

PRENTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Aims

Our aim is to provide an environment where our pupils can feel totally comfortable and thrive. Staff (meaning everyone who comes into contact with the pupils) therefore need to be able to identify any child who is at risk and to ensure that the correct procedures are followed by both teaching and non-teaching staff.

The school will safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils in the school in compliance with DCSF Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2022"

This policy has been adapted to take into account the 2003 Government Green Paper – Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022 and the Prevent duty (section 26) of The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, July 2015 (updated April 2021). All staff are provided with the relevant documents and sign to say that they have read and understood the relevant parts of them. In particular we aim to encompass the five key outcomes from Every Child Matters, i.e., that every child should be:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well-being

The school is committed to interagency working to safeguard children as set out in the document "Working Together to Safeguard Children", September 2020, updated 2022, the "Domestic Abuse Act", 2021 and "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused".

The policy has been developed in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and is made available to parents on the school website and hard copies are available from the school on request. It applies equally to the EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

School contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children, September 2020*. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. School should allow access for children's social care from Wirral local authority and, if appropriate, from a placing local authority, to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

School ensures that our child protection and safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP).

The proprietors are responsible for reviewing and amending the policy annually and at other times if necessary. They will undertake an annual review of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. The Proprietors will determine any changes to the school's policies and procedures as appropriate. The Proprietors require and ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the School Child protection arrangements are remedied without delay. The Headteacher, as designated person, will report annually to the Proprietors on the working of the policy. The Proprietors, once satisfied, should sign off the school's policy.

Children are taught about safeguarding themselves, including online (see the e-safety policy and code of conduct), through a broad and balanced curriculum including covering relevant issues through assemblies, personal, social and health education (PSHE), ICT and, in the juniors, through sex and relationship education (SRE). Proprietors should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through the curriculum and PSHE.

The school curriculum, procedures and policies have been developed to help children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet.

The children should understand the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults. Internet safety is integral to the school's ICT curriculum and also be embedded in PSHE and sex and relationships education (SRE).

The latest resources promoted by DfE can be found at:

- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation
- The UK Safer Internet Centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- CEOP's Thinkuknow website (www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

2. Objectives

All staff members, including volunteers, are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff members, including volunteers, are made aware of systems within school which support child protection and these are explained to them and given out with the staff handbook as part of staff induction. This includes: the school's child protection policy; the school's staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); and the identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) – Mr. M. T. R. Jones, the deputy DSL – Miss J. Orme and the Proprietor with responsibility for safeguarding – Mrs. J. Storey.

In addition to working with the designated safeguarding lead, staff members are aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children.

All staff members, including volunteers, also receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated. This training should also ensure that all staff and volunteers have read and understood Part 1 and Annex A of KCSiE. As a part of a newly appointed member of staff's induction process, they are made aware of the identity and role of the DSL, made familiar with this policy and provided with a copy of Part 1 and Annex A of KCSiE.

The proprietors have ensured that the school has designated an appropriate senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for child protection, DSL. This person is the Headteacher who has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff. The also proprietors ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare and that child protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C of KCSiE 2022

3. Definitions of Child Abuse

Abuse:

a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse:

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

Emotional abuse:

the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse:

involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect:

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

result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Specific safeguarding issues:

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the TES website and also on its own website www.nspcc.org.uk Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see below
- bullying including cyberbullying and peer on peer abuse – see below
- domestic violence – see below
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
- forced marriage – see below
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation – see below
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

Further information on specific safeguarding issues:

Child abduction and community safety incidents:

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child.

Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE):

This is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse via the internet.

This involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitation relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. (Grooming is the process by which an offender draws a victim into a sexual relationship and maintains that relationship in secrecy. The shrouding of the relationship is an essential feature of grooming. The six stages are: targeting the victim, gaining the victim's trust, filling a need, isolating the child, sexualizing the relationship and maintaining control. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Some of the following can be indicators of CSE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Refers to the exploitation of a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. The activity can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late.
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

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Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

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- Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:
- Can affect any child or young person under the age of 18 years.
- Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Domestic abuse:

This is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at: NSPCC-UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects.

Refuge- what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children.

Other issues which could raise safeguarding issues are:

- Domestic Violence
- Drugs
- Gangs & Youth Violence
- Gender based Violence
- Trafficking
- Sexting
- Relationship Abuse
- Mental Health
- Private Fostering

Abuse can take place wholly online and maybe used to facilitate offline abuse.

Domestic abuse can impact on children when they witness it at home and/or suffer it in an intimate personal relationship.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practise or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Types of Procedures:

- Clitoridectomy - partial/total removal of the clitoris.
- Excision - partial/total removal of the clitoris and labia minora.
- Infibulation - entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia.

All other procedures that may include; pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening:

- Pupil talking about getting ready for a special ceremony.
- Family taking a long trip abroad.
- Knowledge that the pupil's sibling has undergone FGM.
- Pupil talks about going abroad to be cut or to prepare for marriage.

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities.
- Behaviour changes on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued.
- Bladder or menstrual problems.
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable.
- Complaining about pain between the legs.
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group.
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity.

FGM & CSE must also be reported to the police as a matter of urgency before consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Once this has been done, give all the relevant information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Children missing education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. Staff need to be vigilant about unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. All absence must be authorised; if there is a pattern to the absence, then the Designated Teacher must be informed and he/she must follow safeguard procedures.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities.) Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. We (School) can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

Honour Based Abuse

Encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practises such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Prevent

This is the prevention of children or adults being drawn into terrorism. It has four key areas:

PREVENT - stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;

PURSUE - stop terrorist attacks and prosecute wherever possible;

PROTECT - strengthen protection against terrorist attack in the UK and overseas interests;

PREPARE- mitigate terrorist attack when it can't be stopped.

The school will therefore aim to do the following:

a) Educate pupils on the appropriate use of social media and the dangers of downloading and sharing inappropriate material including that which is illegal under the Counter- Terrorism Act.

b) Ensure that pupils are unable to access any inappropriate internet sites whilst using the school computers/laptops through the use of appropriate filtering, firewalls and security settings.

c) Educate pupils through lessons and assemblies on the concepts of radicalisation and extreme ideology.

d) Inform pupils on the importance of Internet Safety both through the ICT curriculum and PSHE education.

Radicalisation

Refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. (See Prevent Policy)

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Child-on Child Abuse

Children can abuse children. This is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to):

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

The following points must be considered by all staff:

- It is more likely that girls will be victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. We should be aware of the importance of:
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up', 'just having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'; and challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, vaginas and penises. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

To finalise the advice is sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

SEN Children

We as staff must recognise the children with SEN and Disabilities can be especially vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children.

Children With Family Members in Prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides

information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead should be aware of contact details and referral routes in the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti- social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children

When referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 are rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault. When referring to sexual harassment we mean unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. An example of sexual harassment could be sexual comments, sexual jokes or taunting, physical behaviour, online sexual harassment- sharing of images, bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages.

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12th April 2019. "Upskirting" is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

Serious violence

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

Bullying (See Policy for More Guidance)

Bullying is not easy to define, can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. Or is when a child finds what's done upsetting. The three main types of bullying are physical, verbal and emotional.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in schools guidance.

4a. Concerns for a Child in Need / Early Help

If staff members have any concerns (even seemingly minor) about a child they should raise these with the school's designated safeguarding lead, the Headteacher.

The designated safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care.

For allegations against members of staff, volunteers or the Headteacher please refer to section 13.

4b. Child at Immediate Risk of Serious Harm

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Initially staff should report to the DSL who will refer this situation to social services immediately. However anybody can make a referral if they are sufficiently concerned or do not feel the relevant referral was made. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

- Take the time to listen to a child's disclosure the following advice should be followed in such circumstances:
- Arrange a time and place where you can talk privately as soon as possible after the child has initiated contact.
- Stay calm and reassuring.
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what the child tells you a secret.
- Listen to and believe what the child tells you - explain that, whatever the circumstances, he/she is not to blame for the incident.
- Do not press for details or ask leading questions - some cases of abuse may need further and possibly extensive investigation. It is better for the child if he/she does not have to repeat the details unnecessarily.
- Explain that there are other people that you will have to contact. Who these people are will depend on the procedure which the school has already adopted.
- Don't make any promises to the child - the situation may cause you to react emotionally. Whilst this is an understandable and natural reaction, at such times it is possible that you may make promises which cannot, in the event, be fulfilled.

5. If suspicions of abuse are aroused or if an allegation is made by a child, the following procedure must be adhered to.

Tell the DSL immediately, even if you have no proof. Keep notes, based on observation and evidence, in a separate file, on a daily basis, if necessary and monitor the situation closely. Members of staff and volunteers must report their concerns to the DSL as soon as possible but always within 24 hours if the concern is serious. If the DSL is unavailable then concerns should be reported to the deputy DSL or the proprietor with responsibility for safeguarding (named above).

Child protection information should be treated as strictly confidential and only discussed on a 'need to know' basis. Parents and teachers not directly involved should not be told at this stage, and maybe not at all. Such decisions can only be made after discussion with the DSL.

Children confiding in a member of staff must be given the benefit of the doubt and their allegation taken seriously, even if it seems far-fetched.

If a child asks that nobody else is told, you must explain that you can only help by telling the DSL.

All allegations will be referred to the CADT for advice before any investigation takes place. In borderline cases these discussions can be held informally and without naming any individual. Parental or pupil consent is not required to make a referral if there are concerns about a child's safety.

If, after discussion with the CADT / LADO, it is felt appropriate for school to investigate, following discussion with the DSL, it may be thought appropriate to follow any one or more of the following courses of action: -

- (a) enquire of other members of staff if they have observed anything amiss;
- (b) enquire of parents about an observable injury or behavioural change;
- (c) enquire of any previous school who may have helpful information;
- (d) consult professional Agencies for information or advice e.g., Local Safeguarding unit, including the LADO, Child Guidance, local child and family services.

In discussion with any of the above, close notes must be kept of what is said - even, in the case of suspected parties, a record of the actual words spoken. Where possible draw a diagram to indicate bruising. However only parts of a child's body which are normally visible should be viewed.

Where suspicion turns out to be unfounded, notes should, anyway, be preserved and the designated lead consulted if there are any grounds for further suspicion.

Where suspicion was not proven, but was possibly well founded and suspicion remains, notes should continue to be kept and closely monitored and such notes passed on to any future school the child attends.

In this instance the procedures followed will conform to the recommendations made in the Wirral Child Protection policy statement (copy available in the Staffroom).

Any records of concern will be kept in a confidential Child protection file to which only the DSL (the Headteacher), the Deputy DSL and the nominated proprietor have access.

Reporting arrangements will include that the most suitable welfare agency will be contacted within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

Any referrals the school may make will be followed up with a letter as soon as possible and always within 48 hours. A copy of the letter will be placed in the confidential Child protection file

Any serious concerns will be reported to the police in the child's home area if it is not possible to contact social services.

It should be noted that bullying and peer-on-peer abuse, when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, should be treated as a safeguarding concern.

For procedures of how to deal with peer-to-peer abuse and allegations (including sexting, passing off abusive comments and interactions as mere 'banter', sexual assaults, gender-based issues and how victims will be supported) refer to the school **anti-bullying policy**.

Any such abuse will be referred to local agencies as a safeguarding issue with all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, treated as being 'at risk'. (*Advice about sexting in schools is also available from the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS): Sexting in schools and colleges.*)

See also the school **anti-cyber bullying policy** and the **e-safety policy**.

It is important to differentiate between safeguarding children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. Subject to local procedures and reporting thresholds which can vary, the former should be reported to Children's Social Care immediately; the latter should lead to early help, inter-agency assessment and intervention using local processes, including use of the 'Common Assessment Framework' (CAF) and 'Team around the Child' (TAC) approaches.

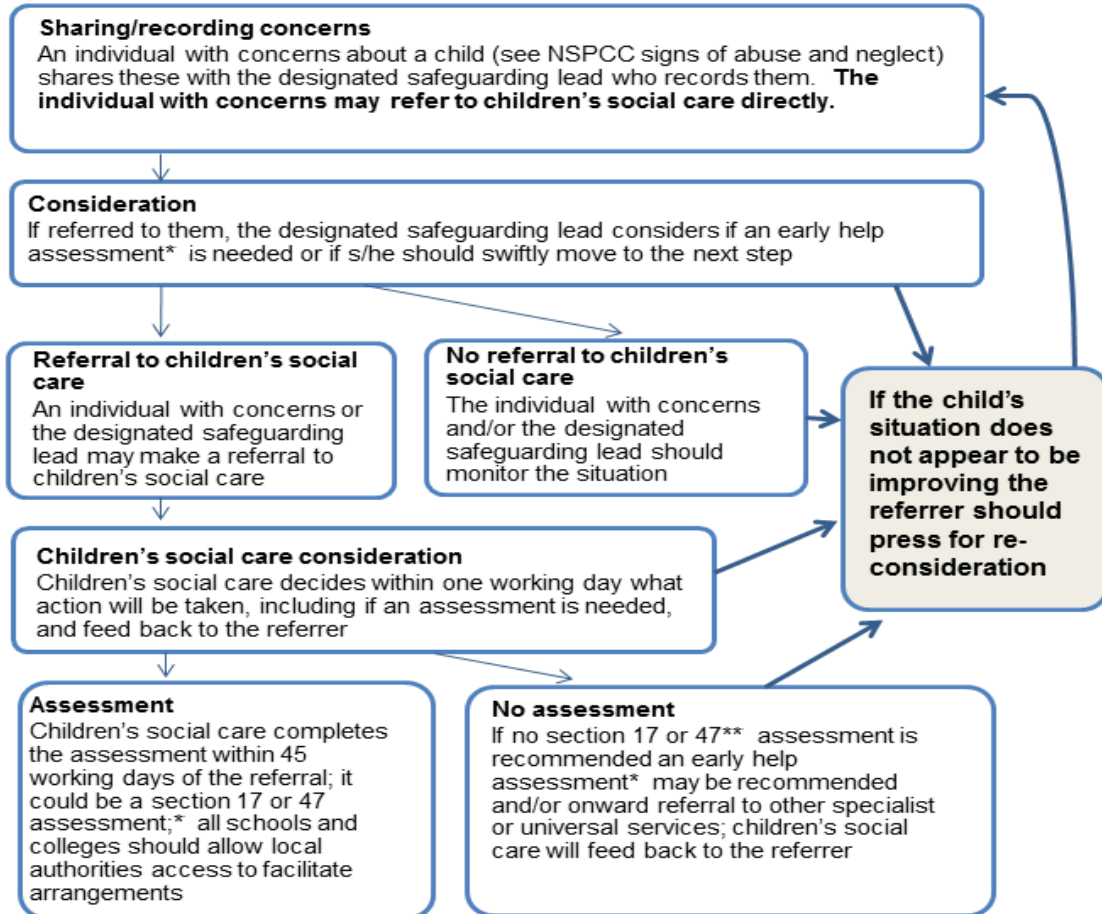
All members of staff and volunteers have the DSL emergency contact details and can make a referral to them at any point 24 hours a day, if deemed necessary.

See diagram below for advice on what action to take when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm.

Action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm

This diagram illustrates what action should be taken and who should take it when there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.

Anybody can make a referral.



* Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (eg, education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs coordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

** Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need). Where there are child protection concerns local authority services must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

6. Involvement of parents

Where possible, after discussion with appropriate Agencies or staff the Headteacher will seek to arrange a meeting with the parents / carers of the child involved to discuss allegations. If necessary, a representative of the appropriate Agency will be present as well as the Form Teacher.

7. Records

Any records of concern will be kept in a confidential Child protection file to which only the DSL (the Headteacher), deputy DSL and nominated proprietor have access.

Any referrals the school may make will be followed up with a letter as soon as possible and always within 48 hours. A copy of the letter will be placed in the confidential Child protection file.

8. Signs and Symptoms

Signs of Physical Abuse:

- unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent;
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries;
- refusal to discuss injuries;
- untreated injuries;
- admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- bald patches;
- withdrawal from physical contact;
- arms and legs kept covered in hot weather;
- fear of returning home;
- fear of medical help;
- self-destructive tendencies;
- aggression towards others;
- running away

Signs of Neglect

- constant hunger;
- poor personal hygiene;
- constant tiredness;
- poor state of clothing;
- emaciation;
- frequent lateness or non-attendance at school;
- untreated medical problems;
- destructive tendencies;
- low self-esteem;
- neurotic behaviour;
- no social relationships;
- running away;
- compulsive stealing or scavenging.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

- physical, mental and emotional development lags;
- admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- over-reaction to mistakes;
- continual self-deprecation;
- sudden speech disorders;
- fear of new situations;
- inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;
- neurotic behaviour (for example rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking);
- self mutilation;
- fear of parents being contacted;
- extremes of passivity or aggression;
- drug/solvent abuse;
- running away;
- compulsive stealing, scavenging.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

- sudden changes in behaviour or school performance;
- displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age;
- tendency to cry easily;
- regression to younger behaviour such as thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby;
- complains of genital itching or pain;
- distrust of a familiar adult, a baby-sitter or lodger;
- unexplained gifts or money;
- depression and withdrawal;

- apparent secrecy;
- wetting, day or night;
- sleep disturbances or nightmares;
- chronic illnesses, especially throat infections and venereal disease;
- anorexia or bulimia;
- unexplained pregnancy;
- fear of undressing for gym;
- phobias or panic attacks.

9. **The Prevent Strategy**

On 1 July 2015 the Prevent duty (section 26) of The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (updated April 2021) came into force. This duty places the responsibility on local authorities and schools to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Prenton Preparatory School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. As a school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is as important as safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

All staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We believe that children should be given the opportunity to explore diversity and understand Britain as a multi-cultural society; everyone should be treated with respect whatever their race, gender, sexuality, religious belief, special need, or disability.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding and child protection we fully support the government's *Prevent Strategy*.

Any member of staff who observes a pupil or adult in school displaying any form of extremist behaviour or who suspects a pupil is at risk of radicalisation should report this to the DSL.

The DSL will report concerns of this nature to the Merseyside Police Prevent / Channel Team. If any member of staff feels it is necessary, they can report directly to this team themselves.

10. **Use of Mobile 'Phones and Digital Cameras (including in EYFS)**

a) **Use of personal mobile phones & cameras by staff and volunteers (including in EYFS)**

PPS recognises that staff, students and volunteers may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergency. However, safeguarding of children within the setting is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore all staff should adhere to the following policy:

Personal mobile phones should only be used in the staff room, office or outside the building (away from the children). They should only be used whilst staff are on breaks or outside of working hours.

Staff, students or volunteers who ignore this policy may face disciplinary action.

The main school telephone number can be used for emergencies by staff or volunteers or by people who need to contact them.

In circumstances such as outings and off-site visits, staff will agree with the Headteacher the appropriate use of personal mobile phones in the event of an emergency.

Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations' process will be followed (see below).

b) **Use of personal mobile phones and cameras by parents/carers and visitors (including in EYFS)**

PPS recognises that visitors may wish to have their personal mobile phones with them for use in case of emergency. However, safeguarding of children within the setting is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore we have implemented the following policy:

Mobile phones and cameras should only be used away from the children, off site or in our staff room. The main school telephone number can be used for emergencies.

Parents may take photographs of children participating in concerts, plays, sports days and other authorised events, as all parents have completed a photograph permission slip. However those wishing to take such photographs should register at the appointed point before the event.

In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations' process will be followed (see below).

c) **Use of School mobile phones, cameras and recording equipment (including in EYFS)**

PPS provides a mobile phone and cameras for staff, students and volunteers to use to support their work with children. To ensure the appropriate use of this equipment, and to safeguard children, the following policy applies:

Cameras and recording equipment belonging to PPS may be used to take appropriate and relevant images of children, i.e. observations, photographs of activities and events. Images must be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

It is not appropriate to take photographs of bruising or injuries on a child for child protection concerns. In these cases a Concern Form must be used.

The PPS mobile is solely for the purpose of contacting or being contacted by parents/carers. They can also be taken off site in circumstances such as outings. These mobiles do not have a camera facility.

In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on any of the PPS mobile phones may be unsuitable and provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations' process will be followed (see below).

The PPS mobile phone and cameras remain the property of the school at all times and should only be taken off of the premises for the purpose of having photographs produced for school use (with the exception of visits and outings).

11. Staff Recruitment

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education.

Prenton Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Proprietors and the School comply fully with Safer Recruitment systems and procedures in compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations. The proprietors take a proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors.

See also the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

12. Designated People

The School has a DSL, the Headteacher, Mr. M. T. R. Jones, in charge of safeguarding who has been trained appropriately (inter-agency training agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)). This training is updated at least every two years and a record of this training is kept on file.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual problems associated with child protection are investigated and dealt with. The designated person will ensure that he/she is aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and will keep the Proprietors, staff and volunteers informed as appropriate

The DSL will ensure that the appropriate training of all staff, academic and non academic, and volunteers is organised whenever new staff join the school as part of their induction and is updated at least every 2 years.

The DSL will co-ordinate action in the school, refer and liaise with Social Services and other agencies over suspected or actual cases of child abuse within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. They will then work in full co-operation with the relevant authorities.

In the event that the DSL is not available the School has a Deputy DSL, the EYFS Leader, Miss J. Orme, who has also been trained appropriately to the same level as the DSL. Mrs. J. Storey is the proprietor in charge of safeguarding and has also been trained appropriately to the same level as the DSL. This training is updated at least every two years and a record of this training is kept on file.

13. Allegations against Members of Staff, Volunteers or The Headteacher

What to do:

See below for procedures to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers:

All such allegations should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Any parent or staff member with an allegation against a member of staff should contact the Headteacher or, in their absence, the deputy DSL. Any allegation will be dealt in good faith according to the Complaints policy, Stage 2. Allegations of a safeguarding concern should be referred to the LADO by the Headteacher with immediate effect and certainly within 24 hours of the initial complaint.

All allegations will be treated sympathetically and the school will not tolerate any retribution nor will any disciplinary action ever be brought for "whistle blowing". Further information on this situation is available in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Any parent or staff member with an allegation against the Headteacher should contact the Proprietor with responsibility for safeguarding, who will then report this to the LADO and co-operate with any subsequent investigation the Headteacher must not be made aware of any such allegation prior to contact with the proprietor and LADO.

School will not undertake any investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO, or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations.

The member of staff subject to an allegation may be suspended from work. School will consider whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place. School will give due weight to the views of the LADO, KCSiE and WT (and where necessary police) when making a decision about suspension.

School will inform the relevant authorities of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. This will be done as soon as is reasonably practicable.

From 1 October 2012, there are restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers, and so school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

If a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made by the Headteacher or the Proprietors within 24 hours and consideration would also be made to report this to the National College for Teaching and leadership (NCTL). This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

14 **Staff Training**

All staff read the School Safeguarding and Child Protection policies, Part One of KCSiE 2022 and Working Together to Safeguard Children last updated 2022. These documents are emailed annually, or more often if updated, to staff and hard copies are available for those preferring this format. All staff sign a form annually to say that they have read and understood the documents.

The DSL receives updated child protection training every two years. This includes local inter-agency working protocols and training in the WSCP's approach to Prevent duties.

Additional designated safeguarding staff (deputy and proprietor) are trained to the same level as the DSL.

All staff are trained in child protection and safeguarding regularly (at least every 2 years, with annual updates), in line with advice from the WSCP. Prevent awareness training is part of this. Staff training also includes on-line safety. These are done through the online Educare training platform.

The two-yearly training for DSLs and regular formal training for staff are supplemented with informal updates in staff meetings as required but at least annually on the September INSET day.

All new staff are provided with induction training that includes:

- o the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies, including information about the identity and role of the DSL, deputy DSL and proprietor with responsibility for safeguarding;
- o the Staff Code of Conduct including the whistleblowing procedure and the e-safety policy including the acceptable use of technologies policy;
- o a copy of Part 1 of KCSiE 2022 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2020;

Temporary staff and volunteers are risk assessed and if deemed necessary provided with the above documents as part of their induction process – see also school **Induction Policy**.

15 One-to-one teaching

Some children undertake one-to-one teaching with peripatetic teachers in learning support and musical tuition. All such lessons are taught in specified rooms with windows in the doors. If in exceptional circumstances these rooms are unavailable the door to a replacement room must be left open whilst teaching.

All peripatetic staff are thoroughly checked according to the school Safer Recruitment policy.

16 Contact Details:

DSL (M.T.R. Jones) – via school (out of hours emergency contact)	0151 652 3182 (Mon – Fri: 9am – 5pm) 07733 223879 (out of hours) headteacher@prentonprep.co.uk
Deputy DSL (J. Orme) – via school	0151 652 3182 (Mon – Fri: 9am – 5pm) jorme_prentonprep@outlook.com
Nominated Proprietor (Mrs. J. Storey)	07551 740013 js@forfaeducation.co.uk
Wirral LADO (Pamela Cope)	0151 666 4442 / 5525 07342 058612 pamelacope@wirral.gov.uk safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk
Integrated Front Door (for any safeguarding / child protection concerns)	0151 606 2008 (Mon – Fri: 9am – 5pm) ifd@wirral.gov.uk 0151 677 6557 (out of hours)
Wirral Director of Children's Services (Simone White)	0151 606 2000
Wirral Head of Service Quality & Safeguarding (Joe Banham)	0151 666 4371
Prevent Co-ordinator (Alison Burnett)	07394 559106 alison.burnett@liverpool.gov.uk
Merseyside Police Prevent Team	0151 777 8125 prevent@merseyside.police.uk
Police (emergency) (non-emergency but possible crime)	999 101
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) DBS Customer Services PO Box 110 Liverpool L69 3JD	0870 909 0811
National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL)	0800 085 0984
DfE mailbox.disqualification@education.gsi.gov.uk	01325 340 409
The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (0207 340 7264) to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk .	
Ofsted	0300 123 1231
Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)	0207 600 0100

RECORD OF CHILD PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING CONCERN:

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Signed: Staff Title:

Headteacher: Designated person:

Date:

APPENDIX A:

THE PREVENT STRATEGY

The Prevent strategy

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorist or extremist causes. The Prevent strategy covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing, violent Islamist groups and other extremist causes.

How does the Prevent strategy apply to schools?

From July 2015 (updated April 2020) all schools (as well as other organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism. This means we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views the same way we protect them from drugs or gang violence. Importantly, we can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss these issues so they better understand how to protect themselves.

What does this mean in practice?

Many of the things we already do in school to help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy.

These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments
- Developing critical thinking skills and a strong, positive self-identity
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, as well as British values such as democracy

We will also protect children from the risk of radicalisation, for example by using filters on the internet to make sure they can't access extremist and terrorist material, or by vetting visitors who come into school to work with pupils.

Different schools will carry out the Prevent duty in different ways, depending on the age of the children and the needs of the community.

How does Prevent relate to British values?

Schools have been required to promote British values since 2014, and this will continue to be part of our response to the Prevent strategy.

British values include:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

Isn't my child too young to learn about extremism?

The Prevent strategy is not just about discussing extremism itself, which may not be appropriate for younger children. It is also about teaching children values such as tolerance and mutual respect.

The school will make sure any discussions are suitable for the age and maturity of the children involved.

Is extremism really a risk in our area?

Extremism can take many forms, including political, religious and misogynistic extremism. Some of these may be a bigger threat in our area than others. We will give children the skills to protect them from any extremist views they may encounter, now or later in their lives.

Key Terms

Extremism:	vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
Ideology:	a set of beliefs
Terrorism:	a violent action against people or property, designed to create fear and advance a political, religious or ideological cause
Radicalisation:	the process by which a person comes to support extremism and terrorism.

Last reviewed:

Autumn 2022

Date of next review:

Autumn 2023

Member of staff responsible for review

M. T. R. Jones

RECORD OF CHILD PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING CONCERN:

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Headteacher:

Designated person:

Date: