Appendix A from the Thurrock Protocol and Procedures for children missing education, not in receipt of full-time education and children missing from school. The full document can be found at: [Thurrock Council - Protocols and procedures for children missing education, March 2019](#)



Contacts for Safeguarding in Thurrock LA:

If you have a Safeguarding concern:

Contact –

- **Social Care Initial Response Team – 01375 652802 /01375 652634**

- **The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – 01375 652802**
 - Thurrock MASH, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL
 - For further details on MASH Services see Appendix 1

- **Thurrock Council Emergency Duty Team – 01375 372468**
 - For out of hours only

- **Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership – 01375 652813**
 - Civic Offices New Road Grays ESSEX RM17 6SL
 - Email: lscb@thurrock.gov.uk

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-ordinator and LADO- Sharon Owen**
 - 01375 652921
 - sowen@thurrock.gov.uk / LADO@thurrock.gov.uk

- **Police Child Abuse Investigation Team – 01277 266822**

- **Childline- 0800 11 11**
www.childline.org.uk

- **NSPCC- 0800 800 5000**
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.facebook.com/nspcc