CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Thurlstone Primary School

Approved by:	Dr Nicky Shaw	**Date:**
Last reviewed on:		
Next review due by:		

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Executive Headteacher and DSL	Charlotte Gibbins	01226 762018 c.gibbins@thurlstoneprimary.org
Head of School and DSL	Beth Wise	01226 762018 b.wise@thurlstoneprimary.org
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Nick Peace	01226 762018 n.peace@thurlstoneprimary.org
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Ruth M Holmes	01226 772341 LADO@barnsley.gov.uk
Chair of Governors	Dr Nicky Shaw	01226 762018 n.shaw@thurlstoneprimary.org
Channel Helpline		020 7340 7264 (GOVERNMENT HELPLINE)
BMBC COHESION AND PREVENT OFFICER	Andrew Barnaby	AndrewBarnaby@barnsley.gov.uk 07809 103453
Barnsley Children's Social Care / Integrated Front Door		01226 772423
Emergency Duty Team		01226 787789

1. Aims

At Thurlstone Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors have a role in protecting children from harm and supporting their welfare and wellbeing.

Safeguarding is central to our commitment that every child should have the opportunity to Grow Together; Learn Together; Feel Loved. We are committed to providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment in which every child can thrive, develop their strengths and achieve their potential.

Our safeguarding practice is underpinned by a strong, proactive culture in which:

- the child's welfare is paramount
- all children have the right to be protected from harm and to receive support that promotes their welfare and development
- all concerns are taken seriously and acted upon promptly
- children are listened to, taken seriously and their views and wishes are considered when decisions are made about them
- professional curiosity is encouraged
- we recognise that children may experience multiple and overlapping safeguarding risks
- safeguarding practice is regularly reviewed and strengthened.

This policy reflects our commitment to providing a safe environment in which children can learn, develop and achieve.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on and reflects the most recent statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- The Governance Handbook
- Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners

The school follows this guidance and the safeguarding arrangements agreed and published by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.

This policy also reflects the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, including the Prevent duty
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009, as amended
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, including relevant provisions relating to information sharing for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The policy also reflects:

- the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), where applicable
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- relevant local safeguarding procedures and arrangements published by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership
- relevant national guidance relating to filtering and monitoring, online safety and safeguarding children from online harms.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, including through Family Help/Early Help and multi-agency support where appropriate.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing 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.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is 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. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), may be used to facilitate abuse, exploitation or harm. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children.

Child-on-child abuse is abuse that occurs between children and can include bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and online abuse. Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or harmless behaviour.

Neglect is 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.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

4. Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist to recognising or disclosing harm. Thurlstone Primary School is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that all children receive appropriate protection and support.

We recognise that safeguarding must be responsive to the diverse needs and lived experiences of our children.

We give particular consideration to children who:

- have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions
- are young carers
- may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation
- have English as an additional language (EAL)
- are living in difficult or unstable circumstances, including temporary accommodation, domestic abuse or substance misuse
- are at risk of exploitation, radicalisation or so-called 'honour-based' abuse, including FGM and forced marriage
- are asylum seekers or refugees
- are at risk due to their own or a family member's mental health needs
- are looked after or previously looked after
- are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeated occasions
- have a parent or carer who has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

We recognise that safeguarding risks can be interconnected and may affect children differently. Staff should consider each child's individual circumstances and any additional barriers they may face when recognising concerns, responding to disclosures and providing support.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body has strategic responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding and child protection arrangements are effective and comply with statutory guidance.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the school has an effective child protection and safeguarding policy and that it is reviewed regularly
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for responding to safeguarding concerns and allegations about adults working in or on behalf of the school
- ensure that the school works effectively with relevant safeguarding partners and external agencies
- ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Leads have the appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out their roles effectively
- ensure that safeguarding is considered as part of the school's wider leadership, culture and decision-making
- ensure that safeguarding information is appropriately reported to and scrutinised by governors
- ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for online safety, filtering and monitoring
- ensure that governors receive appropriate safeguarding training and maintain sufficient knowledge to provide effective oversight and challenge.

5.2 Designated Safeguarding Governor

The Chair of Governors is the school's Designated Safeguarding Governor.

The Designated Safeguarding Governor provides appropriate support and challenge to the Designated Safeguarding Leads and school leadership and has oversight of the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The Designated Safeguarding Governor will:

- maintain an appropriate level of safeguarding knowledge and understanding
- provide challenge and support to school leaders regarding safeguarding arrangements
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding systems and procedures
- ensure that safeguarding is appropriately considered by the Governing Body
- maintain appropriate oversight of safeguarding training, safer recruitment and safeguarding-related policies
- act as a point of contact for safeguarding matters at governor level, while recognising that operational responsibility for safeguarding remains with the school's leadership and Designated Safeguarding Leads.

5.3 Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher, Charlotte Gibbins, is a Designated Safeguarding Lead and has responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding and child protection arrangements are implemented effectively across the school.

The Executive Headteacher will:

- ensure that safeguarding remains a priority within school leadership and culture
- ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Leads have sufficient time, authority, resources and support to fulfil their roles effectively
- ensure that appropriate action is taken when safeguarding concerns are raised
- ensure that concerns and allegations relating to staff are managed in accordance with statutory guidance and local procedures
- ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed
- support the regular review and strengthening of safeguarding arrangements.

5.4 Head of School

The Head of School, Beth Wise, is a Designated Safeguarding Lead and is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and implementation of safeguarding arrangements within the school.

The Head of School will ensure that:

- safeguarding procedures are followed consistently in day-to-day school practice
- safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly and appropriately
- staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to report concerns
- safeguarding records are maintained appropriately
- appropriate referrals are made to external agencies where required
- staff receive safeguarding training and regular updates
- safeguarding patterns, themes and emerging risks are identified and acted upon
- the voice and welfare of children remain central to safeguarding practice.

5.5 Designated Safeguarding Leads

The school has two Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):

- Executive Headteacher – Charlotte Gibbins

- Head of School – Beth Wise

The DSLs have lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school, including online safety and understanding the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The DSLs will:

- provide advice and support to staff on safeguarding and child protection matters
- receive and respond to safeguarding concerns raised by staff and other members of the school community
- make or oversee referrals to children's social care, the police and other agencies where appropriate
- work with external agencies and participate in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- maintain appropriate safeguarding and child protection records
- ensure that safeguarding information is transferred appropriately when children move school
- ensure that staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and updates
- contribute to safeguarding policy development and review
- ensure that concerns identified through filtering and monitoring systems are considered and acted upon appropriately
- maintain an overview of safeguarding patterns, themes and emerging risks within the school
- provide appropriate safeguarding information and assurance to the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body.

The DSLs have the appropriate status and authority to act on safeguarding concerns and are provided with the time, funding, training, resources and support necessary to carry out their roles effectively. The school has arrangements to ensure that safeguarding concerns can be responded to appropriately when either DSL is unavailable.

5.6 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The school has a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), **Nick Peace**, who supports the DSLs in carrying out the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

The DDSL will:

- be trained to the same standard as the DSLs
- respond to safeguarding concerns in accordance with the school's procedures
- support the DSLs with safeguarding records, referrals and multi-agency working
- provide safeguarding leadership when the DSLs are unavailable
- ensure that urgent safeguarding concerns are acted upon without delay.

The DDSL has appropriate access to the DSLs and will escalate safeguarding concerns without delay where necessary.

5.7 Virtual School Head

The Virtual School Head has a non-statutory responsibility for promoting the educational outcomes of children in care and previously looked-after children and has a strategic role in relation to the educational outcomes of children with a social worker.

The school will work with the Virtual School Head and relevant professionals where appropriate to support the educational outcomes, attendance, wellbeing and safeguarding of these children.

5.8 All Staff

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, including temporary staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors working with children, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

All staff must:

- read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full
- understand and follow this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures
- know who the DSLs and DDSL are and how to contact them
- act immediately when they have a safeguarding concern
- report concerns to a DSL or the DDSL without delay
- listen carefully to children and take what they say seriously
- record safeguarding concerns clearly and factually
- understand that they do not need to decide whether a concern meets a particular threshold before reporting it
- maintain professional boundaries and follow the school's Code of Conduct
- understand the procedures for reporting concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school
- maintain an awareness of emerging safeguarding risks, including online harms and risks associated with artificial intelligence.

6. Safeguarding Systems and Processes

6.1 Safeguarding Systems

Thurlstone Primary School has clear systems and processes for identifying, reporting, recording and responding to safeguarding concerns.

All staff are expected to be familiar with these systems and to follow the procedures set out in this policy. Staff must act immediately when they have a concern about a child and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) without delay.

The school's safeguarding systems include:

- clear lines of responsibility through the DSLs and DDSL
- recording and management of safeguarding concerns
- appropriate information sharing within and beyond the school
- early help and support where appropriate
- referral to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies where required
- appropriate action in response to concerns about adults working in or associated with the school
- systems for identifying patterns, cumulative concerns and emerging safeguarding risks
- secure storage and transfer of safeguarding records
- regular leadership and governance oversight of safeguarding arrangements.

Staff do not need to determine whether a concern meets a particular safeguarding threshold before reporting it. The DSL or DDSL will consider the concern alongside other available information and determine the appropriate response.

6.2 Safeguarding Oversight

The DSLs maintain oversight of safeguarding concerns and activity across the school. This includes consideration of individual concerns, patterns and themes, cumulative concerns, attendance and other information that may indicate that a child is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm.

The DSLs will ensure that safeguarding concerns are followed up appropriately and that actions and decisions are recorded.

The DSLs will ensure that safeguarding remains a priority within school leadership and decision-making.

The Designated Safeguarding Governor provides appropriate support and challenge to the school's safeguarding leadership on behalf of the Governing Body.

6.3 Safeguarding Decision-Making

Safeguarding decisions are made in accordance with statutory guidance, Barnsley safeguarding procedures and the needs and circumstances of the individual child.

When considering a concern, the DSL or DDSL will take account of:

- the child's lived experience and individual circumstances
- the nature, frequency and seriousness of the concern
- any previous concerns or patterns of behaviour
- cumulative concerns and the possibility of multiple or overlapping safeguarding risks
- the child's wishes and feelings, where appropriate
- any additional vulnerabilities or barriers to recognising or disclosing harm
- information from parents, carers and other professionals, where relevant
- information from other agencies involved with the child or family.

Professional curiosity is expected. Concerns will not be considered in isolation where there is information suggesting that a child may require additional support or protection.

Where appropriate, concerns may be managed through support within school, Family Help/Early Help, or referral to children's social care, the police or another relevant agency.

Where a referral is made, the school will work with relevant agencies and provide information and support required to contribute to assessment and planning.

If the school is concerned that appropriate action has not been taken following a referral or that a child's circumstances are not improving, the DSL will consider the appropriate escalation process in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

6.4 External Scrutiny and Quality Assurance

The school recognises the importance of external challenge, partnership working and learning from safeguarding practice.

Safeguarding arrangements are subject to appropriate review and scrutiny through school leadership, the Governing Body and relevant external safeguarding arrangements.

The school will use learning from safeguarding incidents, reviews, audits, complaints, professional challenge and changes to statutory guidance or local procedures to strengthen safeguarding practice.

6.5 Secure Storage and Transfer of Safeguarding Records

Safeguarding records are stored securely and confidentially and are only accessed by those who have an appropriate professional need to see them.

Safeguarding information will be shared and transferred securely and in accordance with data protection legislation and safeguarding requirements.

When a child moves to another school, relevant safeguarding information will be transferred securely and promptly in accordance with statutory requirements and school procedures.

Further requirements relating to confidentiality, information sharing and record keeping are set out elsewhere in this policy.

6.6 Review of Safeguarding Systems

Safeguarding systems and processes are reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain effective, compliant with statutory requirements and responsive to emerging safeguarding risks and the needs of children at Thurlstone Primary School.

The school will review and strengthen its safeguarding arrangements following relevant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures, safeguarding incidents, reviews or identified areas for improvement.

7. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

7.1 Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

All staff have a responsibility to recognise signs that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation and to act without delay.

Staff should remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, emotional wellbeing, relationships, attendance or engagement, as well as physical signs, disclosures and concerns arising online. Safeguarding concerns may arise from a single incident or from a pattern of concerns over time. Staff should maintain professional curiosity and should not assume that a concern is insignificant because it appears minor or because there has not been a direct disclosure.

Staff should be particularly alert to children who may face additional barriers to recognising or disclosing harm, including children with SEND, communication difficulties or other vulnerabilities.

Abuse and exploitation can take place in the home, in school, in the community or online. Technology and artificial intelligence may also be used to facilitate abuse, exploitation or harm.

7.2 If a Child Makes a Disclosure

If a child discloses a safeguarding concern to you, you should:

- listen carefully and take the child seriously
- allow the child time to speak freely and do not ask leading questions
- remain calm and do not show shock, disbelief or judgement
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you
- explain that you will need to pass the information to people who can help
- never promise to keep a disclosure secret
- avoid investigating the matter or asking unnecessary questions
- record the disclosure as soon as possible, using the child's own words wherever possible
- record facts rather than personal opinion or interpretation
- report the concern to the DSL without delay.

Children may not always recognise that what they are experiencing is abuse, neglect or exploitation, or may not feel ready or able to disclose what is happening. Staff should therefore speak to the DSL whenever they have concerns about a child's welfare, even where there has been no direct disclosure.

7.3 If a Child is in Immediate Danger or at Risk of Harm
If a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Where a member of staff believes that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm, they must act immediately in accordance with this policy and local safeguarding procedures. Anyone can make a referral.

Barnsley Children's Social Care / Integrated Front Door: 01226 772423
Emergency Duty Team: 01226 787789 outside normal working hours, including evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

Where possible, staff should inform a DSL as soon as possible if they make a referral directly.
Staff must not delay taking action because they are unsure whether a concern meets a particular threshold. Staff are expected to recognise concerns, report them and provide relevant information; they are not expected to investigate or determine the threshold for statutory intervention.

The DSL will ensure that appropriate follow-up action is taken and that decisions, actions and outcomes are recorded.

7.4 If You Have a Concern About a Child
Where a member of staff has a concern about a child's welfare, they should speak to a DSL as soon as possible.

If the DSL is unavailable, staff should speak to the other DSL or the DDSL. The absence of a particular member of the safeguarding team must not delay appropriate action.

Staff should provide all relevant information and should not assume that an apparently minor concern is insignificant. Information about patterns or cumulative concerns may be important in understanding a child's circumstances.

The DSL will consider:

- the child's individual circumstances and lived experience
- the level and nature of need or risk
- the nature, frequency and seriousness of the concerns
- previous concerns, patterns and cumulative harm
- the child's wishes and feelings, where appropriate
- any additional vulnerabilities or barriers to recognising or disclosing harm
- whether Family Help/Early Help may be appropriate
- whether a referral to Children's Social Care, the police or another agency is required.

7.5 Family Help/Early Help
Any child may benefit from Family Help/Early Help where additional support is needed before concerns escalate.

Where Family Help/Early Help is appropriate, the DSL will work with the child, family and relevant professionals to identify needs, agree appropriate support and review whether that support is making a difference.

Family Help/Early Help may be appropriate where a child or family is experiencing difficulties that do not currently require a statutory child protection response but where additional support is needed.

The school will work with other agencies as appropriate and contribute to assessment, planning, implementation and review.

Where support is not improving the child's situation, or new information indicates increased risk, the DSL will consider whether a referral to Children's Social Care is required.

7.6 Referral to Children's Social Care

Where a referral to Children's Social Care is required, the DSL will make the referral or support the member of staff making the referral.
If a member of staff makes a referral directly, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible.
The school will provide relevant information and cooperate with any subsequent assessment or safeguarding process.

If the school does not receive an appropriate response, or concerns remain about the child's safety or welfare, the DSL will follow local escalation procedures and continue to advocate for the child.

7.7 Specific Safeguarding Concerns

Some safeguarding concerns require particular action or additional statutory duties. Staff must follow the relevant procedures set out elsewhere in this policy where concerns relate to:

- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- radicalisation or extremism
- child-on-child abuse
- sexual violence or sexual harassment
- self-generated intimate images and/or videos
- concerns about a member of staff or another adult working with children
- other specific safeguarding issues identified within this policy.

Where a concern relates to one of these areas, staff should report it to the DSL without delay. Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

7.8 Concerns About Radicalisation or Extremism

If a member of staff is concerned that a child may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism or extremist activity, they should speak to the DSL immediately.

The DSL will consider the level of risk and determine the appropriate response. This may include seeking advice from Children's Social Care, making a referral through Prevent/Channel arrangements or involving the police where appropriate.

If there is an immediate risk of harm or a terrorism-related emergency, call 999.

Staff should not attempt to investigate concerns about radicalisation or extremism themselves.

7.9 Concerns About a Child's Mental Health
Mental health difficulties may, in some circumstances, be an indicator that a child has experienced or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff should remain alert to changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance, relationships or emotional wellbeing.

Where a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern, staff should follow the safeguarding procedures in this section immediately and speak to the DSL.

Where a mental health concern does not appear to be a safeguarding concern, staff should still speak to the DSL so that appropriate support can be considered.

7.10 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Another Child
Children can abuse other children, both inside and outside school, including online.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding concern and must never be dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or something that children should be expected to deal with themselves.
It may include bullying, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation and online abuse.

Most incidents of children hurting other children will be managed through the school's behaviour procedures. However, this safeguarding policy applies where behaviour raises safeguarding concerns.

If a child reports an allegation of abuse by another child, staff must:

- listen and take the report seriously
- record the concern factually
- report it to the DSL without delay
- not investigate the allegation themselves.

The DSL will consider the needs and safety of all children involved, including the child who has experienced the alleged abuse, the child alleged to have caused harm and any other children affected.
The school will consider whether the behaviour may indicate that the child who has caused harm is themselves experiencing abuse or other safeguarding concerns.

7.11 Self-Generated Intimate Images and/or Videos
Where staff become aware that a child has created, received or shared an intimate image or video of themselves or another child, this must be reported to the DSL immediately. This includes images or videos created or manipulated using technology or artificial intelligence.

Staff must not:

- view, copy, print, save or share the image or video
- ask a child to send or show them the image or video
- download or store the image or video
- ask children to investigate or explain the content themselves

- delete the image or ask a child to delete it
- share information about the incident with other staff, children or parents/carers unless directed to do so
- blame or shame any child involved.

If an image is seen accidentally, staff should not continue to view it and must report the incident to the DSL.

The DSL will assess the circumstances and determine whether further action, including referral to Children's Social Care and/or the police, is required.

7.12 Reporting Systems for Pupils
The school recognises the importance of ensuring that children feel safe, listened to and able to report concerns.

We will:
- provide clear and accessible ways for children to report safeguarding concerns
- ensure reporting routes are explained through appropriate assemblies, PSHE and other curriculum opportunities
- make it clear that concerns will be taken seriously
- listen to children's wishes and feelings and take them into account when determining appropriate action
- provide reassurance and support to children who make a disclosure or report a concern
- ensure children know which trusted adults they can approach if they are worried about themselves or another child.

8. Online Safety
Children increasingly use technology as part of their learning, communication and social lives. Thurlstone Primary School recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and that risks can arise through the use of websites, social media, gaming, messaging, mobile devices, artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital technologies.

Our approach to online safety is based on education, prevention, appropriate filtering and monitoring, clear expectations, effective reporting and a proportionate response to concerns.

Online safety is considered alongside the wider safeguarding risks identified in this policy. Staff should remain alert to online harm that may be connected to concerns about a child's wellbeing, relationships, behaviour, attendance or safety offline.

8.1 Online Risks
We recognise that children may be exposed to a range of online risks, including:
- harmful or inappropriate content
- online bullying and harassment
- sexual harassment, sexual violence and exploitation
- grooming and other forms of abuse
- exploitation and radicalisation
- contact with inappropriate or unknown individuals

- sharing of personal information or images
- pressure to send or receive intimate images
- scams, fraud and other forms of online exploitation
- excessive or harmful use of technology
- misinformation and manipulated content
- AI-generated or digitally manipulated images, audio and video
- deepfakes, including sexualised or otherwise harmful content
- inappropriate use of generative AI or chatbots
- emotional over-reliance on AI chatbots
- risks associated with cognitive offloading and over-reliance on AI-generated information.

Staff should recognise that technology can facilitate existing forms of abuse as well as create new forms of harm. AI may be used to create convincing but false images, audio or video and may also be used to facilitate bullying, grooming, exploitation or the distribution of harmful content.

8.2 Filtering and Monitoring

Thurlstone Primary School will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to protect children from harmful and inappropriate online content while supporting safe and effective use of technology for learning.

The school will:

- maintain filtering and monitoring arrangements appropriate to the age and needs of pupils
- ensure that filtering and monitoring address the breadth of risks identified in this policy
- ensure that staff know how to report concerns about inappropriate or harmful content being accessed
- respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns identified through filtering and monitoring
- review filtering and monitoring arrangements at least annually and following significant changes or incidents
- ensure that the Governing Body has appropriate oversight and assurance that filtering and monitoring arrangements are effective
- ensure that responsibility for the safeguarding aspects of filtering and monitoring is led by the DSLs, with appropriate technical support from those responsible for the school's IT systems
- consider emerging risks, including those associated with AI and new technologies, as part of the review process.

Filtering and monitoring will not be treated as a substitute for effective supervision, teaching, professional curiosity or appropriate safeguarding action. Staff should report concerns even where filtering or monitoring systems appear to have prevented access to harmful content.

8.3 Mobile Phones, Cameras and Personal Devices

The school has clear expectations about the use of mobile phones, cameras and other personal devices by staff, pupils and visitors. These expectations are set out in the school's relevant mobile phone, acceptable use and behaviour arrangements.

Staff:

- may bring personal mobile phones to school for their own use but should restrict their use to appropriate non-contact time when pupils are not present

- must not use personal phones or cameras to photograph or record pupils
- must follow school expectations regarding the use of school devices and digital systems
- must report any safeguarding concern arising from the use of a personal or school device.

Pupils must follow the school's expectations regarding mobile phones, smart devices and access to the internet. Any concerns or breaches will be managed in accordance with the school's behaviour and acceptable use procedures.

8.4 Teaching and Learning
Online safety is taught as part of our wider curriculum and preventative safeguarding education.

Pupils are taught age-appropriate knowledge and skills to help them:

- recognise online risks and harmful content
- understand how to keep personal information safe
- communicate respectfully online
- recognise and respond to online bullying and harassment
- understand the importance of consent and appropriate boundaries
- know how and when to report something that worries or concerns them
- understand that online behaviour can have safeguarding consequences
- recognise that online information may be false, misleading or manipulated
- understand the risks associated with AI-generated content, including deepfakes and manipulated images
- use AI and digital technologies safely, responsibly and critically.

Online safety education is reinforced through relevant areas of the curriculum, including PSHE/RSHE, computing and safeguarding education, and through discussions arising from current issues and pupil experience.

8.5 Artificial Intelligence
Thurlstone Primary School recognises that generative AI can have positive uses in teaching, learning and safeguarding but also presents emerging risks.
Staff should consider the safeguarding implications of any AI tool used within school and follow the school's expectations for the safe and appropriate use of AI.
AI-related safeguarding concerns will be responded to in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.

This includes concerns involving:

- AI-generated or manipulated images
- deepfakes
- sexualised or nudified images
- voice cloning
- bullying or harassment
- grooming or exploitation
- harmful or inappropriate content
- misinformation or deliberately misleading content
- a child developing an unhealthy or inappropriate reliance on an AI chatbot.

The school's filtering and monitoring arrangements apply to the use of AI. New AI tools should be appropriately risk assessed before being introduced for use in school.

8.6 Reporting and Responding to Online Safety Concerns
Children are encouraged to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable, unsafe or worried, whether it happens online or offline.

Staff should:

- listen and take concerns seriously
- follow the safeguarding procedures set out in Section 7
- report safeguarding concerns to a DSL without delay
- record concerns factually and appropriately
- avoid investigating concerns themselves unless specifically asked to do so as part of an agreed safeguarding response
- preserve relevant information where appropriate and seek advice from the DSL about what should be retained or shared.

Where an online concern indicates that a child may be at risk of significant harm, the school's normal safeguarding and referral procedures apply.

8.7 Parents and Carers
We recognise that effective online safety requires partnership with parents and carers.
The school will provide parents and carers with information and guidance about online safety through appropriate school communications, the website and opportunities such as parents' evenings.
Parents and carers will be encouraged to raise online safety concerns with the school and to work with us when concerns arise.

8.8 Review and Assurance
The school's approach to online safety will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there are significant changes in technology, guidance, local risks or the school's circumstances.
The annual review will consider:

- safeguarding incidents and emerging patterns
- concerns raised by pupils, parents, staff or governors
- the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring
- emerging risks, including AI and other technologies
- the effectiveness of online safety education
- relevant national and local safeguarding guidance.

9. Early Help, Thresholds and Multi-Agency Working
Thurlstone Primary School recognises that safeguarding is a shared responsibility and that children and families may require different levels of support at different points in their lives.
The school works within the safeguarding arrangements established by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) and follows Barnsley safeguarding policies, procedures and the local framework for responding to need. We work closely with children, families and partner agencies to ensure that children receive the right help, at the right time and in the right place.

9.1 Early Help/Family Help

Early identification and support can prevent needs from escalating and is an important part of safeguarding.

Where a child or family would benefit from additional support but the circumstances do not require a statutory child protection response, the school will consider whether support through Family Help/Early Help is appropriate.

This may include concerns relating to:

- emotional wellbeing or mental health
- attendance
- behaviour or relationships
- additional needs or SEND
- parenting or family circumstances
- domestic abuse
- substance misuse
- caring responsibilities
- difficulties affecting a child's education, development or wellbeing
- multiple or emerging needs within the family.

The school will work with children and families to identify needs and, where appropriate, involve other professionals so that support is coordinated around the child and family.
Barnsley's local arrangements emphasise a whole-family approach and coordinated support across the spectrum of need.

9.2 Thresholds and Responding to Need

The school uses the Barnsley Thresholds for Intervention framework to support professional decision-making.

Staff do not need to determine whether a particular threshold has been met before reporting a concern. All concerns should be shared promptly with a DSL, who will consider the child's individual circumstances, the nature and level of need, previous concerns, cumulative risk and any other relevant information.
The school recognises that children and families' circumstances can change and that safeguarding concerns may develop or become more significant over time. Decisions will therefore be reviewed when new information becomes available or circumstances change.

Where appropriate, the school may:

- provide support through its own universal provision
- seek or coordinate Family Help/Early Help
- work with other professionals as part of a multi-agency plan
- seek advice from Barnsley services
- make a referral to Children's Social Care
- contact the police or another agency where appropriate
- escalate concerns where the response does not adequately address the child's needs or level of risk.

9.3 Referral to Children's Social Care

Where the DSL considers that a child may be in need of statutory support or may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the school will make an appropriate referral to Barnsley Children's Social Care in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

The school will provide relevant information to support effective decision-making and will cooperate with Children's Social Care and other agencies in assessments, planning and safeguarding activity.

Where a referral has been made and the school remains concerned about the child's safety or welfare, the DSL will follow up the response and use the appropriate escalation process where necessary.
The school will not delay making a referral because other support is already in place where the level of concern indicates that a statutory response is required.

9.4 Multi-Agency Working
Thurlstone Primary School recognises the importance of effective multi-agency working in safeguarding children.

The school will work constructively with:

- Children's Social Care
- health services
- the police
- education and attendance services
- Early Help/Family Help services
- mental health services
- SEND services
- other relevant statutory, voluntary and community organisations.

Where appropriate, school staff will contribute to assessments, Team Around the Family or other multi-agency meetings, child protection processes, plans and reviews.

The school will share relevant information appropriately and lawfully to support safeguarding and the welfare of children. Staff will not assume that another professional or agency has shared information or taken action where doing so could leave a child at risk.

9.5 Professional Challenge and Escalation
The school recognises that effective safeguarding requires professionals to be able to challenge decisions and responses where they believe a child's needs are not being appropriately met or risks have not been adequately addressed.

Where there is disagreement between professionals about the level of need, response or action required, the DSL will seek to resolve this through discussion with the relevant practitioner or agency and, where necessary, use the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency escalation process.
Professional disagreement will not prevent the school from taking action to safeguard a child where there is an ongoing concern.

9.6 Information Sharing
Effective early help and multi-agency safeguarding depend on appropriate information sharing.

The school will share relevant information with other professionals where this is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child, in accordance with statutory requirements, data protection legislation and safeguarding information-sharing guidance.

Information sharing will be proportionate, purposeful and based on the best interests of the child. Data protection requirements will not be used as a reason to avoid sharing information where there is a lawful basis and a safeguarding need to do so.

9.7 The Child and Family's Voice

Children and families should be involved in decisions about support wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

The school will seek to understand the child's lived experience, wishes and feelings and will consider these alongside professional assessment of risk and need.

We recognise that effective safeguarding requires professionals to build relationships with children and families while maintaining appropriate professional curiosity and challenge.

9.8 Review and Escalation of Support

The school will monitor the effectiveness of support provided and remain alert to changes in a child's circumstances.

If needs are not reducing, new concerns emerge or risk increases, the DSL will reconsider the level of support required and whether a referral or further multi-agency response is necessary.
Early Help is not a reason to delay statutory safeguarding action where a child may be at risk of significant harm.

10. Specific Safeguarding Issues and Vulnerabilities

All staff are aware that safeguarding issues can present in many forms and that children may be at risk of harm both inside and outside of school, including online.
Staff are trained to recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and understand that safeguarding concerns can be complex, interconnected and may involve multiple or overlapping risks.

10.1 Types of Abuse

Staff are aware of the main categories of abuse:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect.

Detailed definitions and indicators are provided in Appendix 1.

10.2 Specific Safeguarding Issues

Staff are aware of a wide range of specific safeguarding issues, including but not limited to:

- child-on-child abuse, including bullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- child criminal exploitation (CCE), including county lines
- domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour

- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage and so-called 'honour-based' abuse
- radicalisation and extremism, including the Prevent duty
- serious violence
- modern slavery and human trafficking
- online safety risks and harmful online behaviour
- the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (youth-produced sexual imagery)
- AI-related safeguarding risks, including deepfakes, voice cloning, synthetic media, nudification technology, AI-generated sexualised imagery, misinformation and harmful interactions with AI chatbots.

Staff understand that these issues may not occur in isolation and may be connected to wider vulnerabilities, contextual risks or other forms of harm.

Specific procedures for responding to these concerns are set out elsewhere in this policy and in the relevant appendices.

10.3 Contextual Safeguarding
Thurlstone Primary School recognises that safeguarding risks may arise from the wider contexts in which children live, learn and spend their time.

This may include:
- peer groups and relationships
- family circumstances
- the school environment
- locations and activities within the local community
- online environments
- wider community and contextual risks.

When assessing safeguarding concerns, the school will consider the child's wider circumstances rather than focusing solely on what is happening within the family home.

Staff should consider:
- where and when concerns or incidents occur
- relationships and peer groups
- online activity and environments
- places where children may be particularly vulnerable
- patterns of behaviour affecting more than one child
- wider community risks
- whether other children may also be at risk.

Where appropriate, the school will work with Children's Social Care, the police and other safeguarding partners to understand and address risks beyond the immediate school or family environment.

10.4 Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm
Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation or may experience additional barriers to recognising, communicating or disclosing concerns.

This includes children who:

- have SEND or health conditions
- are experiencing mental health difficulties
- are young carers
- are looked after or previously looked after
- have a social worker or are receiving Family Help/Early Help
- are persistently or severely absent or missing from education
- are at risk of exploitation or discrimination
- have English as an additional language (EAL)
- are living in difficult or unstable circumstances
- may experience domestic abuse, substance misuse or other difficulties within their family or home environment.

Staff should remain alert to changes in behaviour, presentation, communication, attendance, relationships or emotional wellbeing and should not assume that these are solely attributable to a child's SEND, health needs or other known circumstances.

The school will make appropriate adjustments to ensure that children can understand how to keep themselves safe, recognise when something is not right, communicate concerns and access trusted adults and appropriate reporting routes.

Further detail about particular groups of children and their safeguarding needs is set out in the relevant sections of this policy.

10.5 Child-on-Child Abuse

Thurlstone Primary School recognises that children can abuse other children and that this can take place in school, outside school and online.

Child-on-child abuse may include bullying, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation and online abuse. It will never be dismissed as 'banter', part of growing up or harmless behaviour.

The school will consider the safety and wellbeing of all children involved and recognise that a child displaying harmful behaviour may themselves be experiencing harm or other safeguarding concerns.

Concerns about child-on-child abuse must be reported to the DSL without delay and will be managed in accordance with this policy and relevant statutory and local safeguarding procedures.

10.6 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health difficulties may be a need in their own right and may also indicate that a child is experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or another safeguarding concern.

Staff should remain alert to significant changes in emotional wellbeing, behaviour, presentation, relationships, attendance or engagement.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, staff must report it to the DSL without delay in accordance with Section 7. Where additional support is needed but there is no safeguarding concern, the school will consider appropriate pastoral, SEND, Family Help/Early Help, health or other support.

11. Safer Recruitment

Thurlstone Primary School is committed to safer recruitment and to ensuring that all adults who work with children are suitable to do so.

The school follows the safer recruitment requirements set out in Part 3 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and takes appropriate steps to deter, identify and prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a key consideration throughout the recruitment and selection process.

11.1 Recruitment Principles

The school will ensure that:

- safeguarding is considered at every stage of recruitment and selection
- job descriptions and person specifications make clear the safeguarding responsibilities of the role
- advertisements make clear the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
- applicants are made aware that appropriate safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- applications are scrutinised carefully and any gaps or discrepancies in employment history are explored
- references are obtained, verified and appropriately scrutinised before an appointment is confirmed wherever possible
- questions relating to safeguarding are included within the selection and interview process where appropriate
- recruitment decisions take account of the suitability of the applicant to work with children
- no person is permitted to begin regulated activity with children until the required checks have been completed or the appropriate arrangements are in place in accordance with statutory guidance.

11.2 Pre-Appointment Checks

The school carries out the pre-employment checks required by statutory guidance before staff take up their roles.

These include, as applicable:

- verification of identity
- verification of the right to work in the UK
- appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, including barred list checks where required
- checks of qualifications where required for the role
- prohibition from teaching checks, where applicable
- Section 128 checks for relevant management positions
- checks relating to disqualification from childcare, where applicable
- appropriate overseas criminal record checks or other checks where an individual has lived or worked overseas

- any other checks required by current statutory guidance.

The school will also consider whether an online search of shortlisted candidates is appropriate, in accordance with current statutory guidance.

All required checks will be recorded and verified before the individual begins work, in accordance with the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

11.3 Single Central Record
The school maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) containing the required information about the safeguarding checks carried out on staff and other relevant adults.

The SCR is maintained accurately and securely and is reviewed regularly to ensure that required checks have been completed and appropriately recorded.

11.4 Safer Recruitment Training
At least one person involved in each recruitment process will have completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

Leaders and governors involved in recruitment will maintain an appropriate understanding of safer recruitment principles and the safeguarding responsibilities associated with recruitment and selection.

11.5 Volunteers, Contractors and Other Adults
The school applies appropriate safeguarding checks and risk management arrangements to volunteers, contractors, visitors and other adults who may have contact with children.

The school will:

- determine whether DBS or other safeguarding checks are required based on the nature of the individual's role and contact with children
- ensure that appropriate checks are undertaken where required
- ensure that adults who have not undergone the required checks are appropriately supervised
- ensure that contractors and external organisations providing staff or services have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place
- ensure that visitors follow the school's signing-in and identification procedures
- ensure that adults working in school understand how to report safeguarding concerns.

No unchecked visitor or other adult will be left unsupervised with children where this would create a safeguarding risk.

11.6 Ongoing Vigilance
Safer recruitment does not end when an individual is appointed.

The school maintains an ongoing culture of vigilance and expects all staff and governors to remain alert to concerns about the suitability or behaviour of adults working with children.
Any safeguarding concern about a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer, contractor or other adult must be reported immediately in accordance with Section 12 and Appendix 2 of this policy.

Concerns about adults will be managed in accordance with the school's procedures, *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and relevant Barnsley safeguarding arrangements.

12. Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns

Thurlstone Primary School recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise about adults working in or on behalf of the school. All concerns and allegations are taken seriously and are managed promptly, fairly and in accordance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

This includes concerns about employees, supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and other adults working with children.

The school follows Part 4 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and relevant Barnsley safeguarding and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures.

12.1 Concerns or Allegations That May Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation should be treated as potentially meeting the harm threshold where it is alleged that an adult working with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Where a concern or allegation may meet the harm threshold, it must be reported immediately and must not be dealt with informally or investigated by staff within school before appropriate advice has been obtained.

The school will follow the relevant local authority procedures and seek advice from the LADO where required.

The school will:

- prioritise the safety and welfare of children
- ensure the concern or allegation is reported without delay
- preserve confidentiality and share information only with those who need to know
- avoid undertaking its own investigation before appropriate advice has been obtained
- cooperate fully with the LADO, Children's Social Care, police and other relevant agencies
- take appropriate action to manage any immediate safeguarding risk
- keep accurate records of concerns, decisions, actions and outcomes
- consider whether any referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or other agency is required.

12.2 Reporting Concerns About Adults

All staff and other adults working in school have a responsibility to report concerns about the behaviour of another adult where that behaviour may pose a safeguarding risk.

Concerns should be reported immediately to the appropriate school leader or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where the concern relates to the Executive Headteacher, Charlotte Gibbins, or the Head of School, Beth Wise, the concern must be reported to the Chair of Governors, Dr Nicky Shaw.

Where there is uncertainty about who should receive a concern, staff should seek advice from the DSL, DDSL, Chair of Governors or LADO as appropriate.

Staff should not assume that someone else will report a concern.

12.3 Low-Level Concerns

The school recognises that concerns about the behaviour of an adult may not meet the harm threshold but may nevertheless be relevant to safeguarding.

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the school's expectations of professional behaviour; or
- does not meet the harm threshold or may not otherwise require a referral to the LADO.

Examples might include, but are not limited to:

- being over-familiar with children
- having favourites
- using inappropriate language or humour
- giving children inappropriate gifts or attention
- having inappropriate one-to-one interactions with children
- failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- using personal devices or communication methods inappropriately
- behaviour that causes discomfort or concern, even where it does not appear to constitute abuse.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Low-level concerns may arise from a single incident or from a pattern of behaviour. Staff should report concerns even where they are unsure whether the behaviour meets the threshold for a formal allegation.

12.4 Responding to Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns should be reported promptly to the appropriate school leader or DSL.

The school will:

- listen to and take the concern seriously
- record the concern factually, including the context and relevant information
- consider whether the concern is genuinely low-level or whether it may meet the harm threshold
- consider whether there are previous concerns or patterns of behaviour relating to the adult
- seek advice from the LADO where appropriate
- respond proportionately and in accordance with the school's procedures
- use the information to identify patterns or wider safeguarding issues
- provide appropriate support, guidance or management where required.

A low-level concern will not automatically result in disciplinary action. The response will depend on the nature and context of the concern and any wider information available.

Where information indicates that the concern may meet the harm threshold, the school will follow the procedures in Section 12.1.

12.5 Recording and Reviewing Concerns
The school will maintain a confidential record of low-level concerns and allegations about adults. Records will include sufficient information to understand:

- what the concern was
- when and how it was raised
- who was involved
- the context and relevant information
- the action taken
- any advice sought
- the rationale for decisions
- the outcome.

Records will be stored securely and accessed only by those who need the information for safeguarding or employment purposes.

The DSLs and school leaders will consider whether low-level concerns indicate patterns of behaviour or wider safeguarding issues. Information may be considered collectively where this is necessary to identify emerging concerns about an adult.

12.6 Professional Culture and Expectations
The school promotes a culture in which all adults understand professional boundaries and feel confident to raise concerns.

Low-level concerns are not dismissed simply because they appear minor. Reporting concerns early can help prevent inappropriate behaviour from becoming normalised and can support a culture of openness, professional challenge and safeguarding vigilance.

All staff are expected to follow the school's Code of Conduct, safeguarding policy and relevant guidance on professional boundaries.

12.7 Concerns About the School's Safeguarding Practice
Where a member of staff has concerns about safeguarding practice, they should raise these with the DSL or DDSL in the first instance.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise a safeguarding concern internally, or believes that a concern has not been appropriately addressed, they should follow the school's whistleblowing procedures.
The school will ensure that staff are able to raise safeguarding concerns without fear of reprisal.

13. Record Keeping and Information Management
Thurlstone Primary School recognises that accurate, timely and secure record keeping is essential to effective safeguarding.

Safeguarding records provide a clear and cumulative picture of a child's needs, circumstances and experiences and are used to inform safeguarding decisions, referrals, support and ongoing review.

13.1 Recording Safeguarding Information
All safeguarding concerns, disclosures and relevant safeguarding information are recorded on CPOMS, in line with the school's safeguarding recording procedures.

Records must be:

- completed as soon as possible after a concern arises
- clear, factual, accurate and objective
- written using the child's own words where appropriate
- clear about what was observed, reported or disclosed
- updated to record relevant actions, decisions and outcomes
- sufficiently detailed to provide a clear record of the safeguarding concern and the school's response.

All staff are responsible for recording concerns on CPOMS in line with school procedures and reporting them to a DSL or DDSL without delay. A CPOMS record does not replace the requirement to report an immediate safeguarding concern promptly.

13.2 Storage and Security
Safeguarding records are:

- stored securely within CPOMS
- treated as confidential
- accessed only by staff with an appropriate professional need to know
- managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and other relevant data protection requirements.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

13.3 Information Sharing
Thurlstone Primary School recognises that timely and appropriate information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.

Staff understand that:

- concerns about sharing information must not stand in the way of safeguarding a child
- information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so, including where necessary to safeguard a child
- information should be shared proportionately and only where relevant to the safeguarding concern
- decisions about information sharing should take account of the child's best interests and individual circumstances
- the school follows current statutory guidance and *Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners* when making decisions about sharing information.

Where a decision is made to share information, the DSL will ensure that the decision, rationale and relevant action are recorded where appropriate.

13.4 Monitoring and Review of Records

Safeguarding records are regularly reviewed by the DSLs to ensure that:

- concerns are followed up appropriately
- actions and decisions are timely and proportionate
- cumulative concerns and patterns are identified
- emerging safeguarding risks are recognised
- information from different sources is considered when assessing a child's needs and circumstances.

The DSLs maintain oversight of safeguarding records and use this information to inform safeguarding practice, referrals, support and leadership decision-making.

The Designated Safeguarding Governor provides appropriate support and challenge through governance arrangements.

13.5 Transfer of Safeguarding Records

When a child moves to another school, relevant safeguarding records are transferred securely and promptly to the receiving school in accordance with statutory guidance and data protection requirements.

The DSL will ensure that relevant safeguarding information is shared so that the receiving school has the information necessary to support the child's ongoing safety and wellbeing.

The transfer of safeguarding information will be handled securely and in accordance with the school's arrangements for pupil record transfer.

13.6 Retention and Disposal of Records

Safeguarding records are retained in accordance with statutory guidance, data protection requirements and applicable local authority arrangements.

Records will be:

- retained for the appropriate period
- kept securely throughout the retention period
- disposed of securely when they are no longer required.

The school will ensure that records relating to safeguarding concerns are not destroyed or removed in a way that could undermine ongoing safeguarding, accountability or statutory requirements.

14. Training

Thurlstone Primary School recognises that effective safeguarding depends on staff having the knowledge, skills and confidence to identify concerns, respond appropriately and understand their responsibilities.

14.1 Safeguarding Training for All Staff

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and at regular intervals thereafter, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and local safeguarding arrangements.

Training ensures that staff:

- understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- know how to recognise signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- understand how to respond to a child who makes a disclosure

- know how and when to report concerns
- understand the school's safeguarding procedures and reporting routes
- are aware of the DSLs and DDSL and how to contact them
- understand the importance of professional curiosity and recognising cumulative or emerging concerns
- understand relevant safeguarding issues, including online safety and risks associated with artificial intelligence
- understand their responsibilities in relation to concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school
- understand the importance of accurate and timely recording and information sharing.

All staff must read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full. Staff are also provided with relevant updates when statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures or school procedures change.

14.2 Induction

All new members of staff receive safeguarding and child protection information as part of their induction. Induction includes:

- this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Part One of KCSIE 2026
- the identity and role of the DSLs and DDSL
- the school's procedures for reporting and recording concerns
- the staff Code of Conduct and expectations around professional boundaries
- whistleblowing procedures
- the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures
- relevant online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements.

Temporary staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors receive appropriate safeguarding information and are made aware of the school's reporting procedures and expectations.

14.3 Designated Safeguarding Leads

The DSLs receive training in accordance with statutory requirements and local safeguarding arrangements.

DSL training enables them to:

- provide advice and support to staff
- recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns
- make appropriate referrals
- work effectively with children, families and other agencies
- understand local thresholds and safeguarding procedures
- maintain accurate safeguarding records
- recognise patterns and cumulative concerns
- understand current safeguarding risks and emerging issues
- contribute to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- provide effective safeguarding leadership across the school.

DSLs undertake refresher training and ongoing professional development at appropriate intervals and keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date.

14.4 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
The DDSL receives safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role and responsibilities and maintains their knowledge through ongoing updates and professional development.

The DDSL is able to support the DSLs in responding to concerns and provide safeguarding leadership when required.

14.5 Governors
Members of the Governing Body receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

The Designated Safeguarding Governor receives appropriate training to enable them to provide effective support and challenge to the DSLs and school leadership and to maintain appropriate safeguarding oversight.

14.6 Prevent and Other Specific Safeguarding Training
Staff receive appropriate training and updates on specific safeguarding issues relevant to the needs of the school and the children it serves.

This includes, where relevant:

- Prevent and radicalisation
- child-on-child abuse
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- online safety and artificial intelligence
- domestic abuse
- child criminal and sexual exploitation
- FGM and so-called 'honour-based' abuse
- mental health and wellbeing
- safeguarding children with SEND
- attendance and children missing education.

Training is proportionate to staff roles and is updated in response to emerging safeguarding risks, local concerns and changes to statutory guidance.

14.7 Ongoing Updates and Professional Development
Safeguarding is a continuous area of professional learning. The school provides regular updates through staff meetings, briefings, training and other appropriate communication.

The DSLs ensure that staff are made aware of significant changes to:

- statutory guidance
- local safeguarding procedures
- school safeguarding procedures
- emerging safeguarding risks
- online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The school uses safeguarding concerns, incidents, patterns and learning from reviews to identify where further staff training or development may be required.

15. Monitoring and Review

Thurlstone Primary School recognises that effective safeguarding requires regular monitoring, review and continuous improvement. Safeguarding arrangements are reviewed to ensure that they remain effective, responsive to the needs of children and compliant with statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

15.1 Monitoring Safeguarding Arrangements

The DSLs, school leadership and Governing Body monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements through:

- regular review of safeguarding concerns and records
- consideration of patterns, themes and cumulative concerns
- review of referrals and multi-agency involvement
- monitoring attendance and other information that may indicate safeguarding concerns
- review of safeguarding incidents and actions taken
- consideration of concerns raised by children, families and staff
- monitoring the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements
- review of safeguarding training and staff understanding
- consideration of relevant local and national safeguarding developments.

Monitoring is used to identify strengths, areas for improvement and any emerging safeguarding risks.

15.2 Governance Oversight

The Governing Body maintains strategic oversight of safeguarding and provides appropriate support and challenge to school leadership.

The Designated Safeguarding Governor maintains an appropriate level of safeguarding knowledge and provides support and challenge to the DSLs and leadership regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding is considered through appropriate governance processes, including the review of relevant policies, training, safeguarding information and actions for improvement.

15.3 Learning and Continuous Improvement

The school uses learning from safeguarding concerns, incidents, complaints, professional challenge, audits, reviews and relevant external scrutiny to strengthen safeguarding practice.

Where weaknesses or areas for improvement are identified, the school will take appropriate action and monitor the impact of that action.

Safeguarding practice will be reviewed in response to:

- changes to statutory guidance or legislation
- changes to local safeguarding arrangements
- emerging safeguarding risks
- significant incidents or concerns
- learning from reviews or external scrutiny
- changes in the needs or circumstances of children within the school.

15.4 Review of This Policy
This policy is reviewed annually by the school and Governing Body and is updated sooner where there are significant changes to statutory guidance, legislation, local safeguarding arrangements or school practice. The review considers whether the policy remains clear, effective and reflective of current safeguarding practice at Thurlstone Primary School.

16. Complaints and Whistleblowing
Thurlstone Primary School recognises that children, parents, carers, staff and other members of the school community may have concerns about safeguarding practice or the way a safeguarding concern has been managed. The school is committed to responding to concerns openly, appropriately and in accordance with its statutory responsibilities.

16.1 Safeguarding Complaints
Safeguarding concerns or complaints about the school's practice should be raised through the school's Complaints Policy, where appropriate.

The school will:

- take concerns seriously and respond promptly
- ensure that safeguarding concerns are considered alongside the school's complaints process
- prioritise the safety and welfare of children
- maintain appropriate confidentiality
- keep clear and accurate records of concerns, actions and decisions
- involve relevant external agencies where this is necessary or appropriate.

A complaint about safeguarding practice will not prevent the school from taking immediate safeguarding action where a child may be at risk of harm.

16.2 Concerns About Staff or Other Adults
Concerns or allegations about a member of staff, volunteer, supply worker, contractor or other adult working in or on behalf of the school must be reported immediately in accordance with Section 12: Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns.

Where a concern may meet the harm threshold, the school will follow the relevant procedures and seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required.

Where a concern relates to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

16.3 Whistleblowing
All staff are encouraged to raise genuine concerns about safeguarding practice, including concerns that:

- children may not be adequately protected
- safeguarding procedures are not being followed
- concerns are not being appropriately reported or acted upon
- safeguarding records or information are being handled inappropriately
- professional or safeguarding standards are not being maintained.

Staff should normally raise concerns through the school's Whistleblowing Policy and appropriate leadership channels.

Staff should not assume that someone else will raise or act on a safeguarding concern.

Where a member of staff is unable to raise a concern through the normal school process, or believes that a concern has not been appropriately addressed, they may seek advice or raise the matter through appropriate external safeguarding or whistleblowing routes.

16.4 Protection for Those Raising Concerns
The school promotes a culture in which staff feel able to raise safeguarding concerns without fear of reprisal.

Concerns will be handled appropriately, fairly and confidentially, recognising that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information needs to be shared to safeguard a child or meet statutory responsibilities. The school will ensure that raising a genuine safeguarding concern is not treated as a failure of loyalty or professionalism.

Appendix 1: Types and Indicators of Abuse
All staff should be aware of the four main types of abuse and recognise that children may experience more than one form of harm. Abuse can take place inside or outside the home, in school or in the wider community, and online.

Indicators should always be considered alongside the child's individual circumstances, lived experience and any other safeguarding concerns. No single indicator necessarily means that abuse is taking place.

1. Physical Abuse
Physical abuse may involve:

- hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding
- drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm
- physical punishment or deliberate injury.

Possible indicators include:

- unexplained injuries or injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation given
- frequent injuries
- injuries at different stages of healing
- reluctance to change clothes, for example for PE

- flinching or fear of physical contact
- fearfulness around particular people
- changes in behaviour or presentation.

2. Emotional Abuse
Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child.

This may include:
- conveying that a child is worthless, unloved or inadequate
- preventing or limiting opportunities for a child to express their views
- serious bullying, including cyberbullying
- deliberately causing a child to feel frightened or humiliated
- unreasonable or excessive expectations being placed on a child
- exposure to domestic abuse
- controlling or coercive behaviour.

Possible indicators include:
- low self-esteem
- withdrawal, anxiety or distress
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- delayed development
- excessive attention-seeking
- difficulties forming or maintaining relationships
- becoming unusually fearful or watchful
- difficulties concentrating or engaging in learning.

3. Sexual Abuse
Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This includes:
- physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts
- grooming
- sexual exploitation
- sexual coercion
- sexual harassment
- online sexual abuse
- exposure to inappropriate sexual content
- encouraging or facilitating sexual activity
- the creation or sharing of sexualised images or videos, including AI-generated or manipulated imagery.

Possible indicators include:
- inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge for the child's age
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- distress or anxiety
- reluctance to be alone with certain individuals

- fear of particular people or places
- unexplained gifts, money or possessions
- sexualised language or behaviour
- unexplained injuries or physical symptoms
- changes in attendance or engagement
- receiving or sending sexualised messages or images.

The school recognises the serious and potentially long-term impact of child sexual abuse and ensures that concerns are taken seriously, recorded and acted upon without delay.

4. Neglect

Neglect is 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.

This may include failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter
- protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- ensure appropriate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical or dental care
- meet a child's emotional or developmental needs
- ensure regular attendance at school.

Possible indicators include:

- poor hygiene or consistently unwashed clothing
- hunger or consistently appearing without adequate food
- inappropriate clothing for the weather or circumstances
- untreated medical or dental needs
- persistent tiredness
- poor personal care
- persistent absence, severe absence or repeated lateness
- difficulties with concentration or engagement
- developmental or emotional difficulties.

Important Considerations

Staff should remember that:

- abuse can take place inside or outside the home, including online
- technology and artificial intelligence may be used to facilitate abuse, exploitation or harm
- children may not recognise that they are experiencing abuse
- children may be unable or unwilling to disclose concerns
- children may communicate concerns through behaviour rather than direct disclosure
- indicators should be considered in context and over time
- children may experience multiple or overlapping forms of harm
- staff should maintain professional curiosity and avoid making assumptions based on a single indicator
- patterns, cumulative concerns and the child's lived experience should be considered when assessing risk.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported to a DSL or DDSL without delay in accordance with Section 7 of this policy.

Appendix 2: Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns Procedure

This appendix sets out the practical procedure for responding to allegations and concerns about adults working in or on behalf of Thurlstone Primary School. It should be read alongside Section 12: Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns.

1. Reporting a Concern About an Adult

Any concern about the behaviour of an adult working in or on behalf of the school must be reported without delay.

This includes concerns about:

- employees
- supply staff
- trainee teachers
- volunteers
- contractors
- other adults working in or on behalf of the school.

Staff should not investigate the concern themselves or assume that someone else will report it.

Concerns should be reported to:

- the DSL or DDSL, where appropriate
- the Chair of Governors, Dr Nicky Shaw, where the concern relates to the Executive Headteacher, Charlotte Gibbins, or Head of School, Beth Wise.

Where staff are unsure whether a concern meets the harm threshold, they should report it. The concern can then be considered by the appropriate person.

2. Allegations That May Meet the Harm Threshold

A concern may meet the harm threshold where an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Where a concern may meet the harm threshold:

1. Report the concern immediately to the appropriate person.
2. Do not investigate or question those involved beyond what is necessary to establish the basic concern.
3. The school will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in accordance with local procedures.
4. The school will follow the advice and direction of the LADO and any other relevant agency.
5. Appropriate arrangements will be made to safeguard the child or children involved.
6. The concern, actions, decisions and rationale will be recorded securely.

The school will cooperate fully with the LADO, Children's Social Care, the police or other relevant agencies where required.

3. Initial Management of an Allegation

Following advice from the LADO or other appropriate agency, the school will establish the appropriate next steps.

This may include:

- further safeguarding enquiries
- referral to Children's Social Care or the police
- an investigation
- disciplinary procedures
- management action
- no further action.

The school will:

- prioritise the safety and welfare of children
- maintain appropriate confidentiality
- avoid prejudicing any investigation

- ensure relevant records are maintained
- provide appropriate support to the child and other individuals affected
- provide appropriate support to the member of staff, where appropriate.

4. Reporting a Low-Level Concern

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the school's professional expectations or Code of Conduct, but does not meet the harm threshold.

Examples may include:

- being over-familiar with children
- showing favouritism
- using inappropriate language or humour
- giving inappropriate gifts or attention
- inappropriate one-to-one interactions
- poor professional boundaries
- inappropriate use of personal devices or communication
- behaviour that causes discomfort or concern.

This list is not exhaustive.

A low-level concern may arise from a single incident or from a pattern of behaviour.
Where a member of staff is unsure whether something constitutes a low-level concern, they should report it.

5. Responding to a Low-Level Concern

Low-level concerns should be reported to the appropriate school leader as soon as possible.
The concern will be:

1. listened to and taken seriously
2. recorded factually, including relevant context
3. considered alongside any previous concerns or information
4. assessed to determine whether it is genuinely low-level or whether it may meet the harm threshold
5. managed proportionately and appropriately
6. reviewed for any patterns or wider safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate, the school may seek advice from the LADO.
A low-level concern will not automatically result in disciplinary action. The response will depend on the nature and circumstances of the concern and any relevant previous information.
If information indicates that the concern may meet the harm threshold, the school will follow the procedure in Section 2 of this appendix.

6. Recording and Reviewing Low-Level Concerns

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and kept securely.
The record should include, where relevant:

- details of the concern
- the date and circumstances in which it arose
- the person raising the concern
- the adult involved

- relevant context and information
- actions taken
- advice sought
- the rationale for decisions
- the outcome.

Low-level concern records will be kept confidential and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

The DSLs and appropriate school leaders will review low-level concerns periodically to identify patterns or behaviours that may indicate a wider safeguarding concern.

Where a pattern of behaviour indicates that the harm threshold may have been met, the matter will be referred to the LADO in accordance with local procedures.

7. Supply Staff, Contractors and Other Adults
Where a concern relates to a supply teacher, contractor, volunteer or other adult employed by another organisation, the school will take appropriate safeguarding action and inform the relevant employer or organisation where appropriate.
The school will ensure that concerns are not dismissed because the adult is not directly employed by the school.

8. Professional Culture
Thurlstone Primary School promotes a culture in which staff feel confident to raise concerns about the behaviour of adults.
Low-level concerns should not be dismissed as insignificant. Early reporting allows concerns to be considered in context, patterns to be identified and appropriate action to be taken before behaviour escalates or becomes normalised.
All staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries and follow the school's safeguarding procedures and Code of Conduct.

Appendix 3: Specific Safeguarding Issues (Detailed Guidance)
Staff should be aware that safeguarding concerns can take many forms and that risks may overlap. Children may experience harm inside or outside the home, within the school or wider community, and online. Staff should maintain professional curiosity and consider the individual child's circumstances, lived experience, vulnerabilities and the wider context.

The information below provides additional guidance on specific safeguarding issues. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Staff should report any concern in accordance with Section 7 of this policy and should not attempt to determine the appropriate safeguarding threshold themselves.

1. Child-on-Child Abuse
Child-on-child abuse can occur both inside and outside school, including online.
It may include:

- bullying, including cyberbullying
- physical abuse
- sexual violence
- sexual harassment
- harmful sexual behaviour
- exploitation
- online abuse, including the sharing or creation of harmful or sexualised images.

Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or harmless behaviour.

Most incidents of children hurting other children will be managed through the school's behaviour procedures. However, where behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, this safeguarding policy will apply.

Staff should:

- listen carefully and take concerns seriously
- report concerns to the DSL without delay
- record concerns factually
- avoid investigating or attempting to establish the facts themselves
- consider the safety and wellbeing of all children involved.

The child who has caused harm may also have experienced harm or may themselves be at risk. The DSL will therefore consider the circumstances and needs of all children involved, including the wider peer and contextual factors.

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

Children can be exploited in different ways and may be manipulated, coerced or groomed into activities in exchange for money, gifts, status, protection, affection or other perceived benefits.

Child Criminal Exploitation may include children being used to carry drugs, weapons or money, becoming involved in violence or other criminal activity, or being exploited through county lines or other organised criminal activity.

Child Sexual Exploitation involves situations where children are manipulated or coerced into sexual activity or sexualised behaviour. This may occur online or offline and may involve gifts, money, accommodation, status or perceived relationships.

Possible indicators include:

- unexplained gifts, money, phones or other possessions
- changes in behaviour or presentation
- association with older individuals or unfamiliar groups
- going missing from home, school or other expected settings
- increased secrecy about friendships or activities
- changes in attendance or engagement
- unexplained injuries
- sexualised behaviour or language
- sudden changes in relationships
- evidence of coercion, threats or controlling behaviour.

These indicators should always be considered in the context of the individual child. Exploitation may overlap with other safeguarding concerns, including online abuse, domestic abuse, serious violence, radicalisation and mental health difficulties.
Any concern must be reported to the DSL without delay.

3. Domestic Abuse
Domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children's safety, wellbeing and development. A child is a victim of domestic abuse in their own right where they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse may include physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse and other patterns of abusive behaviour. It may occur between adults in a household or within young people's own intimate relationships.

Possible indicators include:

- changes in behaviour, mood or emotional wellbeing
- anxiety, fearfulness, withdrawal or distress
- unexplained injuries or physical symptoms
- difficulties with concentration, learning or relationships
- changes in attendance or punctuality
- becoming unusually protective or concerned about a parent or family member
- references to arguments, violence, threats or frightening behaviour
- signs of controlling or coercive behaviour within relationships
- information shared by a child, family member, professional or the police.

Any concern must be reported to the DSL without delay. Staff should listen carefully and record what they have seen, heard or been told factually.

Staff must not attempt to investigate domestic abuse themselves or mediate between family members. The DSL will consider whether information should be shared with Children's Social Care, the police or other agencies and whether the child or family requires Family Help/Early Help or a statutory safeguarding response.

Operation Encompass
The school recognises the importance of responding promptly when police attend a domestic abuse incident involving a child's household.

Where the school receives information through Operation Encompass, this will be handled confidentially and shared only with those who need the information to safeguard and support the child. Operation Encompass does not replace the school's normal safeguarding procedures or the need to make a referral where there are concerns that a child is at risk of harm.

4. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
FGM is illegal and is a form of child abuse. It involves procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Staff should be alert to concerns that a child may be at risk of FGM or may have undergone FGM.

Possible indicators include:

- a child talking about a special procedure, ceremony or holiday
- plans for an extended absence from school
- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- physical discomfort or pain
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- reluctance to discuss family or travel arrangements.

Where staff have concerns that a child may be at risk, they must report these to the DSL without delay.

Where a teacher discovers through disclosure or otherwise that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, the teacher has a statutory duty to report this directly to the police, in accordance with current statutory guidance. The DSL must also be informed.

5. Forced Marriage and So-Called 'Honour-Based' Abuse

Forced marriage is a form of abuse and may involve physical, emotional, psychological or sexual abuse, threats, coercion or violence.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse may involve violence, threats, intimidation or coercion intended to protect or defend perceived family or community 'honour'.

Staff should be alert to:

- sudden changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- increased restrictions on a child's movements or friendships
- fear of family members
- discussions about marriage or relationships that cause concern
- plans for unexplained or extended travel
- a child expressing fear about returning home
- withdrawal from education or activities
- evidence of threats, coercion or violence.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL without delay.

Staff must not:

- approach family members to discuss suspicions without safeguarding advice
- attempt to mediate
- make promises about confidentiality
- attempt to investigate.

The DSL will consider the child's immediate safety, wishes and feelings and whether advice or referral to Children's Social Care, the police or specialist services is required.

6. Radicalisation and Extremism – Prevent

Children may be vulnerable to being drawn into extremist ideologies or terrorism. Radicalisation can happen through face-to-face relationships, online activity or a combination of both.

Possible indicators may include:

- significant changes in behaviour or beliefs
- increasing isolation from peers or family
- use of extremist language
- expressing or promoting extremist views
- increased secrecy about online activity or relationships
- association with individuals or groups presenting a risk of radicalisation.

These indicators should not be treated as a checklist and may have other explanations. Staff should maintain professional curiosity and consider the child's wider circumstances.
Any concern must be reported to the DSL without delay.

The DSL will consider whether the concern should be addressed through school-based support, Family Help/Early Help, a Prevent or Channel process, Children's Social Care, the police or another appropriate agency.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency procedures must be followed.

7. Serious Violence
Children may be at risk of serious violence as victims, witnesses or participants.

Possible indicators include:

- unexplained injuries
- increased or unexplained absence
- changes in behaviour or relationships
- association with individuals or groups involved in violence
- possession of weapons or items that could be used as weapons
- increased secrecy
- involvement in criminal activity
- changes in emotional wellbeing or engagement.

Staff should report concerns to the DSL without delay.

The DSL will consider the wider context and any links to criminal exploitation, county lines, peer groups, online activity, missing episodes or other safeguarding concerns.

8. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
Children may be victims of trafficking or modern slavery and may be exploited for criminal, sexual or labour purposes.

Possible indicators include:

- unexplained absence or missing episodes
- appearing fearful, controlled or withdrawn
- association with individuals who appear to control the child
- unexplained money, possessions or accommodation
- reluctance to discuss where they have been or who they spend time with
- signs of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

- being involved in criminal or exploitative activity.

Concerns must be reported to the DSL without delay.

The DSL will consider the child's immediate safety and whether referral to Children's Social Care, the police or other relevant agencies is required.

9. Cybercrime

Cybercrime can affect children both as victims and, in some circumstances, as participants in criminal activity. It may involve hacking, accessing or sharing stolen information, fraud, malware, extortion or other illegal activity. Children may be encouraged, coerced or manipulated into cybercrime by others.

Possible indicators include:

- sudden or unexplained interest in hacking or illegal online activity
- accessing or sharing inappropriate or illegal online material
- unexplained money, devices or possessions
- changes in behaviour, friendships or online activity
- increased secrecy around devices or internet use
- contact with unknown individuals or groups online
- being encouraged, pressured or coerced to carry out illegal activity
- threats, blackmail or extortion linked to online activity
- unexplained absence or disengagement from education.

Cybercrime may overlap with criminal exploitation, online grooming, financial exploitation, coercion or other abuse.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL without delay. Staff must not investigate cybercrime themselves, access a child's accounts or devices beyond what is necessary and authorised under school procedures, or confront another person who may be involved.

10. Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment

A parent or carer's imprisonment may affect a child's emotional wellbeing, attendance, relationships, learning and sense of security. The circumstances should not automatically be viewed as evidence of safeguarding harm, but staff should remain alert to the child's individual needs and wider circumstances.

Possible indicators include:

- increased or unexplained absence or lateness
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- anxiety, withdrawal or difficulties concentrating
- financial hardship or changes in family circumstances
- stigma or bullying
- changes in educational engagement
- increased caring responsibilities.

The DSL will consider the child's wishes and feelings, the impact on their wellbeing and education, any additional safeguarding concerns and whether Family Help/Early Help or other support would be beneficial.

The school will work sensitively with the child, family and relevant professionals and will avoid making assumptions about the impact of imprisonment.

11. Homelessness

Homelessness or the risk of homelessness can increase a child's vulnerability and may be associated with neglect, domestic abuse, poverty, exploitation, substance misuse, mental health difficulties and disrupted education.

Possible indicators include:

- frequent changes of address or temporary accommodation
- overcrowded, unsuitable or insecure accommodation
- staying temporarily with relatives, friends or other households
- concerns about eviction or loss of accommodation
- increased absence or lateness
- tiredness or hunger
- lack of appropriate clothing, equipment or belongings
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- inappropriate caring responsibilities
- information suggesting that the family has no stable accommodation.

Homelessness should not be viewed solely as a housing issue. Staff should consider its impact on the child's safety, wellbeing, education and wider circumstances.

Any concern must be reported to the DSL. The school will work with the family and relevant agencies to help ensure that the child remains safe, attends school and can access appropriate support.

12. Mental Health and Self-Harm

Mental health difficulties may be a safeguarding concern in themselves, may indicate that a child is experiencing harm, or may increase vulnerability to other safeguarding risks.
Staff should be alert to:

- significant changes in mood or behaviour
- withdrawal or isolation
- increased anxiety or distress
- changes in relationships or attendance
- changes in presentation or engagement
- expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness
- self-harm or thoughts of self-harm
- significant changes in eating, sleeping or other behaviour.

Staff should not assume that a mental health difficulty is simply a pastoral issue where there are indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL without delay. Where a child requires additional support but there is no safeguarding concern, the school will consider appropriate pastoral, SEND, Family Help/Early Help, health or specialist support.

13. Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Some children may face additional barriers to recognising, communicating or reporting safeguarding concerns. This includes children with SEND or health needs, children with a social worker, looked-after or previously looked-after children, children experiencing persistent absence, children affected by domestic abuse, exploitation, discrimination or difficult family circumstances.

Staff should:

- avoid assuming that changes in behaviour are solely attributable to SEND, disability or another known need
- make reasonable adjustments to support communication
- ensure children know how to access trusted adults and reporting routes
- consider the child's individual circumstances and lived experience
- maintain appropriate safeguarding vigilance.

Further detail about the safeguarding needs of particular groups of children is set out in the relevant sections of this policy.

14. Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding risks may arise from circumstances outside the family home, including:

- peer groups and friendships
- relationships
- the local community
- school and other settings
- online environments
- places where children spend time
- wider community or societal risks.

Staff should consider the wider context when responding to concerns, including where and when incidents occur, who else may be involved, whether other children may be at risk and whether patterns are emerging.

The school will work with Children's Social Care, the police, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies where contextual risks require a coordinated response.

15. Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes / Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery

Children may create or share sexualised images or videos of themselves or other children. This may happen under pressure, through coercion or exploitation, or without the child fully understanding the consequences.

This includes images or videos created or manipulated using artificial intelligence.

If a child reports receiving, creating or sharing a nude or semi-nude image, staff must:

- remain calm and non-judgemental
- listen and take the concern seriously
- report it to the DSL without delay
- record the concern factually.

Staff must not:

- view or ask to view the image
- copy, save or forward the image
- ask the child to send it to them
- investigate the circumstances themselves
- blame or shame the child.

The DSL will consider the circumstances, risks to all children involved, whether coercion or exploitation is present, whether further action or referral is required and how the children involved should be supported.

16. Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Safeguarding Risks
Technology and artificial intelligence can facilitate existing forms of abuse and create new safeguarding risks.

Staff should remain alert to:

- AI-generated or manipulated sexualised images
- 'nudified' images
- deepfakes and manipulated video
- voice cloning
- bullying or harassment using AI
- grooming or exploitation facilitated by technology
- harmful or inappropriate AI-generated content
- misinformation or manipulated content
- inappropriate interactions with AI chatbots
- children becoming excessively or inappropriately reliant on AI systems.

Where an AI-related concern arises, staff should follow the same safeguarding reporting procedures as for any other concern. Staff must not investigate or circulate harmful material themselves.
The school's online safety and filtering and monitoring arrangements support prevention and response to emerging technology-related risks.

Staff should remember:
Notice it. Be curious. Share the concern.
They do not need to identify the precise safeguarding issue or decide whether a threshold has been met before reporting.