Rebuilding Confidence. Restoring Futures.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Date: 01.09.2026

The Sage School

Date to be reviewed: 01.09.2027 or whenever a significant change in legislation or guidance occurs

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Contents

Introduction 3
1. Prevention 5
2. Procedures 8
3. Supporting Children 20
4. Preventing unsuitable people from working with children 32
5. Governing Body safeguarding responsibilities 36
Policy Links 38
Appendix A - Categories of abuse, neglect and exploitation 39
Appendix B - Useful Contacts - Cambridgeshire 42
Appendix C - Relevant Documents 43

Introduction

The Sage School fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

This responsibility is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026', which comes into force on 1 September 2026. All staff must be made aware of their duties and responsibilities under Part One of this document.

All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, must read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The previous condensed Annex A has been removed. Staff should also read the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and any other safeguarding information identified for their role.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families all staff in school have a responsibility to:

- Identify concerns early to prevent them from escalating
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- Identify children who may benefit from help and support, including Family Help and other targeted support where appropriate
- Know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, neglected or exploited
- Follow the referral process if they have a concern.

This policy sets out how The Sage School discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the school, including governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, office staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the school and its governors.

It is consistent with the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board procedures.

There are four main elements to our policy:

1. **PREVENTION** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos;
2. **PROCEDURES** for identifying and referring cases, or suspected cases, of abuse or exploitation. The definitions of the categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A);
3. **SUPPORTING CHILDREN** particularly those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others;
4. **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN** Processes are followed to ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed.

This policy is available to parents on request and is on the school website.

1. Prevention

1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

1.2 The school will therefore:

1.2.1 Establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe, including in a digital context, and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

1.2.2 Ensure children know that there are trusted adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

1.2.3 Tailor our curriculum to be age and stage of development appropriate so that it meets the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

1.2.4 Incorporate into the curriculum, activities and opportunities that enable children to develop their understanding of stereotyping, prejudice and equality.

1.2.5 Ensure that all school staff challenge instances of prejudice related behaviour, including but not limited to, instances of sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict.

1.2.6 Incorporate into the curriculum, activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safer from abuse and exploitation in all contexts, including:

- How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.
- The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and

outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.

- The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something it does not automatically make it ethically ok.
- Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called “involuntary celibates” (incels) or online influencers.
- Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online.
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images.
- Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment.
- How sexual imagery may be created, altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including deepfakes and other digitally manipulated images.
- What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.
- That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online.

- That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners.
- The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse include controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.
- What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it.
- The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.

(Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) & Health Education, DfE, 2019)

(Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) & Health Education, DfE, 2025 – to be fully implemented by 2026)

2. Procedures

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board 'Multi-Agency Procedures'. A copy of these procedures can be found on their website: Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board (safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

2.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Mrs G Fulcher (Headteacher)

2.2.1 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Mrs S Amor (Deputy Headteacher and SENDCo)

2.2.2 The nominated governor for Safeguarding is:

Mrs J Fleming

In addition, we have the following roles:

2.2.3 The Prevent Lead is:

Mrs G Fulcher (Headteacher)

2.2.4 The Domestic Abuse Lead is:

Mrs G Fulcher (Headteacher)

2.2.5 The Online Safety Lead is:

Mrs G Fulcher (Headteacher)

2.3 The Governing body will:

2.3.1 Appoint a senior member of staff from the leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, DDSL), the

lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and cannot be delegated.

2.3.2 Ensure that the role of DSL and DDSL is explicit in the role holder's job description (as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026 Annex B).

2.3.3 Ensure that the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. Give the DSL the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. (See 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026, Annex B).

Ensure that the DSL and deputies have undertaken the appropriate training provided by the Cambridgeshire Education Safeguarding Team and that this training is updated at least every two years.

2.3.4 Ensure that in addition to the formal training set out above, the DSL and DDSLs refresh their knowledge and skills e.g. via updates, meetings or additional training at least annually.

2.3.5 Ensure that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body knows who the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the point of induction. Staff members are required to log a concern via MyConcern and submit it to the DSL/DDSL immediately.

2.3.6 Ensure that the DSL or DDSL are always available (during school hours, during term-time) to discuss any safeguarding concerns and that all staff are clear upon the course of action they must take if in exceptional circumstances the DSL and DDSL are not available. A DSL or DDSL is always on site in term time during school hours.

2.3.7 If neither is available, staff must use the school's established safeguarding reporting route without delay. MyConcern must be used to log concerns; which will report to a shared safeguarding email inbox, alerting all safeguarding leads. If the concern needs immediate action, staff should call the Headteacher directly.

2.3.8 Liaise with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Integrated Care Board and Police) as appropriate and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026.

2.3.9 Nominate a governor for safeguarding who has undertaken appropriate training.

2.3.10 Ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

- the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputies and their role
- how to identify the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online
- that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful
- how to pass on and record concerns about a student
- that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and exploitation; and for referring safeguarding concerns to the DSL/DDSL
- what is meant by, and the importance of, showing professional curiosity
- that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- where to find the Multi–Agency Procedures on the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board website
- their role in the early help/targeted support process
- the process for making referrals to children's social care
- the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- the role of filtering and monitoring and the process for reporting issues.

2.3.11 Ensure all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction. The training should be regularly updated, as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

2.3.12 Ensure that all staff recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistleblowing policies, including low level concerns and allegations against staff.

2.3.13 Ensure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties in the school.

2.3.14 Ensure that this policy is available publicly via the school website – The Sage School - Policies.

2.3.15 Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school leadership staff.

2.3.16 Where pupils are educated off site or in alternative provision, the school will obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment and carry out due diligence checks against national standards for non-school alternative provision, at least half termly.

2.3.17 Where pupils are educated off site or in alternative provision, the school and the provider will have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns between the two agencies. Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

2.4 **Multi-Agency Working**

The school will:

2.4.1 Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all pupils.

2.4.2 Co-operate as required, in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' (2026), with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters

including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.

2.4.3 Notify the relevant Social Care Team immediately if:

- it should have to suspend or exclude a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
- there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
- there is a change in circumstances to a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

2.4.4 When a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Protection Chair and Social Care Team will also be informed.

2.5 **Record Keeping**

The school will:

2.5.1 Keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Social Care immediately.

2.5.2 Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- the child's wishes and feelings
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- a record of any discussion/communication with parents, other agencies etc.

2.5.3 Electronic records are stored on MyConcern. In addition, appropriate secure storage arrangements are in place for any historic hardcopy safeguarding files.

2.5.4 Ensure all relevant safeguarding records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools within five days, in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026, (page 174) and the Cambridgeshire and

Peterborough Education Safeguarding Team's Guidance on Keeping and Managing Child Safeguarding Records.

The DSL will consider whether it would be appropriate to share information with the new school/college in advance of a child leaving.

2.5.5 Make parents aware that such records exist except where to do so would place the child at risk of harm.

2.5.6 Ensure all actions and decisions are led by what is considered to be in the best interests of the child and rationales are included in all discussions and decisions made.

2.6 **Confidentiality and information sharing**

2.6.1 Information about children and their families is defined as 'special category data', i.e. information that identifies a living individual. Collection, storage and sharing of personal data is governed by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

The school will:

2.6.2 Ensure staff and volunteers adhere to confidentiality protocols and that information is shared appropriately.

2.6.3 Ensure staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children, (as set out in 'Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, May 2024).

2.6.4 Ensure that if a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (under the Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025) from a pupil or parent they will refer the request to the DSL or Headteacher.

2.6.5 Ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputies will:

2.6.6 Disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, considering what is necessary, proportionate and relevant. Parental consent may be required.

2.6.7 Aim to gain consent to share information and be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent, where to do so might place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime.

2.6.8 Record when decisions are made to share or withhold information, who information has been shared with and why. (See 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' 2026)

2.6.9 In cases where the 'serious harm test' is met, schools must withhold providing data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and the UK GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice.

2.6.10 Seek advice about confidentiality from outside agencies if required. (See 'Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, May 2024).

2.6.11 Where children leave the school, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives.

2.7 **Communication with Parents/Carers**

The school will:

2.7.1 Ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties on the school website.

2.7.2 Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action.

2.7.3 Record what discussions have taken place with parents or if a decision has been made not to discuss it with parents, for example if the school believes that notifying parents could place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, the rationale must be recorded.

Records may subsequently be disclosable to relevant partner agencies if a Child in Need or Child Protection Enquiry is undertaken.

2.8 **Child-on-Child Abuse**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. By definition, it applies to abuse by one child of another child – regardless of the age, of stage of development, or any age differential between them.

We recognise that child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate personal relationships between children; physical abuse; serious physical assault, or the threat of harm with a weapon, harmful sexual behaviour; sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny/misandry and upskirting, and online sexual harassment; sharing of nudes and semi-nudes; child sexual exploitation; child criminal exploitation; hate incidents and hate crime; racism; and initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

2.8.1 All forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

The school will therefore:

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

2.8.3 Provide training for staff about preventing, recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse,

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

2.8.5 Ensure all staff are aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

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

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

2.8.8 Ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of child-on-child abuse, referring any concerns of child-on-child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) in line with safeguarding procedures.

2.8.9 Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk. School will ensure that these children have a trusted adult in school to talk to.

2.8.10 Recognise the risk of intra familial harms and provide support to siblings following incidents when necessary.

2.8.11 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's Child Sexual Behaviour Assessment Tool | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board (safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk) if there is a concern that a young person may be displaying sexually harmful behaviours.

2.8.12 Ensure pupils are made aware of how to report concerns about abuse.

2.8.13 Train pastoral support workers in supporting pupils who are the victims or perpetrators of abuse.

2.9 **Dealing with Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB), Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence between children**

HSB can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable.

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

The school will:

2.9.1 Refer to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five', 2026 for full details of procedures to be followed in such cases. Also see 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' (UKCIS, March 2024)

2.9.2 Make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to HSB, sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

2.9.3 Provide training to staff to help them understand that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

2.9.4 Provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, including challenging behaviours, such as grabbing bottoms, breast and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras.

2.9.5 Take a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual.

2.9.6 Support staff in recognising the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support their approach to minimising the risk of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence.

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

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

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

2.9.10 Consider the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations.

2.9.11 Liaise closely with external agencies, including police and social care, when required.

2.10 **Serious Violence**

2.10.1 Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation.

2.10.2 Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

2.10.3 The designated safeguarding lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

2.10.4 Staff will be aware of signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g.

suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending.

3. Supporting Children

The school recognises that any child may be subject to abuse and that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation and as such will support all children by:

3.1 Providing curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.

3.2 Creating an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community.

3.3 Applying the school's behaviour policy effectively. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

3.4 Liaising with mental health teams where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health in school for advice on case management.

3.5 Liaising with other agencies such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service, Cambridgeshire Sexual Behaviour Service or Family Help / Targeted Support Teams

3.6 Promoting supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances

3.7 Recognising that whilst any child may benefit from early help, staff are encouraged to consider the wider environmental factors present in a child's life which could pose a threat to their welfare or safety (Risks outside the home). Staff are required to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children in particular circumstances. Please see Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026 for the complete list. The list includes:

3.7.1 **Children with Disabilities, Certain Health Conditions, Additional Needs or Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that, statistically, children with additional needs, special educational needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse and can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. School staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The school has pupils with emotional and internally dysregulated behaviours. The school will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self–esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with parents/carers.

As part of the PSHE curriculum staff will teach children personal safety skills commensurate with their age, ability and needs. Children will be taught personal safety skills such as: how to recognise if they are feeling unsafe including within family relationships and friendships; how to ask for help; the difference between safe and unsafe secrets; the difference between safe and unsafe physical contact; and how to recognise and manage risk including online. The content of lessons will be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.

The school has pupils who may have communication difficulties, and we are aware that they are vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Instead, such children will often exhibit changes in behaviours or signs and indicators of abuse recognised by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

Where necessary, the school will provide additional training to staff in the use of Makaton, PECS or other communication systems. Supervision by senior managers will be vigilant to create a protective ethos around the child.

Under the Equality Act, there is also a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that disabled children know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

3.7.2 **Mental Health**

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise.

These could include:

- significant changes in behaviour,
- ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- withdrawing from social situations,
- not wanting to do things they usually like, and
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention.

If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should follow the safeguarding reporting procedures.

3.7.3 **Young Carers**

The school recognises that children who are living in a home environment which requires them to act as a young carer for a family member with an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection.

School will: seek to identify young carers; offer additional support internally; signpost to external agencies; be particularly vigilant to the welfare of young carers and follow the procedures outlined in this policy, referring to Family Help or Social Care as required if concerns arise.

3.7.4 **Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation**

Criminal exploitation of children is a form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. Drug networks or gangs exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas. Exploitation can occur even if activity appears to be consensual.

All staff will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. These are referred to as Extra-Familial Harms/Contextual Safeguarding and/or Risks Outside the Home.

School will address indicators of child criminal exploitation with staff through training. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of criminal exploitation arise.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's Contextual Risk Screening Tool | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board (safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)and refer to Social Care if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The school recognises that young people who go missing can be at increased risk of child criminal exploitation, modern slavery and/or trafficking and has procedures in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

3.7.5 **Children at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as

involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim.

Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Potential indicators of sexual exploitation will be addressed within staff training, including raising awareness with staff that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of child sexual exploitation arise.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's Contextual Risk Screening Tool | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)and refer to Social Care if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of CSE.

The school recognises that young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and has procedures in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

3.7.6 **Children Persistently Absent from Education**

School recognises that children who have unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, can act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, modern slavery, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM or forced marriage.

The school monitors and follows up on the attendance of individual pupils closely, as outlined in the Attendance Policy, and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence.

The school endeavours to hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil to provide additional options to contact a responsible adult when a child who is absent from education is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

When a child is absent from education, the school follows the procedure as set out in Cambridgeshire Children Missing from Education guidance. The school will inform Social Care if a child who is absent from education is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

3.7.7 **Children Misusing Drugs or Alcohol**

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient alone to consider a Child in Need or Child Protection referral. However, the school will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- To believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual or criminal exploitation
- The child's substance misuse dependency is affecting their mental and physical health and social wellbeing
- Where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse
- Where the child's substance misuse dependency is putting the child at such risk that intensive specialist resources are required

- Where the child is perceived to be at risk of harm through any substance associated criminality.

3.7.8 **Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers**

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic abuse.

When the school receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures.

This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Parent/ carer/other family members drug and/or alcohol use is at a problematic level and are unable to provide care to a child(ren).
- Family home is used for drug taking / dealing / illegal activities.
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
- Child or household member found in possession of Class A or Class B drugs / drug paraphernalia found in home.
- Evidence of substance/drug misuse during pregnancy

3.7.9 **Children Living with Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 applies to those aged 16 or over and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be

recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16).

Domestic Abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are 'personally connected' regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour.

The school recognises that where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer any violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Domestic Abuse can also affect children in their personal relationships as well as in the context of home life.

Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of Domestic Abuse arise. The school will vigilantly monitor the welfare of children living in domestic abuse households, offer support to them and contribute to any Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) safety plan as required.

At The Sage School we will be working in partnership with Cambridgeshire Police and Cambridgeshire County Council to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their home; this scheme is called Operation Encompass. In order to achieve this, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Education Safeguarding Team will share police information of all domestic abuse incidents to which Police have been called, where one of our pupils has been present, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child may require. The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the 'Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Agency Protocol for Domestic Abuse – Notifications to Schools, Colleges and Early Years settings'.

3.7.10 **Children at risk of 'Honour- Based' Abuse (HBA) including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Honour-Based Abuse can be defined as: 'An incident or pattern of violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion, control or abuse (including but not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, economic, spiritual, faith-related or emotional abuse) motivated by the perpetrator's perception that an individual has shamed, or may shame, the perpetrator, the family, or community or has otherwise broken, or may break, the perceived norms of the community's accepted behaviours, including by speaking out about the abuse and where the perception of shame may also prevent a victim from accessing support or help.'

The school takes these concerns seriously and staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBA through training. Staff are required to treat all forms of HBA as abuse and follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 bans marriage for 16 and 17-year-olds, who no longer will be allowed to marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent, as the legal age of marriage rises to 18. It is now illegal and a criminal offence to exploit vulnerable children by arranging for them to marry, under any circumstances whether or not force is used.

School will manage any concerns relating to forced marriage sensitively and will report concerns immediately via the procedures outlined in this policy.

FGM is a procedure involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK. Any indication that a child is at risk of FGM, where FGM is suspected, or where the woman is under 18, will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. Staff will report concerns to the DSL, who will make appropriate and timely referrals to social care. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice and the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the pupil's wishes.

In accordance with the Female Genital Mutilation Act, it is a statutory duty for teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police via the DSL. Teachers should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve social care as appropriate.

3.7.11 **Children previously in care or who have returned home to their family from care**

The school recognises that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable. School will vigilantly monitor the welfare of previously looked after children, keep records and notify Social Care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern in accordance with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board Multi-Agency Procedures.

3.7.12 **Children showing signs of Abuse, Neglect and/or Exploitation**

School recognises that experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation may have an adverse impact on those children which may continue into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Children who have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation may display this through their own behaviour, which may be challenging and defiant or passive and withdrawn. We recognise that children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Risks outside the home take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

School will provide training for staff to ensure that they have the skills to identify and report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

3.7.13 **Children at Risk of Radicalisation**

Children are susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a school's safeguarding approach.

The governing body will ensure that a DSL has undertaken Prevent Lead training (which is updated every two years) and that all staff receive training about the Prevent Duty.

Staff are required to be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate they need help or protection. Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation are referred to the DSL in the usual way. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral using the Prevent National Referral Form found on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Board website. National Prevent referral form (safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk) See also Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales,' HM Government, (March 2024).

3.7.14 **Privately Fostered Children**

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

The school will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements and refer in the usual way via the Customer Service Centre. Email: ReferralCentre.Children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

3.7.15 **Children who have Family Members in Prison**

The school is committed to supporting children and young people who have a parent or close relative in prison and will work with the family to find the best ways of supporting the child.

The school recognises that children with family members in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health and poor attendance.

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

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

3.7.16 **Children who are questioning their gender**

In recent years, we have seen a significant increase in the number of children who are questioning the way they feel about being a boy or a girl, including the physical attributes of their sex and the related ways in which they fit into society.

It is not for the school to initiate any action in this area; and staff will only have discussions and take action in circumstances where a child or their parent has raised a request relating to social transition to which the school is responding.

Staff should keep in mind that it is common for children to engage in activities that are less typically associated with their sex.

Staff will take the time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and should be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences.

Staff will remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying.

4. Preventing unsuitable people from working with children

4.1 The school will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to Part Three of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2026. This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

4.2 The governing body will ensure that at least one of the people on the recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training. Relevant members of staff will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training. Details are available where relevant and on request.

4.3 **Allegations that may meet the harms threshold (Part Four, Section One)**

4.3.1 Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff, (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors) that meets the harms threshold as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026, Part Four, Section One, will be reported straight away to the Headteacher.

4.3.2 In cases where the Headteacher is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Chair of Governors. The school will follow the procedures set out in Part Four of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2026.

4.3.3 The school will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a teacher, member of supply staff or other staff, volunteer or contractor and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2026, Part Four.

4.3.4 The Head Teacher will ensure that allegations are reported, where relevant, to the LADO within one working day. The LADO will advise on all further action to be taken.

4.3.5 Before contacting the LADO, schools should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future possible police investigation.

4.3.6 Where the school identify a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, they should contact children's social care and as appropriate the police immediately.

4.3.7 School will consider:

- Looking after the welfare of the child - the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.
- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

4.3.8 The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff, supply staff or volunteers relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff, supply staff or volunteer is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

4.3.9 Staff (including trainee teachers, supply staff and volunteers) who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. However, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

4.4 **Concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (Part Four, Section Two)**

4.4.1 Low level concerns that do not meet the harms threshold should be reported to the Headteacher, who will consider whether an onward referral to the LADO is required NB: The term low level does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms test.

4.4.2 In cases where the Head Teacher is the subject of a low-level concern, it will be reported to the Chair of Governors. The school will follow the procedures set out in Part Four, Section Two of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2026.

4.4.3 The school will deal with any such concern, no matter how small, where an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

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

4.4.4 All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

4.4.5 Schools can decide where these records are kept, but they must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). The Sage School stores said files electronically and any paper files are kept in locked filing cabinets behind locked doors.

4.4.6 The school will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This will enable the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

4.4.7 School should ensure that all staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents/carers as advised within the Local Authority's Code of Conduct: 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (February 2022). As part of the Induction process, all staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors, will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional

boundaries (both online and offline) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable. Staff are encouraged to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

4.4.8 The school will ensure that staff, supply staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust)

5. Governing Body safeguarding responsibilities

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

5.2 The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It aims to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in school are effective and comply with law and government guidance at all times.

It will:

- Nominate a governor for safeguarding who will take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and practice and champion safeguarding issues.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate governor safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training will be regularly updated.
- Ensure governors are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the local multiagency safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure an annual safeguarding report (Annual Safeguarding Monitoring Report for Governors) is made to the full governing body and copied to the Education Safeguarding Team. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.
- Ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is annually reviewed, ratified, updated and understood and followed by all staff.
- Ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is published on the school website.

- Ensure that children's exposure to potential risks while using the internet is limited by having in place age-appropriate filtering and monitoring systems. The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring will be reviewed at least annually by the member of the senior leadership team with responsibility for filtering and monitoring, with the DSL and IT support, and the review will be recorded. The review will consider all internet-connected devices and relevant locations and will identify and address safeguarding risks and gaps in provision.
- Ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account where there are safeguarding concerns.

5.3 **Use of school premises for non-school activities**

5.3.1 If the governing body provides extended school facilities or before or after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for safeguarding as written in this policy shall apply.

5.3.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another organisation or individual, either on or off school site, the governing body will seek assurance that they have appropriate policies and procedures in place to keep children safe and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

5.3.3 The governing body will use the guidance on 'Keeping children safe in out of school settings' (May 2026) which details the safeguarding arrangements that schools should expect these providers to have in place.

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

Policy Links

This policy links to our:

Attendance policy (including Children who are absent from Education)

Behaviour policy

Complaints policy

Critical Incident plan

Equality policy

First Aid policy

Health and Safety policy

Intimate Care policy

Lone Working policy

Online Safety and Acceptable Use policy

Protocol for children not collected from school at the end of the school day/activity

Responding to Prejudice Related incidents policy

Safer Recruitment policy

Staff Code of Conduct/Safer Working Practice

Staff Discipline and Grievance procedures

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy

Use of Mobile Phone and Other Smart Devices Policy

Whistleblowing policy

Appendix A - Categories of abuse, neglect and exploitation

Abuse a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. 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.

Physical Abuse - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Neglect - persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.
It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Provide suitable education

Emotional Abuse - Is the persistent emotional maltreatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- Worthless
- Unloved
- Inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views
- deliberately silencing them
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, including
- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- preventing participation in normal social interaction.
- Verbal abuse (e.g. criticism, belittling, name-calling)

It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone

Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex)
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing

- non-contact activities involving:
    - children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,
    - children in watching sexual activities
    - encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
    - grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child Criminal Exploitation - Both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) 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. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. 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. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Risks Outside the Home - is an approach that considers children and young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. The approach considers children and young people's experiences being not only influenced by their family, but also by their peer network, wider community, and society in general. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including: Exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; Children who go missing and trafficking; Online abuse; Sexual exploitation; Influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

Appendix B - Useful Contacts - Cambridgeshire

Education Safeguarding Team ecps.general@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Education Safeguarding Manager – Sara Rogers sara.rogers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Family Help / Targeted Support Service Tel: 01480 376666

Customer Service Centre – Social Care referrals Tel: 0345 045 5203

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Tel: 01733 234724

Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit Tel: 101 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) lado@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Senior Leadership Adviser – Phil Nash Tel: 07920 270820

Prevent Officers prevent@cambs.police.uk Tel: 01480 422277

Appendix C - Relevant Documents

“Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges” (2026)

“Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition: non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school settings” (May 2025)

“Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” (February 2022)

“Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers” (May 2024), together with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

“Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges, Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges” (March 2025)

“The Prevent duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (Jun 2023)

“Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales” (March 2024)

“Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people” (UKCIS, March 2024), including guidance relevant to AI-generated and digitally manipulated sexual imagery

“What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners” (March 2015)

“When to Call the Police: guidance for schools and colleges,” (National Police Chief Council)

“Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” (2026)