

ABBOTS HALL PRIMARY ACADEMY



Safeguarding Policy

Approved by Governors: September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Policy to be reviewed: July 2027

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	• 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	• Changes to reflect updated KCSIE - Peer-on-peer altered to 'child on child' - KCSIE '21 updated to KCSIE '22
9/23	V4	- 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
7/24	V5	Changes to reflect KCSIE '24 - Role of DSL edited to include 'responsible for written records' - Added 'exploitation' alongside 'abuse and neglect'.
9/25	V6	Changes to reflect KCSIE '25 - Various additions related to online safety and emerging risks
7/13	V7	Changes to reflect KCSIE '26

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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)

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)
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should fulfil the responsibilities set out in Part Two of Keeping Children Safe in Education
- EYFS Statutory Framework (Section 3 – Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements).

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.

Our safeguarding culture is underpinned by the understanding that safeguarding concerns rarely occur in isolation. Children may experience multiple forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation simultaneously. All staff recognise the importance of professional curiosity, early identification of concerns and timely intervention to secure the best possible outcomes for children.

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) .

Our school also works in accordance with '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' (DfE), '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' (DfE).

The school also works in accordance with the principles set out within the Families First for Children reforms and will work collaboratively with partner agencies through Universal Services, Community Help and Family Help arrangements to ensure children and families receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff understand the difference between Universal Help, Community Help and Family Help and know how to access support for children and families at the earliest opportunity. 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. Staff must be alert to emerging safeguarding risks, including online harms such as artificial intelligence (AI), gaming, livestreaming, online coercion and financial scams. Staff understand the local arrangements for Universal Services, Community Help and Family Help and know how to seek advice or make referrals where additional support is required. Staff understand that early intervention is fundamental to improving outcomes for children. 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.

Staff recognise that safeguarding concerns can overlap and that children may experience multiple vulnerabilities at the same time. Professional curiosity should always be exercised, particularly where patterns of concern emerge over time.

Trainee teachers, agency staff, volunteers and contractors working directly with children are expected to understand and fulfil safeguarding responsibilities in the same way as permanent members of staff and receive appropriate safeguarding induction before working with children.

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 Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure safeguarding records contain clear professional analysis, decision-making and rationale for actions taken. The DSL is responsible for ensuring filtering and monitoring systems are not only in place but reviewed at least annually for effectiveness.

Appropriate contingency arrangements are maintained should the Designated Safeguarding Lead become unavailable, ensuring safeguarding advice remains immediately accessible to all staff.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) – Deputy 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 Safeguarding 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 Governing Board will ensure safeguarding is a standing item on full governing board meeting agendas.

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

The Governing Board receives regular assurance that safeguarding arrangements remain effective. This includes oversight of safeguarding audits, filtering and monitoring systems, online safety, information sharing arrangements, safeguarding training, safer recruitment, AI-related risks and implementation of national safeguarding guidance.

4. PROCEDURES

Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Wherever appropriate, the school will work alongside partner agencies through Universal Services.

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)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023)
- 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. Information sharing should be timely, proportionate, relevant and secure. Decisions not to share safeguarding information should be clearly recorded together with the rationale. 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. Where concerns are not acted upon appropriately, staff should follow the school's escalation procedures, in line with KCSIE, including using the NSPCC helpline if necessary.

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. Records of training are kept. 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. The DSL will ensure safeguarding records accompany children as soon as possible when they transfer schools and that confirmation of receipt is obtained. 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, neglect or exploitation.

7. RECORDS AND MONITORING

To report Safeguarding concerns, our school uses MyConcern



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. Safeguarding records should include rationale for professional decisions and actions taken.

If a pupil transfers from the school, these files will be copied and forwarded to the pupil's new educational setting within 5 days of the child starting their new school., 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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children"

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 (including humiliation, repeated criticism, belittling and name calling)
- 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 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or organised criminal group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal or sexual activity.

Children may be exploited in exchange for something they need or want, for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator, or through violence, threats, intimidation or coercion.

Children who are criminally exploited may become involved in county lines activity, transporting drugs, carrying money or weapons, shoplifting, theft, fraud, violence or other criminal activity. Exploitation may also involve trafficking or modern slavery.

Our school recognises that victims of exploitation frequently do not recognise themselves as victims and may appear to have a positive relationship with, or loyalty towards, those exploiting them. Children may be reluctant to disclose abuse through fear, manipulation, grooming or misplaced trust. Staff remain professionally curious and recognise that children who display concerning behaviour may themselves be victims of exploitation requiring protection and support.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with partner agencies to identify and support children who may be at risk of exploitation.

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.

Child Sexual Abuse

Child Sexual Abuse is a form of child abuse involving forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Our school recognises that child sexual abuse can occur both online and offline and that technology is increasingly used to facilitate abuse.

Most child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child. Staff understand that children may not recognise that they are being abused and may delay or never disclose abuse. All concerns will therefore be treated seriously and responded to promptly.

Child on child abuse, harassment and violence

We recognise that our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of some children who have experienced abuse, neglect or trauma. Whilst at school, some children may display behaviours that place themselves or others at risk.

Our school recognises that children can abuse other children and that this may occur both inside and outside school, including online. We understand that child-on-child abuse, harassment and violence can be complex and may involve children of any age or gender.

Any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, harassment or violence will be managed in the same way as any other safeguarding concern. Appropriate action will be taken to safeguard all children involved, including both the child who has experienced harm and the child displaying harmful behaviour.

Children displaying harmful behaviour may themselves have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or trauma and may require safeguarding support as well as appropriate intervention.

Child-on-child abuse, harassment and violence can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviour;
- physical abuse;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- upskirting;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
- initiation or hazing rituals;
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children.
-

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of any kind. Staff will never dismiss abusive behaviour as "banter", "part of growing up" or "just having a laugh". Inappropriate behaviour will always be challenged and responded to proportionately.

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 age appropriate / 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 and emotional wellbeing are central to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Our school recognises that mental health concerns, whilst not in themselves indicators of abuse, can in some cases be a sign that a child has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse childhood experiences.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions; however, they are trained to recognise changes in behaviour, presentation or emotional wellbeing which may indicate that a child requires additional support or safeguarding intervention.

Where concerns are identified, staff will discuss them promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will consider whether safeguarding concerns exist alongside any mental health needs and determine the most appropriate course of action.

The school promotes positive mental health through a whole-school approach, providing a safe, inclusive environment where children feel listened to, respected and supported. We work closely with parents, health professionals, the Mental Health Support Team and other agencies to ensure children receive appropriate support at the earliest opportunity.

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

Our school recognises that technology continues to evolve rapidly and that children increasingly access online services through mobile devices, gaming platforms, social media, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. We recognise it also presents challenges and risks which staff must be aware of, in the form of:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, suicide, racist or radical view, AI-generated content, deepfakes, image-based abuse and scams 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.

Staff understand that online risks include exposure to generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI chatbots, synthetic media, deepfakes, AI-generated sexual images, online fraud, phishing, identity theft, misinformation, disinformation and financially motivated scams.

Pupils are taught to critically evaluate online information, question the reliability of digital content and understand that AI-generated material may not always be accurate or authentic.

The school continually reviews filtering and monitoring systems to ensure they remain effective in protecting children from inappropriate or harmful content while supporting teaching and learning. 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).

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.

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.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) refers to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls, although anyone can be a victim. Our school recognises that misogyny, sexual harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, image-based abuse, financial exploitation and other forms of gender-based violence can have a significant impact on children and young people, both directly and indirectly.

These behaviours may occur within families, peer groups, intimate relationships or online and may be normalised by some children or communities. Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, misogynistic language, sexist behaviour and all forms of abuse. Staff challenge inappropriate language and behaviour whenever it occurs and ensure concerns are recorded, shared and responded to appropriately.

Through our curriculum, assemblies and wider safeguarding culture, pupils are taught about respectful relationships, equality, consent, healthy boundaries and how to seek help if they experience or witness abuse.

Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery is a form of abuse and exploitation that includes slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Children may be exploited for criminal, sexual or financial purposes and may be controlled through violence, threats, coercion, debt bondage or grooming.

Modern Slavery can be linked to child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines, organised crime and other forms of exploitation. Victims may not recognise themselves as being exploited and may appear to have a positive relationship with, or loyalty towards, those responsible for their exploitation.

Staff are aware of the indicators of Modern Slavery and exploitation and understand that children who display concerning or offending behaviour may themselves be victims. Any concerns will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will work with partner agencies to ensure children receive appropriate protection and support.

Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

The school has clear expectations regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and personal devices by pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors. The use of personal devices must never compromise the safeguarding of children. Staff must follow the Staff Code of Conduct regarding the use of personal devices, photography, communication with pupils and social media.

Pupils are taught how to use mobile technology responsibly, safely and respectfully and understand the risks associated with image sharing, social media, location sharing and online communication.

Cyber Security

The school recognises that effective cyber security is an important element of safeguarding.

Appropriate technical and organisational measures are in place to protect school systems, safeguarding records and personal information from cyber threats including phishing, ransomware, malware, unauthorised access and data breaches.

Staff receive regular guidance on password security, secure handling of information, recognising cyber mis

Cyber incidents that have the potential to impact the safety or welfare of children will be managed as safeguarding incidents and responded to in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and business continuity arrangements.

10. CHILDREN POTENTIALLY AT RISK OF GREATER HARM

We recognise that any child may benefit from additional help and support; however, some children are potentially at greater risk of harm and may require early help, Family Help, targeted support or statutory intervention to safeguard and promote their welfare.

These may include (but are not limited to) children who are:

- subject to a Family Help Assessment, Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan;
- in care (Looked After Children) or previously in care;
- requiring mental health support;
- young carers;
- children with medical conditions, including those requiring delegated healthcare or support for conditions such as severe allergies, asthma, diabetes or epilepsy;
- children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND);
- children who are absent from education or at risk of becoming absent from education;
- children who identify as LGBTQ+ or are questioning their gender, where they may be vulnerable to bullying, discrimination or other safeguarding concerns;
- privately fostered;
- living in circumstances where there is domestic abuse, substance misuse, parental mental ill health or other adverse childhood experiences;
- at risk of exploitation, serious violence, radicalisation or other contextual safeguarding concerns.

We work closely with Children's Social Care, health professionals and other partner agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning, information sharing and support so that children receive the right help at the right time.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEND) and/or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. We recognise that additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse, neglect or exploitation in this group of children and that safeguarding concerns may be more difficult to recognise.

These barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, neglect or exploitation, such as behaviour, mood or injury, relate solely to the child's disability or additional needs, without further exploration;
- children being more vulnerable to bullying, harassment, discrimination or peer group isolation;

- communication differences or difficulties in expressing concerns, understanding what is happening or reporting abuse;
- the potential to be disproportionately impacted by abuse, neglect or exploitation without outwardly displaying obvious signs;
- greater dependence on adults for personal care or communication, which may increase vulnerability;
- differences in behaviour, communication or presentation that may mask safeguarding concerns.

Staff maintain an attitude of professional curiosity and recognise that safeguarding concerns should never be dismissed because a child has SEND. Where concerns arise, these will always be explored appropriately and responded to in line with this policy.

We recognise that all children have the right to be protected from harm and that safeguarding arrangements should be adapted where necessary to meet the individual needs of children with SEND.

11. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A MEMBER OF STAFF

It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when concerns or allegations are made about adults working with children.

This section applies to all adults working in or on behalf of the school, including employees, supply staff, agency workers, volunteers, contractors, trainee teachers and any other individual working with children.

Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Children's Social Care, the Police or other agencies as appropriate). Whilst it is permissible to ask a child simple, non-leading questions to clarify the basic facts of an allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements must not be undertaken by school staff.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply staff, agency worker, volunteer, trainee teacher or any other adult working with children must be referred immediately to the Headteacher (or the Deputy Headteacher in their absence). Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors.

The procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation or concern being raised are set out within local safeguarding procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Before any enquiries are commenced, the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors where appropriate) will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as soon as possible and, in any event, on the same working day where practicable. No investigation, beyond establishing the basic facts necessary to determine whether the matter should be referred, will take place until advice has been received from the LADO.

The LADO will advise on how the matter should proceed, including whether the concern meets the threshold for LADO involvement, requires referral to Children's Social Care or the Police, and what information may be shared with pupils, parents and carers.

The school will work openly and transparently with all relevant agencies whilst ensuring that confidentiality is maintained and that the welfare of children remains paramount throughout any investigation.

12. BEHAVIOUR, USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AND RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION

The school recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, the use of reasonable force or restrictive intervention may be necessary to prevent a child from harming themselves or others, committing a criminal offence, causing serious damage to property or seriously disrupting the good order of the school.

Any use of reasonable force or restrictive intervention will always be lawful, proportionate, reasonable, necessary and used only as a last resort. Wherever possible, staff will seek to de-escalate situations and use the least restrictive intervention appropriate to the circumstances.

The school recognises that the use of restrictive intervention is a safeguarding matter. Following any significant incident, consideration will be given to whether the child requires additional safeguarding support, review of risk assessments or behaviour plans, or referral to other agencies where appropriate.

Further information regarding the circumstances in which restrictive intervention may be used, staff training requirements, recording, reporting, monitoring and post-incident procedures is contained within the school's Restrictive Intervention Policy.

13. WHISTLEBLOWING

All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude, actions or conduct of colleagues in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy.

Any member of staff may press for reconsideration of a case if they believe a child's situation is not improving or if they consider that appropriate action has not been taken to safeguard a child.

Where appropriate, staff may raise safeguarding concerns directly with Children's Social Care, the Local Authority, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Police or other relevant safeguarding partners where they believe this is necessary to protect a child.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding safeguarding or child protection failures internally. Staff can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line for confidential advice and support.

The school will ensure that no member of staff suffers any detriment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

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)

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 for Safeguarding:

Dawn Smith

Governor for Safeguarding:

Rita Garner

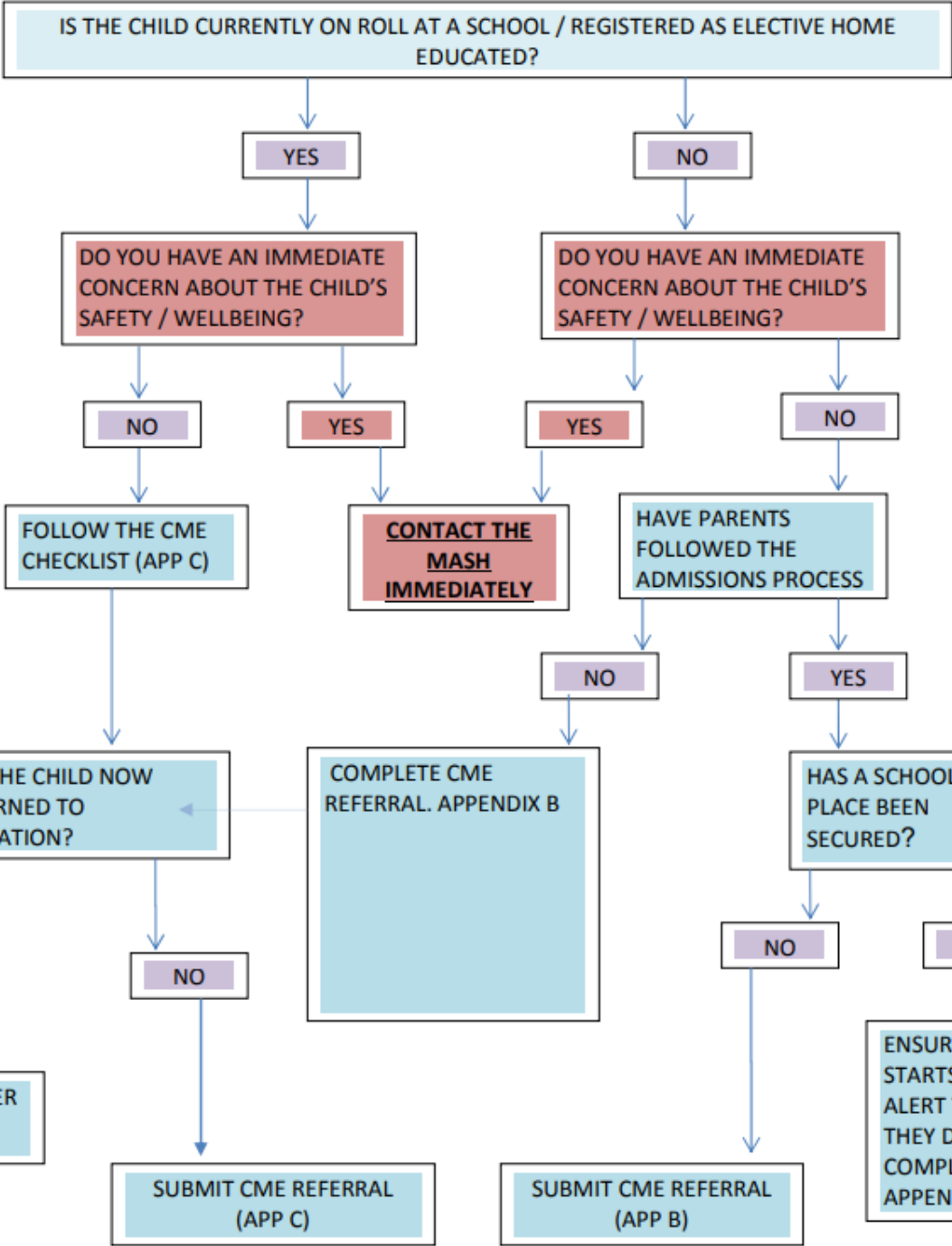
If you have immediate concerns regarding a child, please call
MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) on 01375-652802, out of hours 01375 372468.

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

Appendix 3

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](#)

**ACTION IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD IS MISSING
EDUCATION**



Appendix 4

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

Overall judgement

If this were a policy submitted to me as part of an external safeguarding review or local authority safeguarding audit, my judgement would be:

Area	Rating
Compliance with KCSIE 2025	Outstanding
Readiness for KCSIE September 2026	Outstanding
Practical usability	Outstanding
DSL guidance	Outstanding
Ofsted readiness	Outstanding

Overall score: 98.5/100

The remaining 1–2% is largely dependent on whether the Department for Education makes further amendments before the final KCSIE 2026 is published and whether Thurrock updates its local safeguarding arrangements under the Families First reforms. Based on the current consultation draft, this policy is exceptionally well aligned and would be among the strongest primary school safeguarding policies I would expect to see.

Section	Draft KCSIE 2026 Compliance	Assessment	Further recommendations
1. Introduction	☑ Fully meets	Strong. Includes whole-school safeguarding culture and references to KCSIE.	Consider adding an explicit reference that all staff working directly with children are expected to read Part One of KCSIE following the removal of Annex A.
2. Statutory Framework	⊗ Mostly meets	References are appropriate and updated.	Update local safeguarding references if Thurrock publishes revised Families First / Family Help procedures before September 2026.
3. Roles & Responsibilities	☑ Fully meets	Excellent. Strong DSL responsibilities and governance.	Consider adding a sentence that governors receive annual assurance regarding AI, filtering & monitoring, information sharing and safeguarding audits .
4. Procedures	☑ Fully meets	Good referral and information sharing arrangements.	Ensure local Family Help terminology matches Thurrock's published pathway when finalised.
5. Training	⊗ Mostly meets	Good coverage.	Consider explicitly stating annual safeguarding updates include VAWG, AI, serious violence, modern slavery and Family Help reforms .

6. Information Sharing	☒ Fully meets	Strong and reflects strengthened KCSIE expectations.	None.
7. Record Keeping	☒ Fully meets	Good.	Consider adding that safeguarding records should include professional analysis/rationale , not just factual recording.
8. Types of Abuse & Specific Safeguarding Issues	☒ Exceeds expectations	One of the strongest sections in the policy. Includes VAWG, Modern Slavery, AI, Cyber Security, Mobile Phones, Serious Violence, CCE, CSE, County Lines and contextual safeguarding.	No significant changes required. Consider adding one sentence that most child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child if not already included.
9. Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm	☒ Exceeds expectations	Excellent update. Includes Family Help, medical conditions, young carers, SEND, gender questioning, contextual safeguarding and strengthened SEND wording.	None.
10. Allegations Against Adults Working With Children	☒ Fully meets	Excellent. Includes trainee teachers, agency staff, supply staff and strengthened LADO consultation wording.	None.
11. Behaviour, Reasonable Force & Restrictive Intervention	☒ Fully meets	Good balance between safeguarding principles and signposting to the Restrictive Intervention Policy.	None.
12. Whistleblowing	☒ Fully meets	Reflects KCSIE 2026 and includes escalation to safeguarding partners.	None.
Appendices	☒ Partially meets	Useful local information.	Review all Thurrock contact details before publication. Some Families First terminology may replace MASH terminology during 2026.