



HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

'Kindness, aspiration & self-belief'

SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Person responsible: Mrs Ruth O'Sullivan, Head

Policy Holder	Assistant Head Pastoral and Welfare
Date Approved	April 24
Approval	E&P Committee
Date for next review	September 2024

Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Assistant Head, Pastoral Simon Porter
Deputy DSL & Boarding: Kevin O'Riordan
Deputy DSL & Early Years: Antoinette Faure
Deputy DSL: Senior Nurse, Danielle Swift
Designated Governors: Anne Wakefield & Alex Patton

Contact details for the LADO
Telephone: 03000 410888
Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
Integrated Children's Services
Front door: 03000 411111
Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191
Worried about a child?
Report to Kent Children's Portal:
<https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>

Review date:**September 2024**

Training	
DSL KS	KSCB October 2022
Deputy DSL KOR	KSCB October 2022
Deputy & EYFS DSL AF	KSCB October 2022
Deputy DSL DS	KSCB November 2022
Governors	The Governance of Safeguarding November 2022
Whole Staff	Safeguarding update – INSET January 2023
Whole Staff	Safeguarding update – INSET April 2023
Governors	Safeguarding training for Governors, May 23, Farrers
Whole Staff	September 2023 Safeguarding training - whole staff INSET Update to KCSIE 2023 TES Develop Safeguarding and Child Protection 2023
Governors	TES Develop Safeguarding and Child Protection 2023
Whole Staff	Safeguarding update – INSET January 2024 Safeguarding update – INSET April 24

Table of Amendments

CHANGE NOTED	AMENDED BY	DATE
Updated in line with KCSIE 2023	KS & KOR	September 2023
Updated with new Lead DSL	CPB	December 2023
Updated	SJP CPB	April 2024

POLICY COMPLIANCE, MONITORING AND REVIEW:

All school personnel and governors will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures. This policy was reviewed in September 2023 signed off by the Governor for Welfare and Prevent.

ABOUT THIS POLICY:

This policy applies to everyone who comes into contact with children and their families; all staff, governors, supply staff, contractors, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers working in or on behalf of Holmewood House School. The policy sets out the procedures in place at Holmewood House School which collectively form our current practice with regard to safeguarding, child protection and the welfare of children (everyone under the age of 18) and are consistent with those outlined in KCSIE 2023.

This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023 (KCSIE) which requires individual schools and colleges to have an effective child protection policy.

This policy should be used in conjunction with our Online Safety Policy for all matters concerning online safety.

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INTRODUCTION

The Governors, Head and staff at Holmewood House School regard as paramount their statutory responsibility, under section 157 of the Education Act 2002, to have policies and procedures in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children which includes taking appropriate action in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; all those directly connected with Holmewood House are an important part of the wider safeguarding support system for children and their families. Creating and maintaining vigilance in a safe culture with a positive mindset is at the heart of the safeguarding practices at this school. When making provisions for safeguarding and safer recruitment, the school takes into account the nature, age range and other significant features of the school including EYFS pupils and boarders.

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school and to ensure that the policy is fully implemented. Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors, paid and unpaid, working in the school including governors. Teaching assistants, catering staff, secretaries, administration staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the school and its governors.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

“protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.”

The responsibility to safeguard is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (September 2023). All staff have read at least Part 1 and Annex A and B of this guidance. All staff must sign to say they are aware of and understand their duties and responsibilities under part 1 of this document. Staff will be required to read every new edition of Keeping Children Safe In Education. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure all staff are made aware of any changes or updates to the guidance. All staff will then be expected to read and sign to say they have read and understood the changes.

Staff must read KCSIE 2023 with [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners, 2015](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) refers to the non- statutory advice Information Sharing: [Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018](#))

This policy also has due regard for [Prevent duty guidance December 2023](#) and [The Use of Social Media for On-line Radicalisation \(July 2015\)](#)

This policy and Safer recruitment policies additionally reference the Disqualification under the Childcare Act February 2006 (Updated August 2018)

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, all staff at the school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect. If at any time there is a risk of **immediate serious harm** to a child, a referral should be made directly to children's local authority children's social care services via the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP). **Any member of staff can make a referral. Parental consent is not needed to make a**

referral. The school is aware that if a crime may have been committed, the matter should be reported to the police immediately. See also information from Kent police for further clarification. Reporting incidents to the Kent police flow charts also with DSL. <https://www.kent.police.uk/foi-ai/kent-police/Policy/crime-and-intelligence/reporting-incidents-in-schools-standard-operating-procedure-n17a/>

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Identify concerns early to prevent them from escalating;
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- Identify children who may benefit from early help;
- Know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected;
- Follow the referral process if they have a concern.

Our policy is consistent with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)

It is important to note that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that anyone can make a referral to Kent County Council KSCMP: [KCC Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal](#) or using frontdoor@kent.gov.uk . At all times staff should consider what is in the best interests of the child. If you make a referral, please inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

There are four main elements to our policy:

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

PREVENTION

We recognise that identifying children who may benefit from early help is imperative and our whole pastoral system is set up accordingly. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

The school, led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will therefore:

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

- Train staff to recognise the importance of children receiving the right help at the right time to address risks and to prevent issues from escalating and to constantly review and reflect on their practice
- Train staff to act on and to refer on the early signs of abuse and neglect, including radicalisation
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safer from abuse both in the real and the virtual world and information about who to turn to for help
- Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills (see below)
- Teach a Staying Safe Curriculum based on the PSHEE Programme, called My Heart My Mind, My World here. This Unit reinforces essential skills for every child. Self-esteem and confidence building, thinking independently and making assessments of risk based on their own judgements are encouraged throughout the Unit. These lessons include how to stay safe online and are aimed at helping children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalization, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet, topics which are also covered in computing lessons. Online Safety lessons are also supported with the use of other recommended resources
- Ensure each child has a 'safety network' (called their safety circle) of people written down which is revisited at the beginning of each term. The children will discuss how to deal with a worry including worries about bullying and cyberbullying and child on child abuse
- Organise NSPCC workshops and assemblies for the children specifically about staying safe.

The curriculum incorporates the requirements of the Relationship Education statutory guidance, including:

- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
- How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
- That some people behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful context and contact and how to report them
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe

- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
- How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- Where to get advice e.g., family, school and/or other sources.

Prevention of Child-on-child Abuse

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to: bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, being coerced to send sexual images (sexting), teenage relationship abuse, physical abuse and up skirting.

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

The school will therefore:

- Create a whole school protective ethos in which child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
- Work with statutory safeguarding partners to provide the best support for our pupils (KSCMP)
- Provide training for staff about recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of peer abuse, with girls more likely to be victims and boys' perpetrators.
- Ensure that the staff understand intra familial harms and the need for support for siblings following incidents
- Ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up, or as 'banter'.
- Include within the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers and online.
- Explain to the children that the law is there to protect them rather than criminalise them
- Provide high quality Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), including teaching about consent.
- Ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of child-on-child abuse.

Filtering and Monitoring in Holmewood

Holmewood House takes the safety of our pupils whilst online seriously and to this end we have a robust filtering and monitoring system. Our filtering system blocks harmful and inappropriate content, without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning. While no filtering system can be 100% effective, we are vigilant in minimising harm to pupils and aware of the requirement to meet our statutory requirements.

The DSL team receive daily notifications alerting them to any untoward activity. Working with the Heads of Year, this is then followed up directly with the pupil. The DSL will follow up directly with any member of staff should an alert be identified to any negative online activity. Where necessary, sanctions will be enforced. During the school day urgent alerts are sent directly to the DSL team, who will respond immediately.

A log of device checks is maintained by the IT department in conjunction with the DSL. Any action taken following responding to a notification, is recorded on the school's tracker document. Where necessary a safeguarding alert will be raised. Should the device need to be withdrawn from a pupil for a period of time as a sanction, it is recorded in the device misuse tracker.

Filtering and monitoring provision will be reviewed annually, as part of a wider online safety review and any necessary adaptations undertaken. The DSL reports a breakdown of daily filtering notifications to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

The Overall Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL including Prevent and Domestic Violence) is:

Mr Simon Porter, Assistant Head, Pastoral – sporter@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS is:

Mrs. Antoinette Faure – afaure@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Boarding is:

Mr Kevin O'Riordan – koriordan@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Danielle Swift – dswift@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

The Governor for Welfare, Safeguarding and Prevent is:

Mrs. Anne Wakefield- ANW@benenden.school

The Governor for Online Safety including Filtering and Monitoring

Mr Alex Patton apatton@brightoncollege.net

We follow the procedures set out in KSCMP. A copy of these procedures can be found on their website: <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures/kent-and-medway-safeguarding-procedures>

The Governing Board takes a lead in the school's management and oversight of safeguarding. The Board will ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at

induction and then at regular intervals. This training will be providing them with knowledge to ensure their school's safeguarding policies and procedures are effective. The Safeguarding Policy is ratified by the Board of Governors annually.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the senior management team and who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the school and has undertaken, as a minimum, the Designated Safeguarding Lead training, allowing them to train staff. These are run by KSCMP & The Education People. Additional training/course may also be undertaken on platforms such as EduCare
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have access to information from KSCMP which contains all relevant guidance and advice to support and carry out their role effectively. The training will include working with inter agencies, participating in child protection conferences, supporting children in need, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead receives Prevent awareness training in response to the Prevent Duty on schools and is confident in rolling out Prevent Awareness Training to all staff
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Lead has sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to carry out the role
- Ensure that the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is also fully trained, to the same level as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and that the roles of both are explicit in the job descriptions
- Ensure that this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance
- Recognise the importance of the role of the designated person/s and ensure they have the time, training and support necessary to undertake their duties including reporting to the senior management team at the half termly meetings. (See Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex C)
- Ensure that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body knows who the Designated Personnel are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the **point of induction** and then receive regular updates, at least annually
- Ensure that every member of staff and every governor knows: how to identify signs of abuse and neglect; how to pass on a record of concern about a pupil; that they have individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the DSL /DDSL; that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn; where to find KSCMP website; their role in the early help process; the process for making referrals to children's local authority children's social care services
- Ensure that the DSL or DDSL is always available during school hours, during term time to discuss any safeguarding concerns and that all staff are clear upon the course of action they must take if in exceptional circumstances the DSL or DDSL are not available. (Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and /or take advice from local authority children's social care services)

- Nominate a governor/s for welfare, safeguarding and child protection (including online) and monitoring and filtering who has undertaken appropriate training. This/These governor's will meet regularly with the DSL to review practice, receive updates on incidents and provide support
- Ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is annually reviewed and updated and shared with staff. It will be made available on the school website
- Ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies
- Ensure the effectiveness of the school's filters and monitoring system in conjunction with the Head of IT.
- Review the daily bulletin from the filtering system and take any appropriate action
- Ensure the Senior Leadership Team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified
- Ensure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties in the school website.

The Named Governor (**Anne Wakefield**) for Welfare and Prevent will support the Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead by:

- Working with the Designated Lead for Safeguarding and Prevent in monitoring the Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and practices to ensure that the policies and procedures are fully implemented in the day to day running of the school
- Reviewing with the Designated Lead for Safeguarding and Prevent termly any safeguarding matters and reporting to the governing body
- Completing with the Designated Lead for Safeguarding and Prevent an annual review of the safeguarding and child protection policies including an update and review of the effectiveness of the procedures and implementation. A detailed report evidencing the depth and breadth of the full review will be produced and presented to the full governing body. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay
- Ensuring that the policy is known in practice. The Governor for Welfare and Prevent will meet with a number of staff during each termly visit to ensure they know who to go to in the case of suspected abuse and how to receive a disclosure from a child.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to KSCMP/KCC Social Services/ Kent Front Door refer all cases which concern a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), refer all cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service and refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police
- Follow up any referrals made by any member of the school to ensure a satisfactory outcome for the child. If the child's situation does not seem to be improving the designated safeguarding

lead will press the necessary authorities until the concerns are addressed in the best interests of the child

- Liaise with the Head and inform the Head of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments. In the case of a child who is likely to suffer significant harm, this will involve reporting directly to local authority children's social care services immediately. In cases where a child needs additional support this will include, providing advice and support to staff, taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of the child in need. This could involve the use of the [KCC Care & Support Website](#)
- In cases where there is a risk of a child becoming radicalised, the normal procedures for making a referral will take place. A Safeguard My School log or green form will be completed and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will refer it to the KSCMP/KCC Social Services/ Kent Front Door
- Have a working knowledge of how Kent Local Authority conducts a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff as well as volunteers
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them
- Ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing body regarding this
- Ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available publicly and parents know referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Link with the KSCMP and Education People to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding: <https://www.theeducationpeople.org/our-expertise/safeguarding/>
- Where children leave the school, ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and, additionally, confirmation of receipt should be obtained

- Request child protection files for any new pupils transferring from other schools or nurseries
- Ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body knows who the designated members of staff are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the point of induction. A document called [Responding to a Disclosure](#) is displayed in each Common Room and is available in the Staff Handbook. This document gives instructions on the process for making a referral to local authority children's social care services.
- Ensure as part of their induction, that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body reads and signs to say they understand the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, The Whistleblowing Policy, The Code of Conduct for Staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 and Annex A and B, Working Together to Safeguard Children, Use of Mobile Phones Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Use of Physical Restraint Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Searching and Confiscation Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Cyber-bullying Policy, Prevent and On-line Safety Policy. (Please note, there may be additional policies specifically related to their role)
- Ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body knows what the contingency arrangements are for when the designated members of staff are not available
- Ensure all staff have access to both the KSCMP for local authority children's social care service referrals and professional consultations and the Kent Early Help Teams for early help assessment and advice. The Emergency Duty service (out of hours) is also available (see Useful Contacts, Appendix B)
- Have nominated governors for safeguarding and child protection, online safety and Prevent, and the filtering and monitoring system who have undertaken appropriate training (**Anne Wakefield & Alex Patton**) and will meet with them on a regular basis.
- The DSL will feed back to the governing body regularly with an update of incidents, actions and plans relating to safeguarding including online.
- Ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies
- Ensure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the school website
- Ensure that this policy is available publicly via the school website. A paper copy can be obtained from the **Deputy Head**
- Where pupils are educated off site or in alternative provision, the school and the provider will have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns between the two agencies. Written confirmation that the alternative provider has carried out appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working at the establishment will be sought by the school.

The DSL should ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

- the name of the designated person/s and their role.
- how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect including signs of bullying, radicalisation (Prevent), sexual exploitation and acts of female genital mutilation.

- that a child being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, may breach children's rights, as set out in the Human Rights Act.
- that a child may not feel ready or comfortable disclosing abuse, exploitation or neglect and that they themselves may not know how to tell someone they are being abused or realise their experiences are harmful. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and report concerns to a DSL. Staff should focus on building a relationship with the children to facilitate communication.
- how to respond to and report concerns about children in need and children at risk, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- how to pass on and record concerns about a pupil.
- that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the Designated Person/s.
- that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- where to find the KSCMP Procedures on the KSCMP website
<https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures>
- their role in the early help process.

The DSL should provide regular Child Protection **training** for all staff including the Head, the Governors, temporary staff and volunteers in regulated activity consisting of induction training, refresher training in full every two years. This covers the full Basic Child Protection. Termly reminders of safeguarding procedures and any changes are a permanent part of training days and staff receive regular updates when necessary. This could be through email or during a staff meeting/training session. Such regular training ensures that staff are confident that they know:

- the school's legislative responsibility by having a thorough knowledge and understanding of the school's safeguarding policy and the relevant statutory documents.
- the contents of **Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 (Sept 2023)**.
- the actions where there are concerns about a child. Please see the flowchart - Actions where there are concerns about a child of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)**
- their personal responsibility by having a thorough knowledge and understanding of the school's **Code of Conduct**.
- their responsibility in relation to whistleblowing and have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the school's **Whistleblowing Policy**.
- the need to be alert to the signs and indicators of possible abuse, including possible child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, criminal exploitation, online abuse including through social media, child on child abuse, radicalisation and children missing in education.
- who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Lead is.
- how to receive a disclosure from a child, including how to avoid asking leading questions and explaining that confidentiality cannot be promised.
- how to support a child who has made a disclosure.
- how to record the information accurately and factually.
- that anyone can make a referral and that the designated safeguarding lead should be informed as soon as possible if a referral has been made.
- how to receive and make a referral either in school or outside school if necessary. **'Responding to a Disclosure'** posters are all visible around school (Appendix D). Parental consent is **NOT** required for referrals to statutory authorities.

The Role of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Support the Designated Safeguarding Lead and have the same authority as the designated safeguarding lead if the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable
- Act as and carry out the role of the designated safeguarding lead when the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable
- Undertake the Designated Safeguarding Lead training, refreshing every two years.

Liaison with Other Agencies

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all pupils
- Co-operate as required, in line with **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups
- Notify the relevant KSCMP immediately if:
 - it should have to exclude a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
 - there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
 - there is any change in circumstances to a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Record Keeping

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Local authority children's social care services immediately
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location
- Ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023). The DSL will consider whether it would be appropriate to share information with the new school/college in advance of a child leaving
- Make parents aware that such records exist except where to do so would place the child at risk of harm.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies where that would protect a child.

The school will:

- Ensure staff and volunteers adhere to confidentiality protocols and that information is shared appropriately
- Ensure staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, (as set out in 'Information sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, July 2018)
- Ensure that if a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (under the Data Protection Act 2018) from a pupil or parent they will refer the request to the DSL or Head
- Ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will:

- Disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis. Parental consent may be required
- Aim to gain consent to share information and be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent if a person believes that there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner
- Record when decisions are made to share or withhold information, who information has been shared with and why. (See 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' July 2023)
- Seek advice about confidentiality from outside agencies if required. (See 'Information sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, July 2018).

Communication with Parents/Carers

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties in the school website
- Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action. If the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk of harm to the child or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from Local authority children's social care services (particular circumstances where parents **may not** be informed include: any disclosure of sexual abuse or physical abuse where the child has an injury or where it may lead to the loss of evidence. This may also include concerns relating to radicalisation)
- Record what discussions have taken place with parents on Safeguard My School about a Child's Welfare or if a decision has been made not to discuss it with parents, record the reasons why. Staff will log concerns on Safeguard My School or the Green Form. Records may subsequently be disclosed to relevant partner agencies if Child Protection proceedings commence.

Dealing with Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

Holmewood House School recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Sexual violence may include rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature', such as sexual comments, sexual taunting or physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone. Online sexual harassment may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, and sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.

The school will:

- Be clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated
- Provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment using the following guidance [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)
- Make decisions on a case-by-case basis
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, offer appropriate support and take the wishes of the victim into account when decision making
- Implement measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and if necessary other children and staff members, safe. Record any risk assessments and keep them under review
- Give consideration to the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations
- Liaise closely with external agencies, including police and local authority children's social care services, when required.

Further guidance can be found in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five' (September 2023), 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges,' (DfE, May 2018) and 'Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)

Supporting Children

The school recognises that **any** child may be subject to abuse and neglect.

We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on those children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.

The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may become withdrawn.

We recognise that some vulnerable children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The school will support all pupils through:

- Listening to the child. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide

- Curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community
- The school's behaviour policy will support **all** pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- Liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Local authority children's social care services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or Locality Teams
- A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse or mental health issues are vulnerable and in need of support and protection; they may also be young carers
- Monitoring and supporting pupil's welfare, keeping records and notifying Local authority children's social care services in accordance with the KSCMP Procedures on the KSCMP website <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures>
- When a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Protection Review Manager and Lead Social Worker from Local authority children's social care services will also be informed
- When a pupil has a social worker, the school will work with the social worker and the virtual school head. The virtual school head has a non-statutory responsibility for oversight of the attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. The virtual school head should identify and engage with key professionals to help them to understand the role they have in improving the outcomes for children
- When a child is missing from education, the school will follow the procedure as set out in Kent's Children Missing Education guidance and inform the Education Welfare Officer and Local authority children's social care services if a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns
- Referral to the Channel programme, if radicalisation is identified as an issue
- The school recognises that whilst **any** child may benefit from early help, staff are encouraged to consider the wider environmental factors present in a child's life that could pose a threat to their welfare or safety, (contextual safeguarding). Staff are required to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for the following:

Children with Disabilities, Additional Needs or Special Educational Needs

We recognise that, statistically, children with additional needs, special educational needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse.

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

As part of the PSHEE (called My Heart, My Mind, My World) curriculum at Holmewood House staff will teach children personal safety skills commensurate with their age, ability and needs. Children will be taught personal safety skills such as how to recognise if they are feeling unsafe including within family relationships and friendships and with other children; how to ask for help (telling and who to tell); the difference between safe and unsafe physical contact (good and bad touches); the difference between safe and unsafe secrets; and how to recognise and manage risk including in a digital context. The content of lessons will be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.

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

Where necessary, the school will provide additional training to staff. Supervision by senior managers will be vigilant to create a protective ethos around the child.

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

Equality Legislation

We recognise the significance of the Equality Act 2010 to school safeguarding and ensure that we:

- Do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics (the 9 protected characteristics in legislation are: age, gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity)
- Consider how we support pupils with protected characteristics. We understand the importance of providing all children with protected characteristics, including LGBTQ+ with a safe space to speak out or share their concerns with a member of staff
- Take positive action, where appropriate to deal with the disadvantages these pupils face. We will make reasonable adjustments for those children. For example, for a child with a disability or for a girl being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.

We also understand the implications of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for education settings we understand that pupils with protected characteristics may be more at risk of harm. This is central to our safeguarding policies and procedures.

Young Carers

The school recognises that children who are living in a home environment which requires them to act as a young carer for a family member or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection.

The school will: seek to identify young carers; offer additional support internally; signpost to external agencies; be particularly vigilant to the welfare of young carers and follow the procedures outlined in this policy, referring to Early Help or local authority children's social care services as required should concerns arise.

Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation

Criminal exploitation of children is a form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. Drug networks or gangs exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas. Exploitation can occur even if activity appears to be consensual. **County Lines is on the increase in Kent and nationally** and all staff have been made aware of this specifically during staff training days.

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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will use the toolkits contained on the Kent Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's website to assess the risks of exploitation (CSE / Criminal / Gangs) and will refer to the local authority children's social care services (KSCMP) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/exploitation-toolkit.pdf>

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

Children Frequently Missing Education

Holmewood House School recognises that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM or forced marriage.

The school monitors attendance of individual pupils closely and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence.

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

When a child is missing from education, the school follows the procedure as set out in Kent's Children Missing Education guidance. The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer and the local authority children's social care services if a missing child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

Children Misusing Drugs or Alcohol

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- to believe the pupil's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
- where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.
- Where the misuse indicates an urgent health or safeguarding concern

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

Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

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

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

This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers
- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
- Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency
- Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment
- Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child

Children Living with Domestic Abuse

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

Holmewood House School recognises that where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Domestic Abuse can impact the children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and /or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships. Domestic Abuse can also affect children in their personal relationships as well as in the context of home life.

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

At Holmewood House School we are working in partnership with Kent Police and Kent County Council to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their home; this scheme is called Operation Encompass.

In order to achieve this, the KCC Safeguarding Team will share police information of all domestic incidents, where one of our pupils has been present, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSL)

On receipt of any information, the DSL Lead will decide on the appropriate support the child may require. The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with consultation with the KCC Safeguarding team

Children at risk of ‘Honour- Based’ Violence including Female Genital Mutilation

So called ‘honour-based’ violence encompasses incidents which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including breast ironing, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. The school takes these concerns seriously and staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBV through training. Staff are required to treat all forms of HBV as abuse and follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

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

In accordance with the Female Genital Mutilation Act, it is a statutory duty for teachers in England and Wales to report ‘known’ cases of FGM in under-18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. Teachers should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve local authority children’s social care services as appropriate, but the teacher will personally report to the police that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. **It is a statutory duty upon teachers to report this to the police if they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.**

Children at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur via the use of technology.

Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups. Potential indicators of sexual exploitation will be addressed within staff training, including raising awareness with staff that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of child sexual exploitation arise.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will use the toolkits contained on the KSCMP’s website to assess the risks of exploitation (CSE / Criminal / Gangs) and will refer to Local authority children’s social care services (KSCMP) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/exploitation-toolkit.pdf>

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

Children who have returned home to their family from care

The school recognises that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable. School will vigilantly monitor the welfare of previously looked after children, keep records and notify Local authority children's social care services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern in accordance with the KSCMP Procedures on the KSCMP website <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures>

Children showing signs of Abuse and/or Neglect

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

School will provide training for staff to ensure that they have the skills to identify and report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A).

Children at Risk of Radicalisation

School recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and that protecting children from this risk forms part of the school's safeguarding response.

The governing body will ensure that the DSL has undertaken Prevent awareness training and that all staff receive training about the Prevent duty.

Staff are required to be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate they need help or protection. Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation are referred to the DSL in the usual way. If appropriate the DSL will make a Channel referral.

See also 'The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers', DfE (June 2015), and 'Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales,' HM Government, (July 2015).

Privately Fostered Children

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

The school will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements and refer to the Specialist Fostering Team.

Children who have Family Members in Prison

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

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

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

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

Physical Intervention

Please see our **Physical restraint and Use of Reasonable Force Policy**.

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. We take guidance from **The Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (DfE Guidance 2013)**.

Searching and Confiscation

We acknowledge that a child has a right to privacy. Please see our **Searching and Confiscation Policy**.

Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying

Please see our **Anti-Bullying Policy** and **Cyber Bullying Policy**.

We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We review this policy annually.

Intimate Care

There may be occasions when a member of staff needs to undertake personal care tasks with children but particularly to those who are in the Early Years and Foundation Stage. The normal range of development for this group of children indicates that they may not be fully toilet trained. In addition to this, there are other vulnerable groups of children and young people that may require support with personal care on either a short, longer term or permanent basis due to SEN and disability, medical needs or a temporary impairment. Examples of these may be children who have limbs in plaster or are temporarily wheelchair bound. In such circumstances staff must follow the guidelines set out in the **Intimate Care Policy**.

Child on child Abuse

We recognise that child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- 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 nude 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, and

- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation)

When dealing with child on child abuse (including online) the school will follow the key safeguarding documents, *Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children*, even where an alleged perpetrator is a child. This will entail:

- Effective implementation of the school's usual safeguarding and anti-bullying (including cyberbullying) policies (and recognition that sexualised abuse, including verbal abuse, by peers is a potential safeguarding issue); sexting and banter are unacceptable
- Following the normal procedures for dealing with pastoral incidents so that a systematic, rigorous and transparent investigation is carried out (please see Recording on the Pastoral and Welfare Doc – Guidelines). In the event of a disclosure all the children involved, whether perpetrator or victim will be treated as at risk. The school is aware that there is more potential for child-on-child abuse among certain groups of vulnerable pupils and special attention is paid to highlight the vulnerability of these groups in staff training and pastoral group meetings
- Seeking advice from statutory agencies, as appropriate, and readiness to make a referral if an incident meets the referral threshold set by the KSCMP/KELSI; [Kent Threshold Guidance](#)
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, an immediate referral to children's local authority children's social care services and/or the police
- Following the advice for practitioners in: [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#);
- Effective information sharing with any agencies or other professionals involved;
- Where allegations of abuse or assault have been made against one or more of its own pupils, a thorough risk-assessment of the situation and risk-based decision-making (with the benefit of the advice of statutory authorities, where appropriate) should be carried out within 24 hours, with a view to ensuring the safety of all pupils and that both alleged victims and perpetrator pupils receive appropriate support. Decisions arising might include, for example, whether the accused pupil should be removed from school for a period, or from certain classes, whether contact with certain individuals should be prevented or supervised, the availability of counselling, the adequacy of arrangements for listening to children etc;
- Good record keeping of related conversations, meetings and communications.

The school will include within the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse including abuse from their peers and online.

Additional guidance on sexting can be found **[Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS 2016\)](#)**.

Bullying related to Racism, Gender or Disability

Our policy on bullying related to Racism, Gender or Disability, set out in the school's Pastoral Care policy, which is in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities policy, is reviewed annually. We

acknowledge that repeated incidents or a single serious incident of this kind may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Cyberbullying - see Cyberbullying Policy and Online Safety

We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying using any form of technology may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. Our policies on e-safety and acceptable use, set out in a separate document, are reviewed annually. They reflect the balance needed between the exciting opportunities offered by the internet and other technologies and the need for pupils and staff to keep themselves safe and deal sensibly with risk. Cyberbullying is part of the taught curriculum in PSHEE (My Heart, My Mind, My World). Parents are invited annually to an online safety evening organised by the Deputy Head

The school shares information with parents/carers about:

- The systems we have in place to monitor and filter online use (we use Smoothwall)
- What we ask the children to do online, including sites we ask them to access
- Who their child will be interacting with online

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits. As a matter of routine any trips involving outside bodies such as travel firms will involve assessment of all risks including the production of child protection measures specific to the activity and its location. All children going on trips outside of the school receive 'Staying Safe' training from the DSL or the teacher in charge of the trip.

Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children

The school will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023) and this section should be read in conjunction with the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

The governing body will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

The following members of staff have undertaken Safer Recruitment training:

Ruth O'Sullivan - Head

Nell Bond – Assistant Head Learning and Teaching

Simon Porter – Assistant Head Pastoral and Welfare

Kevin O'Riordan – Assistant Head Academic Admin & Senior Schools Liaison

Caroline Preston Bell – Assistant Director of Studies

Ben Stevens – Swim School

Michelle French – HR Manager

The following members of staff have undertaken Warner Interview training:

Ruth O'Sullivan - Head

Under Section 75 of the Childcare Act, 2006 individuals are disqualified from childcare provision if they have committed certain specified offences. This applies to any member of staff employed in early years childcare (up to the age of 5) or later years childcare (up to the age of 18) in nursery, primary or secondary school settings or the management of such settings. Staff will be asked to sign a self-declaration form on an annual basis to confirm that they are not disqualified from childcare. (See the **Safer Recruitment Policy**) where this is set out in greater detail).

The School is also required to check with the DfE that anyone who is employed to carry out teaching work has not been prohibited from the teaching profession and also complete the Prohibition from Governance/Leadership (Section 128 Check) for anyone appointed to senior roles or as Governors since September 2015.

Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against teachers and other staff including volunteers

As part of the induction process all staff are given training on the Whistleblowing Policy, refreshed every two years as part of the safeguarding training.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff the quick resolution of the allegation should be a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned. All necessary delays should be eradicated.

Should an allegation be made against a member of the boarding staff, arrangements for alternative accommodation away from children will be made immediately and whilst the matter is being investigated.

Staff and volunteers should report any allegation of abuse immediately to the Head. In cases where the Head is the subject of an allegation, staff and volunteers should report directly to the Chair of Governors without informing the Head. (See Allegations flowchart Appendix C.) The Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the procedures set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)**.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer immediately in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff ensuring that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)**. In the case of an allegation of historical abuse, the same procedures will be followed.

Following consultation with the necessary authorities the LADO will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that the Head or Chair of Governors must **not** seek to interview the child/ren or members of staff involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews and statutory investigations that may be necessary.

All discussions with the LADO will be recorded in writing and any communication with the individual and parents/carers of the child/ren will be agreed.

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

Staff or volunteers who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. The school recognises it has a duty of care to staff and will provide effective support to any member of staff who is the subject of an allegation. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. Advice will be taken from the LADO and the staff member will be given a named contact if suspended.

The School is aware of the restrictions (effective October 2012 applied up to the point where the accused is charged with an offence or the DfE publish information or a decision in a disciplinary case)

on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers and so the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity.

If the school dispenses with a person's services because of unsuitability to work with children or would have done so had the person not resigned, the school will report that person to the Disclosure and Barring Service, within one month of leaving the school.

Referrals to the DBS will not be prevented because of an individual's refusal to co-operate in an investigation.

The School will consider making a referral to the Teacher Referral Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, because of 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute', or a 'conviction at any time for a relevant offence';

In relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the school will notify Ofsted (08456 404040) or 0300 1233155) as soon as is practicable and within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the school whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse which took place on the premises or elsewhere. The school will provide Ofsted the following information about themselves or an employee when relevant:

- details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose;
- the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and a certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

Consideration must be given to the needs of the child and a recognition that a child may make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

At no time must the child be put into a situation in which he/she may have to communicate with or see the accused. The identity of the child will remain confidential to the Head and the DSL.

Support will be put in place for the accuser and the school will make every effort to ensure the accuser does not suffer in any way and is not disadvantaged as a result of their disclosure.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all staff and volunteers, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents/carers as advised within the school's **Code of Conduct**. As part of the Induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.

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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, is transparent and takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and is open to scrutiny.

Learning Lessons

A full review and reflection process will take place after each case, including those which were found to be unsubstantiated. Findings from this process will inform future decision making, policies and training.

Low Level Concerns

The School's Low Levels Concerns Policy contains a clear procedure for confidentially sharing concerns both on and offsite, on and offline, and should be read in conjunction with this policy. The Head should be informed of all low-level concerns so that a final decision can be made about how to respond. Where appropriate this will be done in consultation with the DSL's. The school will notify the employers of contractors or any supply staff if a concern is raised about one of their employees. If there is any doubt about how to proceed, the school will consult the LADO to ascertain whether any low-level concerns about a member of staff meet the harm threshold

Other Related Policies

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Complaints Policy & Procedure
- Cyber Buying Policy
- Digital Devices Guidelines for Parents and Children
- Digital Devices Guidelines for Staff
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Physical Restraint and Use of Reasonable Force
- Prevent
- Protocol for Requesting Approval for Tuition Taking Place Outside of School
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Searching and Confiscation Policy
- Staying Safe Guidance for Staff regarding Children on Overnight or Extended Trips and Tours
- Use of personal smart technology including mobile phones policy
- Whistleblowing

Use of personal smart technology including mobile phones policy

This is a requirement for all schools with EYFS.

Our policy on use of mobile phones, smartwatches, cameras and sharing of images is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. It is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the school has developed a policy to outline the required protocol for all staff, students' volunteers and parents/carers.

From HH Safeguarding Policy

After School Activities (on or off school site)

For all after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, supervising the school's pupils either on or off school site, the school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. These measures are in line with the non-statutory guidance set out in 'After-Schools clubs, community activities and tuition safeguarding guidance for providers' (Department of Education, September 2023).

For Regular Activities run by another body we also require:

- Confirmation that they have completed the relevant safer recruitment checks on all of their staff
- Completion of the Safer Recruitment Checks for Contractors form
- Information on the content of the activities to ensure we comply with our duties under Prevent

For Visiting Speakers please see the **Visiting Speakers Policy**

Appendix A

Four Categories of Abuse

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

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

- It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.
- It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.
- It also includes parents or carers failing to:
 - Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
 - Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
 - Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers
 - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views
- deliberately silencing them
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- preventing participation in normal social interaction

It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone

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

This may involve:

- physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex)
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- non-contact activities involving:
 - children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,
 - children in watching sexual activities
 - encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
 - grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

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

Signs of Abuse (from [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused : Advice for Practitioners 2015](#))

The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs that may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Children also develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger child might be normal behaviour for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so you should also be alert to parent-child interactions that are concerning and other parental behaviours. This could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health. By understanding the warning signs, you can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused.

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

Useful Contacts: Numbers/Emails/Websites



Education Safeguarding Service Contacts

Head Office: Room 2.30 Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ	
Claire Ray Head of Service	03300 423169
Rebecca Avery Training & Development Manager	03000 423168
Robin Brivio Senior Safeguarding Advisor	03000 423169
Online Safety	03000 423164
<p>For advice on safeguarding issues please call your area office on the numbers listed below.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If a child may be at risk of imminent harm, you should call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411111 or the Police on 999</p>	
Ashford	03000 423154
Canterbury	03000 423157
Dartford	03000 423149
Dover	03000 423154
Folkestone & Hythe	03000 423154
Gravesham	03000 423149
Maidstone	03000 423158
Sevenoaks	03000 423149
Swale	03000 423157
Thanet	03000 423157
Tonbridge & Malling	03000 423158
Tunbridge Wells	03000 423158

Kent County Council Key Contacts

Integrated Front Door: 03000 411111 (outside office hours **03000 419191**)
Early Help Contacts (district teams) can be found on www.kelsi.org.uk

<p>LADO Team contact number: 03000 410888 If your call is urgent i.e. a child is in immediate danger and you cannot be connected to the team you should call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 41 11 11 Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk</p>
<p>Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU</p>

<p>Area Education Officers</p>
<p>South Kent – David Adams 03000 410199</p>
<p>East Kent – Marisa White 03000 418794</p>
<p>West Kent – Nick Abrahams 03000 410058</p>
<p>North Kent – Ian Watts 03000 414302</p>

<p>Prevent Education Officers</p>
<p>North/West/ Medway - Sally Green sally.green2@kent.gov.uk 03000 413439</p>
<p>South/East - Jill Allen jill.allen@kent.gov.uk 03000 413565</p>

Additional Contacts

Police Emergency 999

Police Non-Emergency 101

OFSTED Safeguarding Children

08456 404046 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm)

Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Female Genital Mutilation

Contact: Rohma Ullah

Email: rohma.ullah@barnardos.org

Extremism

Department for Education dedicated helpline for staff and governors:

Tel: 020 7340 7264

Email: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

The Customer First and OFSTED Safeguarding Children contact details are all displayed in the EYFS Classrooms as required, so that parents are aware of who to contact if they have any concerns about a child.

Relevant Documents

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/exploitation-toolkit.pdf>

[“Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools” \(August 2018\)](#)

[“Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” \(May 2019\)](#)

[“Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers” \(July 2018\)](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

[“The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers” \(June 2015\)](#)

[“Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales” \(July 2015\)](#)

[“Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people” published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\) – \(September 2016\)](#)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[“Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges” \(May 2018\)](#)

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

[“Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” \(July 2018\)](#)

Managing an Allegation Against a Member of Staff or volunteer in your Establishment

All staff must know how to recognise an allegation and who to report to

ALLEGATION

Might arise as a complaint, grievance, suspicion, concern, during discussions from child, parent, member of staff or member of the public.

If an allegation concerns the Head, the Chair of Governors takes action

Headteacher

- Do not tell anyone, particularly the staff Involved
- Take advice from the Named Senior Officer (NSO) for Education before taking action
- Make initial enquiries only
- Do not investigate or interview
- Usual principles of confidentiality apply
- Deal objectively with everything
- Existing loyalties must be put to one side
- Think the unthinkable, believe the unbelievable

Discussion with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Discussion Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and appropriate professionals (eg police)

Keep detailed records of actions and statements at all stages

Refer back to school

Allegation Management Meeting (AMM)

Record and date your assessments of known facts

The next course of action and timescales are agreed at this point. Consider also

- information for the adult, witnesses, child/young person and parents/carers
- on-going support for the member of staff, pupil and parents/carers
- statements, if needed, for the whole staff, community and press

This is a whole school policy which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

Responding to a Disclosure

All Staff Need to Know:

- **Anyone can make a referral.**
- **Any concerns relating to the welfare of a child must be passed on, dealt with immediately and always on the same day.**
- The Holmewood House Designated Safeguarding Lead: Simon Porter
- If he is unavailable, you can go to any of the DSLs in the Safeguarding Team
- The EYFS Designated Safeguarding Lead: Antoinette Faure
- Log your concern online: Safeguard My School or via GREEN form see Safeguarding Policy
- The Safeguarding & Child Protection policy is on the school website, a copy is available from Reception
- The Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership Safeguarding Procedures are available here: <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/worried-about-a-child>
- The Whistleblowing Policy is on the school website and a copy is available from Reception
- Early Help: 03000 416200 (Early Help assessment and advice for non – emergencies)

Holmewood House Safeguarding Team:

Mr Simon Porter
Lead DSL Asst. Head
Pastoral & Wellbeing
01892 860000 ext. 226



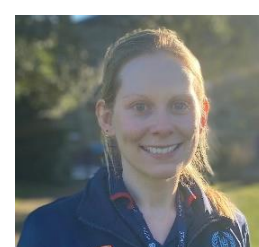
Miss A Faure
DSL
EYFS & Pre Prep
01892 860005



Mr K O'Riordan
DSL Asst. Head
Head of Boarding
01892 860011



Miss D Swift
DSL
Senior Nurse
01892 860000 ext. 229



What to do if a pupil tells you of abuse:

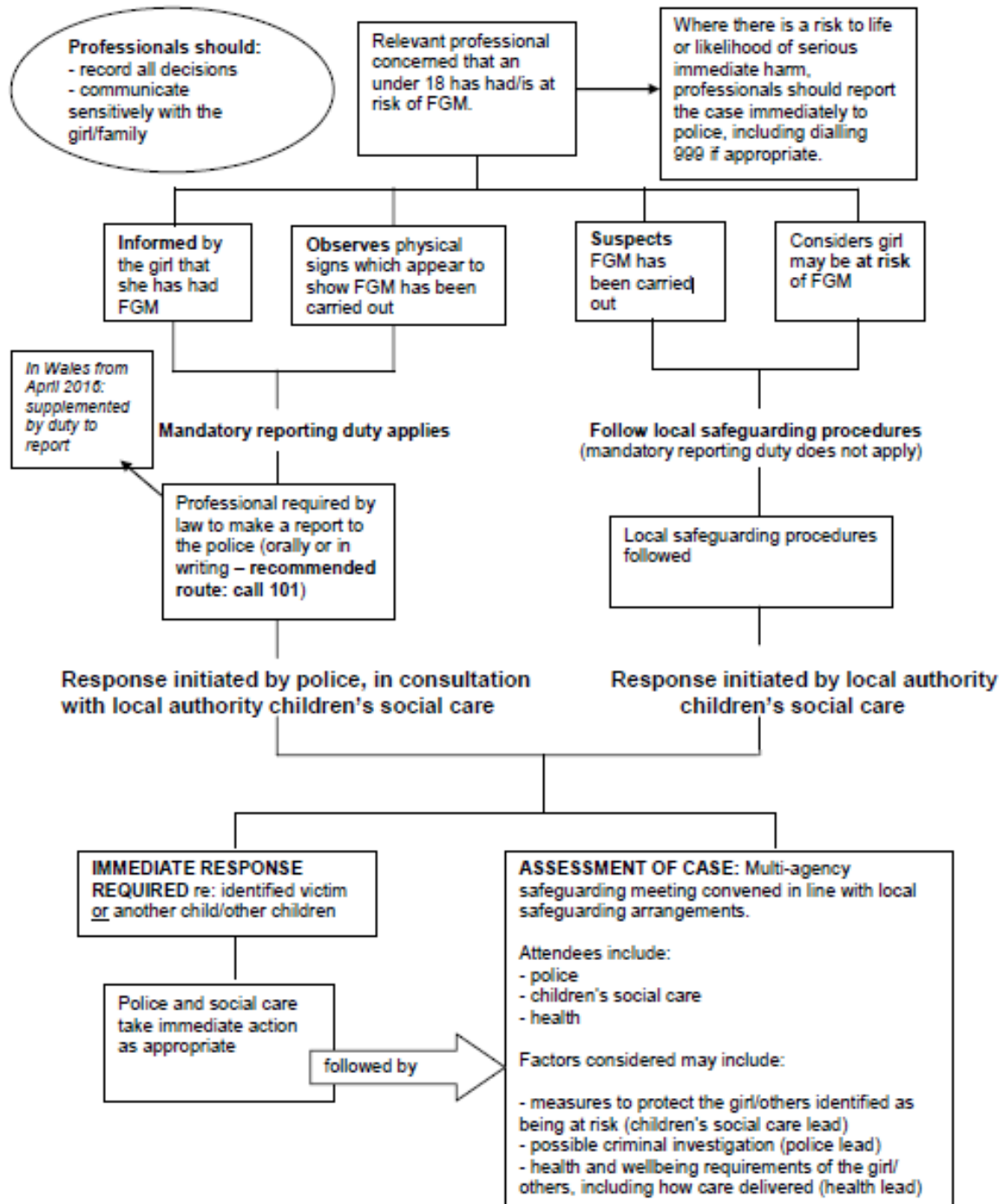
LISTEN	remain calm and reassuring; be sensitive to the child; avoid asking leading questions.
EXPLAIN	what you intend to do and that you may not be able to keep it confidential.
PASS ON	your concerns to the DSL without delay.
RECORD	the details of your conversation as soon as possible and always before the end of the day.
COMPLETE	online Safeguard My School concern form/Green form in detail using only factual information.

What to do if the Lead (DSL) is not available to advise you about a child protection matter:

- Refer your concerns to any of the Deputy DSLs (see above)
- Speak to the Head, Ruth O'Sullivan 01892 860000 rosullivan@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
- Contact Anne Wakefield as the Governor in charge of safeguarding, Welfare & Prevent ANW@benenden.school or the Governor for Online Safety Alex Patton apatton@brightoncollege.net
- **Remember, anyone can make a referral: www.kscmp.org.uk NSPCC: 0808 800 5000**

FGM Mandatory Reporting Process Map

This process map is intended to demonstrate where the FGM mandatory reporting duty fits within existing processes. It is not intended to be an exhaustive guide, and should be considered in the context of wider safeguarding guidance and processes.





'THE GREEN FORM'

HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT / CONCERN FORM

Completed forms must be shared with the DSL

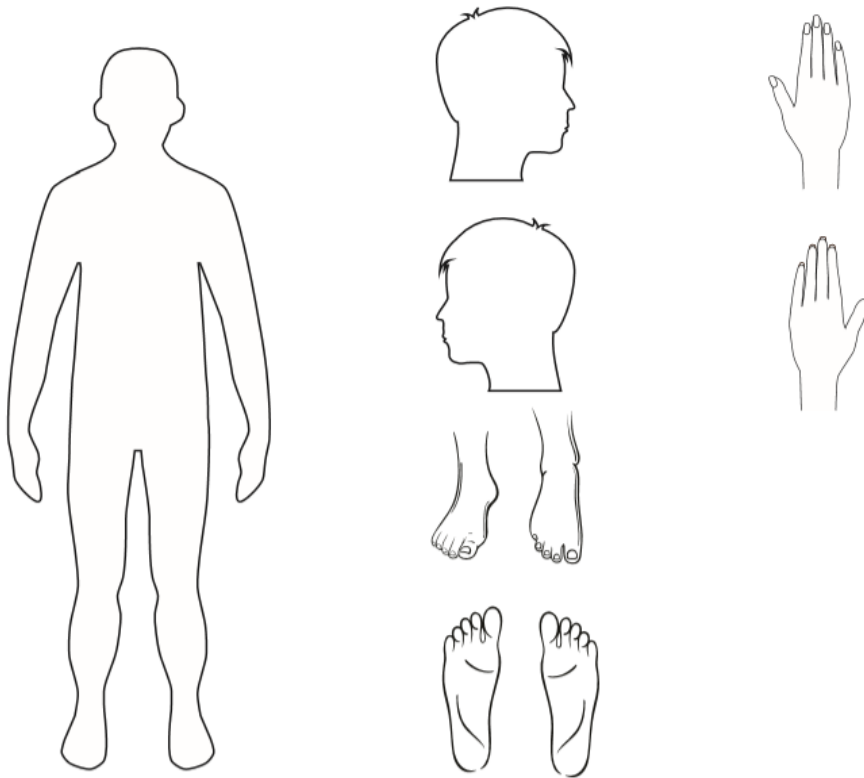
Pupil name		Date of birth and Year Group/class	
Name and position of person completing form (please print)			
Date of incident / concern: (dd mm yy)			
Incident / concern (who what where when)*			
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)			
Signature: (name of member of staff)		Date form completed (DD MM YY)	
Role:			
Action taken including reasons for decisions) and outcomes*			
NB this section is only to be completed by DSL			
Signature of DSL		Date form (DD MM YY)	
Signature of lead DSL (if appropriate)		Date (DD MM YY)	

* continue on separate sheet if necessary



HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

Child Protection body map template



Name of child:		Date of birth:
Recorded by:		
Observations:		
Signed and dated:		