Child Protection / Safeguarding and Promoting the Well-Being of Children and Young People Policy

Policy control	School completion
School / setting	Westcliffe Primary School
Policy publication date	September 2026
Approved by governing body / proprietor	8th October 2026
Review date	September 2027, or earlier if required
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Robert Prestwood
Deputy DSL(s)	Melanie Troop
Safeguarding governor	Amber Bradley

School values and commitment

Westcliffe Primary School aims to provide all members of the school community with the opportunities to engage with the highest quality of education and encouragement. We are committed to striving for excellence and ensuring that all students are known, valued and can achieve.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is inside or outside the home, including online risks
- 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

Safeguarding is a "Shared Responsibility", as defined in Chapter 1 of Working Together 2026. We wish to create a safeguarding ethos where staff:

- share the same goals
- learn with and from each other
- have what they need to help families
- acknowledge and appreciate difference
- challenge each other

We will establish a child centred ethos where: -

- children feel safe so that they can learn and develop
- children know there are adults they can talk to if they are worried
- children are equipped with the skills needed to stay safe, providing opportunities for PSHE throughout the curriculum.

1. Purpose and scope

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all practice will be child-centred, considering at all times what is in the best interests of the child.

This policy applies to all staff, supply staff, volunteers, governors/trustees, contractors and others working in or on behalf of the school, including during off-site and extended-school activity. A child is anyone under the age of 18.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- clarify roles and responsibilities of everyone within our school in relation to child protection and safeguarding
- provide help and support as soon as problems emerge
- ensure that all staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding and are trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues protect children from maltreatment within or outside the home, including online
- have clear procedures that are followed when a child is identified as needing more than universal services can provide
- prevent impairment of mental and physical health or development

- ensure children grow up with safe and effective care
- take action to enable the best outcomes

2. Policy Definitions

Child Protection and Safeguarding: Safeguarding and Child Protection

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to the specific activity that is undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Child protection procedures are followed where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare that may require statutory intervention.

A child: any person under the age of 18 years.

Harm means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Health includes physical and mental health; maltreatment includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Providing Help, Support and Protection (Family Help) means the 'support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse'

Looked after children (LAC) - KCSIE guidance refers to LAC in the policies. However, in North Lincolnshire we should use the term children in care or care experienced in our own reports/recording as it is a more positive term, except when we are quoting the specific guidance.

3. Statutory framework

The school will have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and will comply with applicable safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. All staff will read KCSIE Part One in full and follow this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures.

The policy is also read alongside applicable statutory guidance on attendance, children missing education, alternative provision, Prevent, female genital mutilation, information sharing and the Early Years Foundation Stage where relevant.

4. Equality, inclusion and the voice of the child

We recognise our obligations under the Equality Act 2010; the school will safeguard children without unlawful discrimination because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation. Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification, gender reassignment or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language (EAL)
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs or at risk of witnessing or (see, hear or experience) domestic abuse and its effects.
- Children who struggle with transitions
- Are looked after or previously looked after
- Are missing or absent from education, home or care for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

Staff recognise that some children face additional barriers to recognising or reporting harm, including children with SEND or health conditions, children in care or previously in care, young carers, children absent from education and children experiencing discrimination, exploitation, domestic abuse, mental ill health or other adversity.

Children's wishes, feelings and lived experiences will be sought and considered. A child does not need to make a verbal disclosure for staff to act. Staff will maintain professional curiosity and provide accessible ways for pupils to report concerns.

We recognise the use of Interpreters and will always seek professional advice. Where we have adult or children and young people welfare, safeguarding and child protection concerns, we will always use a recommended interpreter and service. For example, language line or ONGO housing. In all cases, we work to the Bell Foundation guidelines https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/resources/detail/guidance-for-probation-service-staff-and-interpreters/

5. Providing help, support and protection

The child's welfare is paramount. Effective safeguarding usually benefits from positive, open and honest relationships with parents and carers. We will normally work in partnership with parents, share concerns and involve them in support and decision-making. We may share information or make a referral without consent where seeking consent is not appropriate, cannot reasonably be expected, or may place the child or another person at increased risk, impede an investigation or otherwise undermine safeguarding.

Children will be given an explanation, adapted to their age, understanding and communication needs, of what is happening and why. Their wishes and feelings will be heard and considered, while recognising that safeguarding action may still be required when it differs from a child's expressed wishes.

Providing Help, Support and Protection (Early Help)

The definition of early help has been updated to family help to recognise 'support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse' (Working Together 2026).

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child or young person who:

- Is disabled

- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Through research fall within more risk categories, for example (teenage boys) are more likely to be exploited via financially motivated online Sextortion - National Crime Agency
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Are pregnant and/or are parents themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, missing from home/care
- Is not in receipt of full-time education, have been repeatedly removed from the classroom or are on a part-time timetable
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded
- Is lonely (see Building Connections | Support service for young people | NSPCC Learning)

Assessments for early help will consider how the needs of different family members impact each other. This includes needs relating to education, mental and physical health, financial stability, housing, substance use and crime. When supporting assessments, our staff will take into consideration specific needs, such as disabilities, those whose first language isn't English, fathers or male carers, and parents who identify as LGBTQI+A.

We will work with safeguarding professionals and childcare settings to share information, identify, and understand risks of harm, and ensure children and families receive timely support. We have a duty to support a multi-agency response to all forms of abuse and exploitation in all children's social care assessments and support practitioners understanding of the response to online harm. We recognise Service Pupils in Schools: Non-statutory guidance - GOV.UK

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Governing body / proprietor

The Governing body will:

- each hold an enhanced DBS check and have been subject to a Section 128 check
- ensure there is a Safeguarding Governor that is named on this policy and is assured that the Single Central Record is checked and in line with KCSIE 2026
- provide strategic leadership of safeguarding and ensure policies, procedures and training comply with the law and KCSIE

- ensure an effective child protection policy is in place, reviewed at least annually and available publicly
- the school has a staff behaviour policy and/or code of conduct. The policy includes acceptable use of technology, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- ensure all governors/trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and regular updates
- appoint an appropriate senior DSL and trained deputies, with sufficient time, authority, funding and resources and ensure all senior leaders and the DSL/DDSLs have read Annex B KCSIE 2026
- ensure safer recruitment, required checks for all staff including an online search as part of due diligence checks in the recruitment process and volunteers
- ensure effective arrangements for allegations against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures and have procedures for low-level concerns and whistleblowing
- ensure appropriate online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place and reviewed Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK
- ensure pupils placed in alternative provision remain appropriately safeguarded and provision is suitable. The school will undertake appropriate due diligence when commissioning alternative provision, obtain written assurance that appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed, know where pupils are receiving their education and review placements at least half-termly
- seek appropriate assurance through safeguarding monitoring, audit and challenge
- the school attends all relevant Strategy, Initial Child Protection and Review Conferences, Early Help and LADO meetings

6.2 Headteacher / Principal

The Headteacher/Principal will:

- implement the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body/proprietor and are followed by all staff
- create an open safeguarding culture in which concerns can be raised and acted upon by staff and volunteers in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies and use of the Children's MARS Professional Resolution & Escalation Protocol. Escalation-and-Resolution-Policy-and-Procedure
- ensures the DSL is an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team and takes lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding (including online safety and understanding filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description and aligned to KCSIE 2026 (Annex B)
- ensure the DSL/DDSLs have sufficient time, resources, cover and access to relevant information and professional support/supervision
- the DSL completes the serious child safeguarding incident notification, where the criteria is reached Notification-Of-Serious-Child-Safeguarding-Incident-to-Safeguarding-Partners.
- the DSL requests safeguarding partners to consider a case for a local child safeguarding practice review Request-to-Safeguarding-Partners-for-case-to-be-considered-for-a-CSPR, where the criteria is reached
- ensure staff and volunteers receive safeguarding induction, training and updates

- allegations regarding staff or any other adults in school are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as set out in the Managing Allegations procedure. CMARS | Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - CMARS
- act as case manager for allegations about staff unless the allegation concerns the Headteacher/Principal
- ensure referrals to DBS, TRA, LADO, police, children's social care, Ofsted or other bodies are made where required
- ensure the NSPCC's 'What you can do to report abuse' dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8am-8pm Mon-Fri and email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- individuals are referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teacher Regulation Authority (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and serious misconduct)
- there is always adequate DSL /DDSL cover during the school day, and cover arrangements are made in accordance with KCSIE 2026
- The DSL /DDSLs reflect on practice against the local CMARS Practice-Standards-Checklist-to-Promote-Effective-Multi-Agency-Practice-Working-Together-2023.pdf

6.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is expected to:

- take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and filtering and monitoring (included in the job description)
- act as a source of advice and support for all staff and volunteers and be a point of contact with safeguarding partners
- read and understand KCSIE 2026 in full and keep knowledge current
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance – PACE Code C 2019
- adhere to the CMARS quality standards for child protection conferences Quality-Standards-for-Child-Protection-conferences and support the agenda and complete the child protection conference report template, MARS-Multiagency-Report template
- manage referrals, records, information sharing and transfer of child protection files
- as required, liaise with IMAP/SPOC/Police/Health (PREVENT) and other professionals for child protection concerns
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads, on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically
- promote educational outcomes for children with or previously with a social worker and work closely with SEND, attendance, mental health and pastoral leads
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances

- ensure the child's wishes and feelings inform safeguarding action and ensure appropriate support after referrals or incidents
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college

Any safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor must be reported without delay to the Headteacher/Principal. Concerns about the Headteacher/Principal must be reported to the Chair of Governors/appropriate proprietor. Where a conflict of interest exists, the concern should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) LADO Initial Considerations Guide / CMARS | Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - CMARS

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold will be managed in accordance with KCSIE Part Four and CMARS/LADO procedures. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be recorded and managed under the school's low-level concerns arrangements and Staff Code of Conduct. The school will maintain a culture of openness, trust and transparency.

Alternative Provision (AP) / Interim Provision (IP): Educational provision arranged for pupils who are unable to attend mainstream school full-time or temporarily. The school retains safeguarding responsibility for all pupils attending AP/IP and will monitor their safety, welfare, attendance, and educational outcomes. Liaise with the Local Authority – Lead School Improvement Officer for AP/IP Provision and, the LADO (where professional practice concerns are raised).

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

The role of schools in corporate parenting is to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where children in care and care-experienced young people can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Schools act as key partners in promoting stability, raising aspirations, and ensuring that every child has access to high-quality education, positive relationships, and opportunities to achieve their potential. Through effective collaboration with families, carers, social workers, and other professionals, schools help to identify and remove barriers to learning, champion the voice of the child, and ensure that looked after children receive the understanding, support, and advocacy they need to succeed both in education and in life. The school will work with the LA to promote the NLC Corporate Parent Promise.

6.4 All staff

Our staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. All our staff have responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

Our staff are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, which means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life and understand their role in it. From the foundation years to the teenage years.

All staff will:

- read and sign to say they understand KCSIE Part One in full and receive safeguarding and online safety training annually and upon induction
- maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and act immediately on concerns
- follow the school's child protection procedures which are consistent with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026', Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the North Lincolnshire Children's MARS guidance https://www.northlincscmars.co.uk/policies-procedures-and-guidance/
- provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- report concerns to the DSL/DDSL and make a referral themselves where necessary
- never promise confidentiality and share information on a need-to-know basis
- record concerns promptly, factually and in the child's own words where appropriate
- report concerns about an adult to the Headteacher without delay, or to the Chair of Governors where the concern is about the Headteacher; where there is a conflict of interest, seek LADO advice
- report concerns about adults without delay through the routes in section 9
- understand their roles in filtering and monitoring and report technical or safeguarding concerns
- ensure that the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe

All staff are encouraged to consider the importance of voluntary, charity and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, family hubs Family Hubs and Best Start in Life - North Lincolnshire Council the NLC One Family Approach NL-OFA-Practice-Model to better support our families/carers. Staff have access to Helping-Children-Families, information when supporting children, young people, families and carers and promote local family information, advice and signposting Home

Our curriculum supports local CMARS, "*Shine a light areas*", with a particular focus on supporting children and young people living in households where domestic abuse may be present, raising awareness of the impact of domestic abuse, engaging with voluntary agencies, encouraging NSPCC, Pol-Ed and Blue Door assemblies, whilst supporting our school staff to implement trauma informed approaches into practice.

In addition to the children who may require help before statutory interventions KCSIE 2026 (Page 11), all staff will notify the DSL/DDSL, where a child has experienced:

- multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- has a parent or carer in custody (previously it was in 'prison'), or is affected by parental offending
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

All staff support the CMARS policy Statement – Protecting Disabled Children from Harm CMARS | Supplementary Documents - CMARS

7. Recognising safeguarding concerns

Abuse, neglect and exploitation may occur inside or outside the home, online or offline, and different harms may overlap. Staff will be alert to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and to specific safeguarding issues described in KCSIE, including child-on-child abuse, domestic abuse, exploitation, serious violence, radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage, modern slavery, online harm and children absent from education.

Detailed definitions, indicators and practice guidance are in Part 2. Staff must not use indicator lists as a substitute for professional curiosity or an immediate safeguarding response.

Female Genital Mutilation: All concerns that a girl may be at risk of FGM will be reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL and managed through safeguarding procedures. Teachers also have a specific statutory duty to report personally to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. This duty does not replace the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Mental health problems can develop into safeguarding concerns and may indicate that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation. This includes self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or suicide risk. School staff do not diagnose mental-health conditions, but they are well placed to notice changes in behaviour, sleep, social engagement, usual interests, self-care or physical signs of self-harm. Where a mental-health concern is also a safeguarding concern, staff will follow this policy and speak to the DSL/DDSL. If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 or arrange urgent medical care; urgent non-emergency mental-health help can be accessed through NHS 111.

8. Responding to a child or safeguarding concern

Where a child shares, communicates or indicates harm, staff will listen, take the child seriously, remain calm, avoid leading or investigative questions, explain that information may need to be shared, reassure the child that they have done the right thing and report the concern immediately.

All staff follow the school's child protection procedures which are consistent with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026’, ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026’ and the ‘North Lincolnshire Children’s MARS guidance’ https://www.northlincscmars.co.uk/policies-procedures-and-guidance/

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made immediately to children’s social care and/or the police as appropriate. Anyone may make a referral. Staff will not assume that somebody else will act.

Staff will:

- record the date, time, context and the child’s words as accurately as possible
- distinguish fact, observation, professional judgement and information from others
- make an immediate verbal report where risk is urgent; an electronic record alone is not sufficient
- do not investigate or examine a child; provide first aid or urgent medical assistance when required

Concerns staff must act on immediately and report:

- unexplained or concerning injuries, bruising or marks, or explanations that are inconsistent with the injury or developmental stage

- significant changes in behaviour, communication, emotional presentation, health, appearance or attendance
- a disclosure, allegation, comment, drawing, communication or behaviour suggesting abuse, neglect or exploitation
- concerns about domestic abuse, child-to-parent/caregiver abuse, honour/faith-based abuse, FGM or forced marriage
- indicators of sexual or criminal exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, county lines, serious violence, weapons or radicalisation
- child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence
- making or sharing nudes/semi-nudes, including AI-generated or manipulated imagery, online sextortion, cyberflashing or other image-based abuse
- mental-health concerns that may also be safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, eating-disorder indicators, suicidal ideation or suicide risk
- medical/allergy concerns where repeated failures, missing information or withholding of essential medication may indicate neglect or increase vulnerability
- concerns about any adult who may pose a risk to children

Responding to a Disclosure or Safeguarding Concern

Staff must not investigate. They should listen, take the child seriously, respond calmly, avoid leading questions and clarify only what is necessary to understand the immediate concern. Use open prompts such as 'Tell me', 'Explain' and 'Describe' where needed. Do not ask the child to repeat the account unnecessarily. Staff must:

- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone and that the concern will be taken seriously
- do not promise confidentiality or make promises about the outcome
- do not show shock, blame, disbelief or judgement
- explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand
- consider the student's communication needs and preferred communication method
- speak to the DSL/DDSL immediately where there is risk of harm; recording on CPOMS must not replace the verbal alert
- record promptly on CPOMS, including the date/time, context, the child's own words where possible, observations, actions already taken and any body map that is required
- do not retain personal duplicate copies of safeguarding records outside the approved school safeguarding system unless specifically directed by the DSL
- share information only on a legitimate safeguarding need-to-know basis

Action by the DSL/DDSL

Following a concern, the DSL/DDSL will follow the flow chart in KCSIE 2026 and Page 31 of this policy and consider:

- immediate safety and urgent medical needs
- the child's wishes, feelings, communication and developmental needs
- existing Early Help/Family Help, Child in Need, Child Protection, care or other multi-agency involvement
- whether parents/carers should be informed and whether doing so could increase risk, impede an investigation or place another person at risk

- what information can and should be shared, whether consent is appropriate and whether safeguarding concerns override the need to seek consent
- whether the threshold is met for universal/community support, Family Help, section 17, section 47, police, Prevent/Channel, LADO or another referral
- whether other children or adults may be at risk and whether an immediate safety/safeguarding plan is required
- whether professional disagreement or insufficient agency response requires use of CMARS escalation procedures

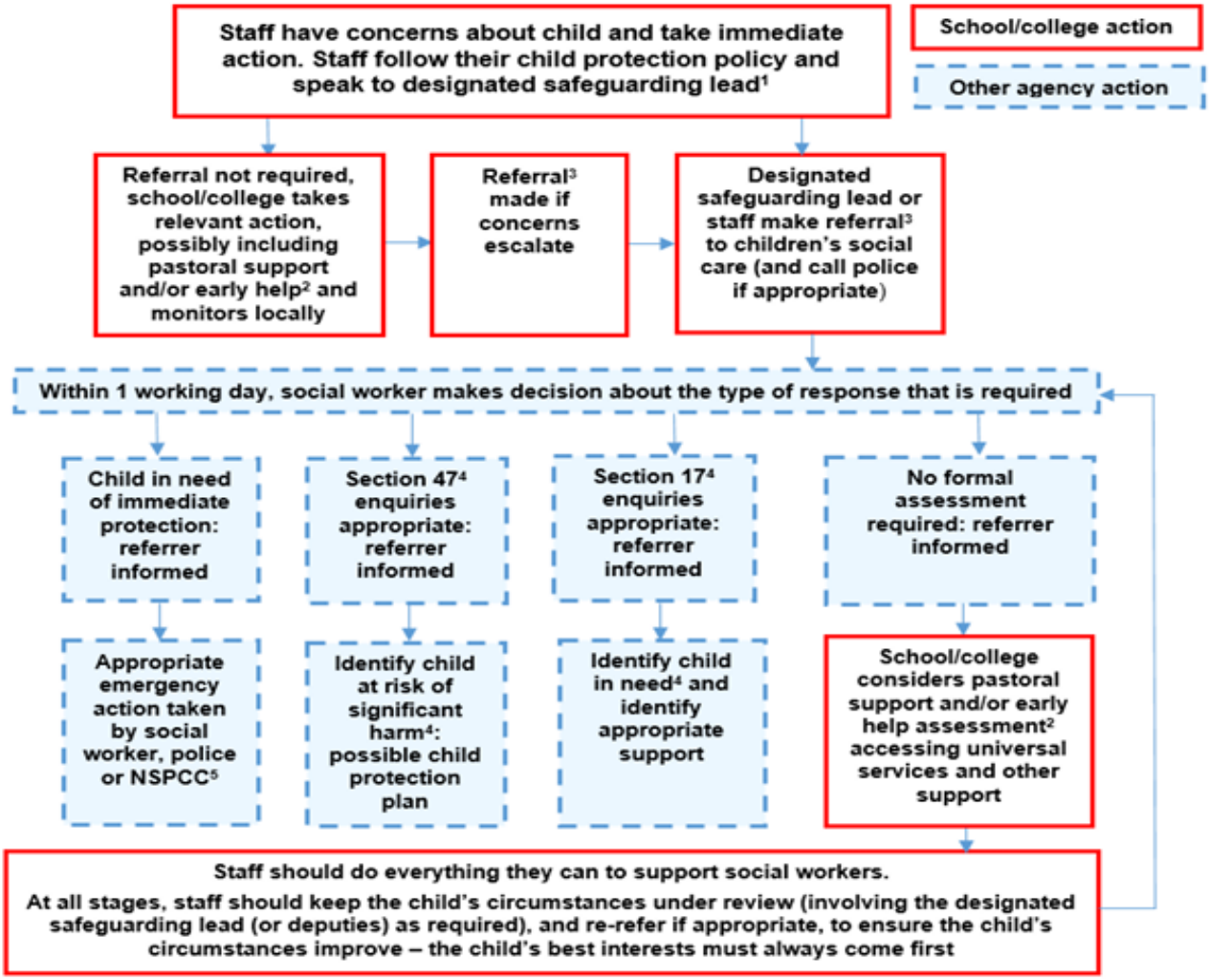
Action Following a Referral

The DSL or other appropriate member of staff will:

- maintain contact with the allocated social worker / lead professional and share relevant information
- contribute to strategy discussions, assessments, child protection conferences, core groups, Child in Need / Family Help meetings and reviews as required
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent child protection conference and notify the LA Education Safeguarding Officer, School Improvement Officer - Safeguarding or Head of Education Standards and Early Years, where schools are unable to attend to arrange cover, for example, in the school holidays
- provide clear reports which include the child's voice, current risk, school information and actions taken
- where safe and appropriate, share reports with parents/carers in advance
- record outcomes, decisions and follow-up actions on CPOMS
- use the CMARS professional resolution/escalation procedure where concerns remain

Actions in a flowchart:

Figure 1: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns about a child



[1] In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

[2] Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated Family Help, a family help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the Family Help process.

[3] Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See Working Together to Safeguard Children.

[4] Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

[5] This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

9. Information sharing, confidentiality and records

Timely information sharing is essential to safeguarding. Data protection law Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK (July 2026) does not prevent information being shared for the purpose of safeguarding children. The school will share information lawfully, proportionately and securely and will record the rationale for significant decisions in line with its Data Protection Policy (see Policies section of the website for further details).

The DSL is responsible for ensuring child protection records are accurate, up to date, confidential, securely stored and accessed only by those who need to know. Records will include concern, decision-making, action taken and outcome. Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with the school's records-retention schedule and current DfE data-protection guidance. Child protection files will be retained until the child's 25th birthday; where a file relates to child sexual abuse, the extended retention period in current DfE guidance will be followed.

When a child moves school, the child protection file will be transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file as soon as possible and within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of the start of a new term. Receipt will be confirmed. Significant information may be shared with the receiving DSL in advance where necessary to support safe transition.

Pupil Reporting Systems

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse to trusted adults in school
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for all pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Make pupils aware of the reporting systems and processes as part of our PSHE curriculum and/ or relationship education delivered by Big Talk.

To keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, we require accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names, contact details and relationship to the child of any person with whom the child normally lives
- Names and contact details of persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- Emergency contact details (if different from above). We encourage all parents/carers to provide more than one emergency contact, providing the school with additional options to contact a responsible adult when a child missing education is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- Any relevant court orders in place including those with affect any person’s access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- If the child is or has been supported on a Child Protection Plan
- If the child is or has been supported through an Early Help Assessment (EHA) or Child in Need (CIN) process
- If the child is looked after LAC) or previously looked after
- Name and contact details of GP
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child
- If the child is a young carer
- If the child is supported through private fostering or kinship arrangements

10. Online Safety, Filtering and Monitoring, Mobile Phones, AI and Synthetic Media

Online safety is integral to safeguarding and presents four key risks, content, contact, conduct and commerce. Content risks include pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm/suicide, radicalisation, extreme violence, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. Contact risks include harmful interaction with other users and generative-AI applications that simulate people. Conduct risks include bullying and making, sending or receiving explicit images, including AI-generated content. Commerce risks include gambling, scams and financial exploitation.

AI-generated or AI-manipulated content, including synthetic media and deepfakes, may facilitate bullying, grooming, exploitation, impersonation and image-based abuse. Such concerns will be recorded, risk assessed and responded to under safeguarding, behaviour, online safety and staff conduct procedures. The school will have regard to AI - Data Protection in Schools

The school complies with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework (if applicable) and the Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK statutory guidance.

Online-safety education will be adapted to students' developmental and communication needs.

The DSL will consider completing the NLC local spreadsheet, where a concern raised constitutes as reportable and, therefore requires reporting into the Home Office. To ensure local co-ordination – all completed forms will be completed and forwarded to the Resettlement team for oversight and reporting from a central point– asylum@northlincs.gov.uk. The **Resettlement team Project Officers may be contacted on 01724 298384** or **01724 298417**

Filtering and Monitoring

The school will take all reasonable steps to limit students' exposure to harmful online content through its IT systems. Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems will be in place and managed in line with the DfE filtering and monitoring standards.

The senior leadership member responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the DSL and IT support/service provider, will review effectiveness at least once every academic year. The review will include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record of the checks and any actions will be retained.

Staff must understand their roles in filtering and monitoring and report concerns immediately, such as if they:

- witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed
- can access unsuitable material themselves
- are teaching content that may create unusual but legitimate filtering activity
- identify failure, circumvention or abuse of filtering/monitoring systems
- believe restrictions unreasonably affect teaching/learning or administrative work
- identify abbreviations, misspellings or alternative routes that bypass controls

Safeguarding through the curriculum

The school will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through a broad, balanced and age-appropriate curriculum. Teaching will be adapted to pupils' age, development and

communication needs and will support pupils to understand healthy relationships, consent, boundaries, online risks, exploitation, bullying and abuse, misinformation and disinformation, how to seek help and how to report concerns.

11. Child-on-child abuse

The school recognises that children can abuse other children inside and outside school and online. The school will take proactive steps to reduce the risk, recognising that child-on-child abuse may occur even where there are no reports or disclosures. The school has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse and concerns will never be dismissed as “banter”, “part of growing up” or “harmless behaviour”. The school will respond to bullying, abuse in intimate relationships, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, sharing of nude or semi-nude images, upskirting, coercive sexual behaviour, initiation/hazing and other harmful behaviour.

Where sexual violence is reported, the DSL/DDSL will ensure an immediate risk and needs assessment. Sexual harassment will be risk assessed on a case-by-case basis. The needs and safety of the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), other children and the wider school environment will be considered. Part 5 of KCSIE will be followed.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm are:

- children who need a social worker (CIN or CP plans)
- children who are absent from education
- electively home educated children
- children requiring mental health support
- looked after children and previously looked after children
- care leavers
- children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues
- children who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans or gender questioning (LGBTIA+)
- The school will follow the statutory guidance Addressing child on child abuse : a resource for schools and colleges

Reports will be recorded, investigated and responded to in accordance with KCSIE and school procedures. The school will consider the needs and ongoing safety of the child who has experienced the alleged abuse, the child alleged to have displayed harmful behaviour and any other children affected. The school will consider whether the incident indicates wider patterns, cultural or environmental concerns and what preventative action is required.

12. Children questioning their gender

The school recognises that children questioning their gender may require sensitive, individualised support and that safeguarding and the best interests of the child remain central to decision-making. Staff will respond respectfully and without discrimination and will remain alert to any associated safeguarding concerns, including bullying, discrimination, mental health needs, family circumstances and online harms.

Where a child or their parent/carer requests support relating to social transition, the school will follow the current requirements of KCSIE 2026. The school will not initiate social transition. Requests will be considered individually, taking account of the child's age, developmental stage, welfare and best interests, the views of parents/carers, relevant safeguarding information, the impact on other children, and the school's obligations under equality and human rights law. Decisions and their rationale will be appropriately recorded.

13. Attendance, children absent from education and transitions

Absence, particularly repeated or prolonged absence, may be a safeguarding warning sign. The school will monitor attendance alongside safeguarding information, make timely enquiries, follow statutory attendance and Children Missing Education requirements and refer or escalate concerns where appropriate. Safeguarding information will be considered at transitions, admissions, removals from roll and elective home education discussions.

We will follow the current Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK statutory guidance, the LA ATEND Framework and our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, in line with Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

North Lincolnshire missing-from-home/care arrangements Children's MARS Protocol for children who run away or go missing from home or care: the school may receive a notification that a student has been reported missing and/or located. This information will be used to support safeguarding and welfare planning. The North Lincolnshire Missing Children Team may contact school to arrange an independent return interview, normally offered within 72 hours of return. Staff will cooperate with these arrangements and continue to share any additional concerns through normal safeguarding routes.

14. Children in care, previously in care and kinship care

The school will ensure appropriate staff have the information required to safeguard children in care and previously in care and that the DSL holds contact details for relevant social workers and the Virtual School Head. The Designated Teacher will work with the DSL and Virtual School to promote safety, stability and educational achievement.

The school recognises the safeguarding and educational needs of children in kinship care. Where a private fostering arrangement comes to the school's attention it will notify the local authority as required. The school will work with the LA to promote the NLC Corporate Parent Promise.

15. Prevent duty and radicalisation

The school will have due regard to the Prevent duty as part of its wider safeguarding responsibilities. It will maintain an appropriate Prevent risk assessment, ensure staff know how to identify and report concerns, provide suitable training, address online radicalisation risks and work with Prevent and Channel arrangements where required. The DSL will follow current local and national referral procedures.

16. Reasonable force and restrictive intervention

The school recognises that there are limited circumstances where reasonable force may be necessary to safeguard a child or others. Any use of reasonable force will be lawful, proportionate, necessary and for the minimum amount of time required. Staff will have particular regard to the additional vulnerability of children with SEND, medical conditions or mental health needs and to the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school does not operate a blanket "no contact" policy and will follow current DfE guidance on restrictive interventions and reasonable force. All staff have undertake the relevant Team Teach training.

17. Use of school premises by outside organisations

Safeguarding requirements will form part of lettings, hire or transfer-of-control arrangements. Where an allegation relates to an individual or organisation using school premises for an activity involving children, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and inform the LADO where appropriate. Failure by a hirer to meet safeguarding requirements may result in termination of the agreement.

18. Early Years provision

Where the school provides Early Years Foundation Stage provision, it will comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the current statutory EYFS framework, including relevant requirements for suitability, allegations, notifications, supervision, paediatric first aid, food safety, mobile phones/cameras and other safeguarding arrangements. Schools should complete the EYFS implementation checklist in Part 2.

19. Safer Recruitment

The school operates safer recruitment procedures in accordance with KCSIE Part Three. Appropriate pre-appointment checks will be undertaken and recorded on the Single Central Record. Recruitment will include appropriate scrutiny of employment history, references, identity, qualifications and suitability to work with children, together with DBS, barred-list, prohibition, Section 128, right-to-work and other checks where applicable. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be undertaken as part of the school's recruitment due diligence. The school will make statutory referrals to the DBS and/or Teacher Regulation Agency where the relevant criteria are met.

20. Linked policies and procedures

- Staff Code of Conduct / staff behaviour
- Behaviour and anti-bullying
- Attendance and Children Missing Education
- Online safety, acceptable use, mobile technology and filtering/monitoring
- RSHE / PSHE
- SEND, inclusion and equality
- Whistleblowing
- Safer recruitment and Single Central Record
- Allegations and low-level concerns
- Data protection and privacy

- Health and safety, first aid and medical needs
- Educational visits
- Alternative provision
- Suspensions and exclusions
- Lettings/use of premises
- Prevent and emergency/critical incident arrangements

21. Monitoring and review

The governing body/proprietor will review this policy at least annually and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, local procedures, safeguarding learning or the needs of the school require change. Governors will seek assurance about implementation, not simply policy compliance. Part 2 may be updated between formal policy reviews because it is an operational guidance and resource bank.

Appendix A: Core statutory and local references

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Keeping children safe in education 2026: September 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and statutory framework Working together to safeguard children 2026
- Children Act 1989 The Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 2004 amendment
- Education Act 2002, including section 175 where applicable Education Act 2002
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 where applicable The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent duty guidance Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty
- Female Genital Mutilation Statutory Guidance Statutory guidance on FGM / Serious Crime Act 2015 reporting duty Serious Crime Act 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Equality Act 2010 The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted and UK GDPR https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK
- Children Missing Education statutory guidance Children missing education - GOV.UK
- Alternative Provision statutory guidance Alternative provision - GOV.UK
- current EYFS statutory framework where applicable statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK
- North Lincolnshire Children's MARS (CMARS) policies, procedures and guidance CMARS | Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - CMARS
- Service Pupils in Schools: Non-statutory guidance - GOV.UK
- Building Connections | Support service for young people | NSPCC Learning
- Bell Foundation guidelines https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/resources/detail/guidance-for-probation-service-staff-and-interpreters/
- Sextortion - National Crime Agency
- Schools guide | Papyrus

Appendix B: Immediate local contacts

Service	Contact
School DSL	Robert Prestwood
Deputy DSL(s)	Melanie Troop
Chair of Governors / appropriate proprietor	Amber Bradley
Single Point of Contact (SPOC / IMAP)	01724 296500 | out of hours: 01724 296555 spoc@northlincs.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	LADO@northlincs.gov.uk | 01724 298293
Police	999 emergency | 101 non-emergency
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285
North Lincolnshire Family Help	familyhelp@northlincs.gov.uk
School Improvement Officer - Safe Schools	07385 005271 | sarah.stokoe@northlincs.gov.uk
Education Safeguarding Officer	01724 296098 | sian.pett@northlincs.gov.uk
NLC Prevent Designated Officer	07717 588137 | stuart.minto@northlincs.gov.uk
North Lincolnshire Missing Children Team	missingchildren@northlincs.gov.uk