



Joseph Leckie
Academy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Section 1: Introduction

1. Policy Introduction

1.1 At Joseph Leckie Academy the safeguarding of the children in our care is of paramount importance. Safeguarding children is every member of staff's responsibility. We are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the Academy, inside and outside of home and online.

When children feel safe they are more likely to feel happy and this in turn supports them in being able to learn to the best of their ability, supporting our vision statement for every child who comes into our Academy to have the opportunity to fulfil their potential through achieving highly, regardless of their ability or background.

Joseph Leckie Academy staff encourage children and parents/carers to feel free to talk about any concerns and to see their Academy as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.

Joseph Leckie Academy follows the child protection procedures as defined by Walsall Safeguarding Partnership (<https://go.walsall.gov.uk/walsall-safeguarding-partnership/>) and multi-agency threshold guidance *Walsall Right Help, Right Time - A Continuum of Need*. We work with partners to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and visitors to the Academy as safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. *Our belief is that "it could happen here" and "we have the interest of the children" as our priority.* All aspects of safeguarding and bullying supports us to address any underlying bias in order to achieve equality for all children and adults within our school.

We must ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. We strive for a culture where children can confidently report abuse, know their concerns will be treated seriously, and know they can safely express their views and give feedback.

1.2 We are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. We know children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This does not prevent our staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child. Our staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people in our school that help facilitate communication.

In our school, we acknowledge the negative experiences and distressing life events associated with COVID-19 and this can still affect the mental health of our students and their parents, we are well prepared to offer the right help at the right time.

1.3 This policy is available to parents/carers on our website www.josephleckieacademy.co.uk All staff (this includes volunteers) are aware of the safeguarding procedures in the Academy and these are explained as part of staff induction. This includes:

- the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- the Staff Code of Conduct.
- the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education.
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (including the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputies)

2. Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

2.1 At Joseph Leckie Academy we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works at our Academy to share this commitment.

Adults in our Academy take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who encounters children, and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

2.2 Joseph Leckie Academy staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.

2.3 Joseph Leckie Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (and trained Deputies) who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and liaise closely with other services such as Children's Services and Police.

2.4 Joseph Leckie Academy staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

2.5 Any member of staff who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in Appendix 1. Staff understand they may be required to support social workers and other agencies following any referrals.

2.6 All our staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

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3. Expectations of Academy Staff, Volunteers and Visitors

3.1 [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

(KCSiE 2024) is statutory guidance and is understood and followed by:

- Our Trustees
- Our Senior leadership
- All staff and volunteers

In our school staff, volunteers and visitors will: -

- be familiar with and understand our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies
- be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc (see part 5)
- be involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, child-in-need plans, child protection plans and early help assessments where necessary (part2)
- be alert to signs and indicators of abuse (part 2)
- participate in reviews undertaken by Walsall Safeguarding Partnership as required

4. Academy Ethos

4.1 The Academy encourages students to respect the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the Academy and where political issues are brought to the attention of the students; reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to students.

Section 2: Duties and Responsibilities

5. Children Act 2004 Education and Schools

5.1 The Children Act 2004 places a statutory responsibility as follows:

Education and schools: All people working in education and schools contribute to the safeguarding and promoting of children's welfare. All schools and further education institutions have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Consequently, staff in these establishments play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect by early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm and by educating children, about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum. All schools and further education institutions should create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people and should be able to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns.

6. Local and National Responsibilities

6.1 Joseph Leckie Academy will fulfil its local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:

- [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Children's Procedures \(walsall.gov.uk\)](https://walsall.gov.uk)
- [Walsall Safeguarding Partnership > Professionals & Volunteers > Procedures and Guidance > Adults Procedures](#)
- [The Education Act 2002 s157/s175](#)
- [What to do if You're Worried a Child is being Abused March 2015](#)
- [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Education inspection framework](#)

7. The Statutory Framework and Legislative Duties

7.1 To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, Joseph Leckie Academy staff will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Children Act 2004](#)
- Education Act 2002 ([section 175](#) / [section 157](#))
- [Walsall Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)
- [Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff \(DfE 2011\)](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)

8. Academy response to guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

8.1 In response Joseph Leckie Academy has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who absent from education
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take students off-roll when they:

- leave the Academy to be Electively Home Educated.
- move away from the Academy's location.
- remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age.
- are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards).
- are permanently excluded.

We will ensure that students who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the Local Authority.

When a student leaves the Academy, we will record the name of the student's new school and their expected start date.

Joseph Leckie Academy will inform the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between Joseph Leckie Academy and the Local Authority.

9. Key Staff

9.1 Named staff at Joseph Leckie Academy are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs M De Rome
CEO Associate Principal	Mr J Ludlow Ms R Cook
Chair of Trustees	Mrs L Ingram
Safeguarding Trustee	Father M McIntyre and John Owen
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Mrs L McCullough, Mr J Ludlow, Ms R Cook, Mr A Banbery, Mrs N Kaur, Mrs L Price, Mr J Greaves, Miss N Ravat and Mr B Edge
Single Point of Contact for Preventing Radicalisation (SPOC)	Mrs M De Rome
Looked After Children Designated Teacher	Miss N Ravat
Special Educational Needs Coordinator	Lead for SEND - Caroline Frye Acting SENCo - Rachael Owen
Designated Lead for Online Safety (responsible to DSL)	Mr T Freeman
Senior Lead for Mental Health	Mr J Greaves

10. Role of The Designated Safeguarding Lead

10.1 The Trust Board have appointed Mrs M De Rome as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, she has the authority to perform the role and is part of the Academy Senior Leadership Team.

10.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and online safety (including filtering and monitoring).

10.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns and in exceptional circumstances this could involve contact electronically, via Teams/Zoom. If in exceptional circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or DDSL) are not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Joseph Leckie Academy staff should consider taking advice from Children's Services. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL) as soon as is practically possible.

10.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead has responsibilities as follows:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority Children's Services as required.
- support staff who make referrals to local authority Children's Services.
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
- liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians SENCO and Mental Health Lead) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- be aware of students who have a social worker.
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and Academy Leadership.
- liaise with the Principal to inform them of issues. Especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult.
- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring.
- Oversee online filtering and monitoring systems and act on issues identified or raised.
- Monitor all aspects of filtering and monitoring systems. Ensuring they use an educational provider, that meets the risk profile of the school and they are aware that this is working effectively e.g [Walsall Council Online monitoring service](#)
- Meet the DFE [filtering and monitoring technical standards](#)
- Consider meeting the [Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK](#). including undertaking Cyber security training for all staff, including governors, and trustees. [Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK](#). and [Walsall Council Schools' Cybersecurity support](#)

10.5 **Referring a Concern.** If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available, you must refer your concerns to a named Deputy DSL.

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Services and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially Section 17 (children in need) and Section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral.

11. The Responsibility of the Trust Board

11.1 The Trust Board are the accountable body for ensuring the safety of Joseph Leckie Academy. Joseph Leckie Academy Trust Board will ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place for appropriate action to be taken promptly to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

This should include:

- an effective Child Protection Policy.
- a Staff Code of Conduct which includes: acceptable use of technology, staff/student relationships and communications including the use of social media.

11.2 The Trust Board will ensure Joseph Leckie Academy has in place the appropriate safeguarding responses to children who are absent from education, for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in the future.

11.3 The Trust Board will ensure Joseph Leckie Academy contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. Joseph Leckie Academy will work with Children's Services, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

11.4 The Trust Board will ensure that our safeguarding arrangements consider the procedures and practices of the Local Authority. This includes the requirement under Section 175/Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 which placed a duty on:

- The Trust Bodies of schools to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in place.
- The Local Authority to monitor compliance of maintained schools.

11.5 Our Trust Board is aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements specified on page 42 of our policy.

11.6 The Trust Board recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns daily and all staff can contribute to safeguarding arrangements and the Child Protection Policy.

11.7 The Trust Board will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, child-on-child sexual abuse (sexual violence and sexual harassment) through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

11.8 The Trust Board will ensure there are procedures in place to handle allegations against teachers, Principals, support staff, volunteers, and visitors.

11.9 The Trust Board will ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at Staff Induction. The training will be regularly updated, and the induction and training will be in line with advice from the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership. The Trust Board will ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training,

including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

11.10 The Trust Board will review the Child Protection Policy annually.

11.11 The Nominated Trustee for safeguarding in the Academy is Father M McIntyre. He is responsible for liaising with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads across all matters regarding child protection issues. The role is strategic rather than operational – he will not be involved in concerns about individual students. John Owen is a second nominated Trustee for safeguarding in the Academy.

11.12 Mrs L Ingram (the Chair Trustee) is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority and other partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal.

11.13 The Trust Board will ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly reviews their effectiveness.

11.14 The Trust Board ensure that all trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in the Academy are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding. Their training will be regularly updated.

The Trust Board reviews its policies/procedures annually. If there is a need to update safeguarding policies to ensure they are kept up-to-date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and/or to include lessons learnt locally or nationally then school leaders, our DSL and Trust Board may update safeguarding policies more regularly.

12. The Role of the Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children (Child in Care)

12.1 The most common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse and/or neglect. The Trust Board will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe. A previously looked-after child can remain vulnerable and all our staff will have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked-after children safe.

12.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual Academy Headteacher in the authority that looks after the child.

12.3 The Trust Board has appointed a Designated Teacher, Miss N Ravat to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after or previously looked after and ensure that this person has received appropriate training.

Our Designated Teacher knows that the Virtual school head manages pupil premium plus for looked after children. Our Designated Teacher works with the virtual school head to discuss how funding

can be best used to support the progress of our looked-after children in school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. Our Designated Teacher will also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked-after children.

On commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Designated Teachers will also have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

12.4 In Walsall, in addition to their statutory duties, the role of virtual school heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

In offering advice and information to workforces that have relationships with children with social workers, virtual school heads will identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children. This should include Designated Safeguarding Leads, social workers, headteachers, governors, Special Educational Needs coordinators, mental health leads and other local authority officers.

Non-statutory guidance on promoting the education of children with a social worker contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads.

[Virtual School Head roles for children with a Social Worker](#)

[Guidance for Designated Teachers](#)

13. Training

13.1 All staff and volunteers will receive Level 2 Safeguarding Children and Young People training at least every year delivered by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the Academy or external online agency. In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

13.2 All staff and volunteers will receive Induction Training, this is mandatory and will include:

- Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (inclusive of procedures to deal with child on child abuse)
- Our Behaviour, Inclusion and Relationships Policy
- Our Staff Code of Conduct
- Our safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- Our Online Safety Policy
- The role of our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- Part one and Annex A. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.
- The Trust Board will assess whether staff who do not work directly with children will be suitably informed by reading (and signing for understanding) Annex A of the guidance. Annex A is a condensed version of part 1. All staff who work directly with children in our school will read and sign acceptance of understanding for Part 1)
- Explanation of the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

13.3 Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputies) will attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.

13.4 All of our other staff will receive weekly safeguarding CPD and child protection updates as required to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

13.5 Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and Trustees who are involved in the recruitment process. (Part 5)

13.6 Walsall Safeguarding Partnership and Walsall Council offer training in Safeguarding Children and Young People, Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, and other topics relating to safeguarding children. Staff training is not only crucial in protecting children and young people but also makes them aware of how they can protect themselves against allegations.

Further information about these courses can be accessed via the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership website at <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/walsall-safeguarding-partnership/>

14. Our Safer Recruitment and Single Central Record (SCR)

14.1 As part of our culture of a commitment to safeguarding our Trust Board and senior leaders adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in our Academy.

14.2 Key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake Safer Recruitment Training offered by the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership

14.3 All recruitment materials will include a reference to the Academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of students. All staff and volunteer interviews will explore the candidate's commitment, understanding and knowledge of safeguarding children and young people. Please see **Appendix 8** further information.

14.2 **Single Central Record.** The Single Central Record (SCR) must indicate whether the checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained, for all staff volunteers and visitors, including people who have lived or worked outside the UK. The Single Central Record will be checked monthly by the CEO.

15. Whistleblowing

15.1 All staff must raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the Academy's safeguarding regime, concerns will be taken seriously by the CEO/ Associate Principal/DSL/DDSL.

15.2 Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, are in place for such concerns to be raised with the CEO/ Associate Principal/DSL/DDSL. If there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in our Academy staff should refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

15.3 A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the Academy community or the general public, such as:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed.
- A legal obligation has been breached.
- There has been a miscarriage of justice.
- The health or safety of any individual has been endangered.
- The environment has been damaged.
- Information about any of the above has been concealed.

15.4 The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285, this line is open from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing> and <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

More information and the full Walsall Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection Procedures can be found at <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/walsall-safeguarding-partnership/>

16. Curriculum

16.1 The Trust Board considers how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through PDP, SRE, SMSC, British Values, Online safety, assemblies and approved visitors etc.

16.2 We will provide opportunities for students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes, and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. Relevant issues will be addressed through the PDP curriculum, for example, self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, exploitation, sex and relationship education, consent, Online safety, British Values, bullying and sexting. Issues will be addressed through other areas of the curriculum, for example, English, History, Drama, Art, RE, Science and many others.

16.3 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Academy policies address issues of power and potential harm, for example, bullying, equal opportunities, physical handling, and positive behaviour, online safety, SEND, disabilities and other vulnerabilities and are linked to ensure a whole Academy approach.

The Academy's safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the Academy, which should ensure that students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and feel they are listened to. This may include covering relevant issues for us through Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education which is compulsory from September 2020 for all secondary students.

Our school makes use of the DfE "one-stop" page for teachers on GOV.UK, outlined within. [Teaching about relationships, sex and health](#). This includes teacher training modules on the RSHE topics and non-statutory implementation guidance.

We are familiar with the following resources to help us plan and teach about safeguarding:

- [teaching online safety in schools](#)
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance [Education for a connected world](#)
- UKCIS guidance [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)
- The UKCIS [external visitor's guidance](#) to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors;
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme [ThinkuKnow](#)
- [Harmful Online Challenges and Online Hoaxes](#) this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.

By using the resources above our students are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

17. Online safety

17.1 The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

We know students increasingly work online, and children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (3G, 4G, and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school, can sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The Designated safeguarding lead has responsibility for ensuring all online access is appropriately, filtered, monitored, risk assessed, reviewed and updated as necessary.

17.2 The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying;
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the DfE has provided advice to support schools and colleges to do so safely:

17.3 Whilst considering our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, our Trust Board will do all that they

reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, our Trust Board ensures our Academy has appropriate technological filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly reviews their effectiveness. They ensure that our leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

Our Trust Board is committed to considering the age range of our students, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks. Staff are also aware that they need to fully and actively monitor the use of technology both in the classroom and any tasks set at home.

17.4 Many students can access the internet using their own personal devices' data plan, which unfortunately we have no control over.

17.5 To minimise inappropriate use, we implement a range of different proactive and reactive measures both in Academy systems and in the curriculum. Both the ICT and PDP curricula contain information and resources for online safety and the dangers/risks of accessing or posting inappropriate content online. We also have a system in place in which both screen captures and key logs on all devices on-site, any captures of inappropriate use are reviewed by the DSL/DDSL/ Leadership Team and IT Services Coordinator, and appropriate sanctions are actioned depending on the issue. This may be educating the user or parental contact. Assemblies are also programmed throughout the Academic year to raise further awareness. Regular safeguarding briefings are sent out by the DSL which where necessary incorporate updated information.

17.6 We are in regular contact with parents and carers. These communications are used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We hope parents and carers find it helpful to understand what systems we use to filter and monitor online use. Parents and carers need to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear about who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

18. Reasonable Force

18.1 There are circumstances when it is appropriate for our staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.

18.2 When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEND or disabilities or with medical conditions, we will consider the risks carefully and recognise the additional vulnerability of these children.

18.3 Joseph Leckie Academy procedures are clear that any member of staff who uses reasonable force completes a report immediately and shares the report with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL) to ensure that:

- The child was not harmed.
- That first aid has been considered.
- That the parents/carers of the child or young person have been informed.
- That reasonable force was the best and most proportionate response to the situation.

Further information: [Use of reasonable force](#)

19. Extended School/Community and Off-Site Arrangements

19.1 Where extended Academy or community activities are provided, the Academy Child Protection Policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, the Academy will undertake checks to ensure that they provide adequate safeguarding arrangements.

19.2 When students attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, the Academy will ensure that the proprietors of the activity/venue operate safe practices to maintain the safety of our students/young people and liaise with investigating agencies in the locality relevant to where the concern has taken place.

Alternative Provision

19.3 In the event that our students attend alternative education provision we understand that this cohort of students often have complex needs. We ensure that the management committee or governing body of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that the students may be vulnerable to. We obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, those checks that our Academy would otherwise perform in respect of our staff as defined in part five.

19.4 The DfE provide two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners/our school of Alternative Provision will have regard:

[Alternative provision - DfE Statutory Guidance](#)

[Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - DfE Statutory Guidance](#)

The Academy gives full regard to the guidance above to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of our students.

19.5 When our Trust Board hire or rents out school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they will ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by our Trust Board, under the direct supervision or management of our school staff, our arrangements for child protection will apply.

However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. Our Trust Board therefore will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. In the event a Position of Trust (POT) is raised regards staff working at the organisation using the premises the school would follow their policy and procedures for reporting. This applies regardless of whether or not the students who attend any of these services or activities are children on Joseph Leckie's roll.

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

20. Data Protection and Information Sharing

20.1 We understand that information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools are required to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA Children's Social Care or the Prevent program etc.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure, this is **not** a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information **will not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

20.2 When children leave Joseph Leckie Academy, the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new academy, school, or college as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt will be obtained; this should be transferred separately from the main student file. If we are the receiving Academy, we will ensure key staff such as DSLs and SENCOs, are aware as required.

See Appendix 3: 'The Seven Golden Rules for Sharing Information'

Section 3: Responding to a Concern or Disclosure (Guidance and Procedure)

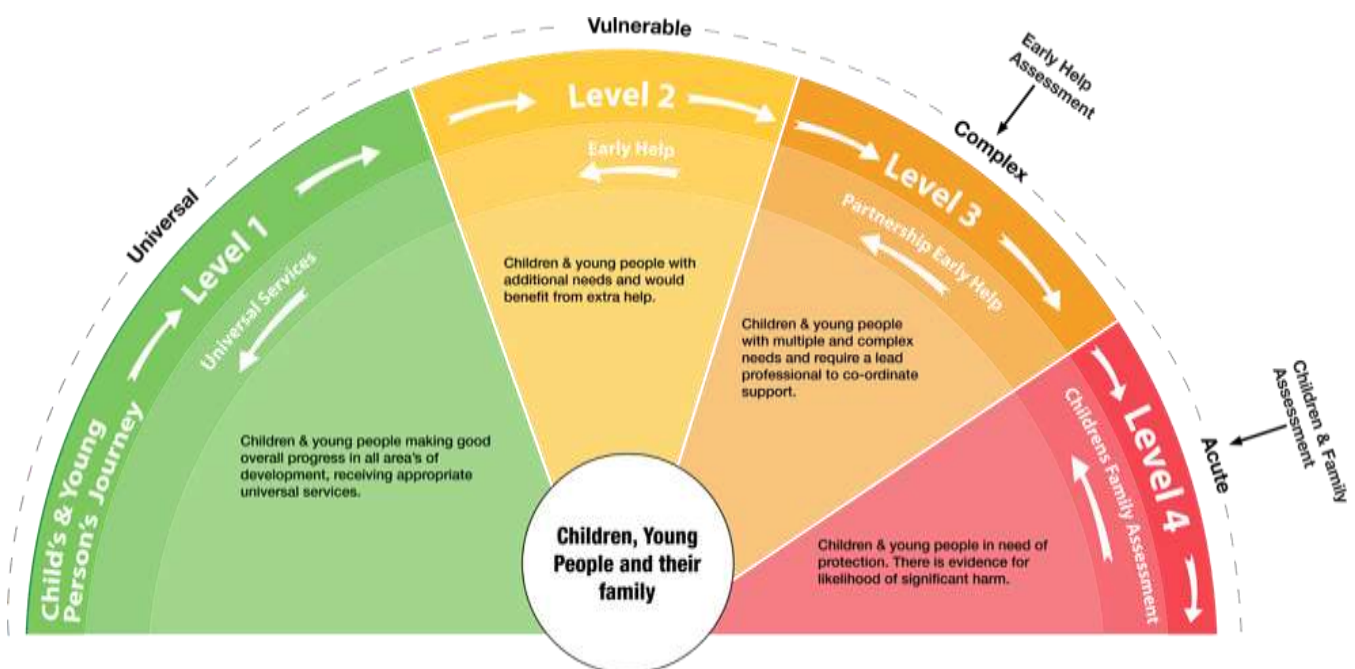
21. Key principles (including 'Early Help')

21.1 Joseph Leckie Academy staff and volunteers should be aware of the referral pathway in Walsall including single and multi-agency Early Help offers as defined in Walsall Safeguarding Partnership Right Help, Right Time – Continuum of Need Guidance:-

<https://walsallsp.co.uk/children/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/03/Multi-Agency-Guidance-Continuum-of-Care-Online4.pdf>

21.2 If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. Early help support for children of all ages improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Many children are vulnerable in various ways and this is not always a result of actions by parents/carers. Children can be deemed to be vulnerable in many ways as defined in the section

The Walsall Pathway indicating levels of concern is defined below:-



Options will therefore include:

- managing any support for a child internally via the Academy Pastoral support practice
- being open to early help assessment/early reviews
- a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or is likely to suffer harm.

21.3 All Academy staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help (levels 2 and 3) in addition to identifying risks of significant harm (level 4).

21.4 Early Help. If early help is appropriate, our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases are kept under constant review and consideration is given to a referral to Children's Services for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for early help can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

21.5 Child in Need. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development are likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in Need may be assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

21.6 Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care and if appropriate the police is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process. [when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://www.npcc.police.uk/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf)

Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

21.7 The Role of the Local Authority. The Local Authority will decide, within one working day of a referral being made, about the type of response that is required and should let the referrer know the outcome, the referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the Academy will consider following local escalation procedures to ensure our concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

21.8 If Academy staff have a concern about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there must be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to agree on a course of action.

21.9 Where there is a safeguarding concern, Joseph Leckie Academy staff will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems are in place for children to express their views.

21.10 Virtual School Head. In Walsall, in addition to their statutory duties, the role of virtual school heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

In offering advice and information to workforces that have relationships with children with social workers, virtual school heads will identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children. This should include Designated Safeguarding Leads, social workers, Headteachers/Principals, Governors/Trustees, Special Educational Needs coordinators, mental health leads and other local authority officers.

[Non-statutory guidance](#) on promoting the education of children with a social worker contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads.

22. Dealing with Concerns and Disclosures

22.1 All staff are trained and aware that:

- a child may disclose something that has upset or harmed them
- someone else might report something that a child has told them, or they believe that a child has or is being harmed
- a child shows signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no explanation
- a child's behaviour, including any observed changes to behaviour 'usual' for that child may suggest he or she is being abused
- the behaviour or attitude of a colleague shown towards a child causes a cause for concern
- a child demonstrates worrying behaviour towards other children.
- a child displays indicators of mental health concerns

22.2 We know that being professionally curious is not simply about asking the question. It is about the language used, creating a trusting relationship, a safe space in which to disclose and giving time to children and young people so they do not feel pressured.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

22.3 All staff are alert to the potential need for early help/referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health, and care plan).
- is a young carer.
- has a mental health need
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home.
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking , sexual and/or exploitation.

- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- has returned home to their family from care.
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- is a privately fostered child.
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending.

22.4 Academy staff are aware that consulting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead **does not** mean a referral has been made. This decision is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the appropriate agency as and when required. However, all staff are aware that they can and should make referrals/consult with Walsall MASH.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college.

[Children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) | NSPCC Learning](#)

22.5 If a member of staff is unhappy with the response he/she receives from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, all staff have the right to contact Children's Services.

22.6 Joseph Leckie Academy will always discuss concerns with parents/carers unless to do so would:

- place the child at risk of significant harm or further risk of significant harm
- place a vulnerable adult at risk of harm
- compromise and enquiries that need to be undertaken by Children's Services or the police

22.7 Joseph Leckie Academy staff will endeavour to ensure that parents/carers understand the responsibilities placed on the Academy and staff for safeguarding children.

22.8 Only a minority of children actively disclose abuse. Most child abuse is disclosed accidentally or through observation by an adult of a child's behaviour, words, and physical appearance. When a child does disclose abuse, this needs to be taken very seriously. Any disclosure must be dealt with appropriately, both for the well-being of the child and to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise any legal action against the abuser.

23 Procedures when someone is concerned about a child or young person (including 'Early Help')

23.1 All concerns for children and young people should be recorded on My Concern using staff login details. *The DSL/DSLs will receive an electronic notification of that concern.* An emergency login system is available on [SharePoint](#).

- All concerns should be recorded as soon as possible within the hour
- All concerns should be referred to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead in their absence

- All concerns of significant harm should be referred to the local authority children's services (MASH) without delay. See Appendix 1.
- All concerns shared with the designated safeguarding lead should be considered alongside Walsall's Safeguarding Partnership Right Help, Right Time guidance
- All concerns of allegations about staff, volunteers or visitors' harmful behaviour should be referred to the Principal (if the concern is about the Principal, the Chair of Trustees and the LADO should be informed without delay). See Appendix 2.

22.2 Remember records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of your concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

If you are in doubt about recording requirements, you should discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

22.3 Principle for the Academy "Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 we may share information without consent if, in our judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk."

22.4 Staff recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most students. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support students who have a social worker.

In Walsall, in addition to their statutory duties, the role of virtual school heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

In offering advice and information to workforces that have relationships with children with social workers, virtual school heads will identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children. This should include Designated Safeguarding Leads, social workers, headteachers, governors, Special Educational Needs coordinators, mental health leads and other local authority officers.

Non-statutory guidance on promoting the education of children with a social worker and kinship care arrangements contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads.

[Children's social care: virtual school head role extension - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-virtual-school-head-role-extension)
[Virtual School Head roles for children with a Social Worker](#)

23. What Information will you need when making a referral

23.1 Staff will be asked to provide as much information as possible, such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents, other siblings, and chronology of previous concerns. Staff should not be concerned if they do not have all these details, staff should still make the call.

23.2 Responses from parents/carers. Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all categories of abuse:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is needed.
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain, or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development.
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries.
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries.
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child.
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child.
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse.
- Parents request removal of the child from home.
- Violence between adults in the household.

23.3 Staff should follow up on the verbal referral in writing, within 24hrs. This should be done on a MARF (multi-agency referral form). Joseph Leckie Academy will use the common referral procedures available online as per their Local Authority the MARF can be accessed through the link: [Walsall Safeguarding Partnership website](#)

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 0300 555 2866 Monday to Thursday 8.45 am - 5.15 pm, Friday 8.45 am - 4.45 pm

[Electronic Multi-Agency Referral Form](#)

Emergency Response Team

Tel: 0300 555 2922 or 0300 555 2836

If you believe a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm call 999 in an emergency

23.3 Some of our students may not reside within Walsall Local Authority and we are aware that we should locate the number for the child's Local Authority's Child Protection Referral Team via <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

24. Responding to a disclosure "The 6 R's Response"

You have a statutory duty under the Education Act 2002 to pass on any child protection concerns about the child.

Receive	Reassure	React	Record	Refer	Reflect
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Receive

- If a child wants to talk to you, never ask them to come back later. Ask them what they want to talk to you about and, if you are concerned about their welfare, give them the time to speak to you.
- Never promise confidentiality, inform the child that you are happy to talk to them but if they tell you anything that you believe may be putting them at harm you will have to talk to someone.
- Listen carefully to the child. Do not stop a child who is freely recalling information.

- Where a child is visibly upset or has an obvious injury, it is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how an injury was caused or respond to a child wanting to talk to you to help clarify vague concerns and result in the right action being taken.

Reassure

- Ensure that the child is aware that they have done the right thing in talking to you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- If you have any concerns that the child has been, or is at risk of harm, you must tell them that you will speak to someone to get help.

React

- If you need to clarify information, ask open-ended questions e.g., "Is there anything you would like to tell me?", "Can you explain to me...", "Can you describe to me..."
- Never ask leading or suggestive questions e.g. 'Did he/she do anything that they shouldn't have done?'
- Never ask 'accusing' questions e.g., "Why didn't you tell someone earlier?"
- Never criticise the alleged perpetrator, it may be someone that they will continue to live with.
- Never ask the student to repeat their disclosure for any other member of staff, it is your responsibility to share the information
- These four factors may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by Children's Services or Police.

Record

- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the words that the child has used.
- Do not record your assumptions and interpretations, just what you heard and saw.
- Do not destroy original notes even if you later write things up more neatly and fully.
- Record the date, time, and place of the disclosure.
- Sign any written records and identify your position in the school setting.
- Do not ask a child to write an account or sign any of your documentation as this may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by Children's Services or Police.

Refer

- Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection Mrs M De Rome or in her absence a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will be responsible for following the appropriate procedures. In the absence of anyone being available in school, contact the Local Authority

Reflect

- Ask yourself if you have done everything you can within your role.
- Refer any remaining concerns to the designated teacher, e.g., any knowledge of siblings in the Academy, or previous contact with parents.

- Dealing with disclosures can be difficult and disturbing; you should seek support for yourself via the support within the Academy or an alternative source but be aware of the principles of confidentiality.

25. Allegations involving a member of staff, supply/agency staff or volunteer

25.1 Joseph Leckie Academy is committed to having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all staff, volunteers and visitors to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people. Key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake Safer Recruitment Training offered by the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership or other relevant providers. However, despite our commitment to safer recruitment processes, we are aware there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor. Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances.

25.2 All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. In these circumstances, all allegations against other members of staff or volunteers should be referred to the CEO. In his absence, staff should seek to speak with a member of the Leadership Team. If the concern is about the CEO, then speak to the Chair of Trustees. Information sharing should not be a barrier but in the unlikely event that staff cannot access the people above they need to discuss concerns with (LADO) Belinda Crowshaw or Francesca Hamilton lado@walsall.gov.uk
01922 652322 WITHIN ONE WORKING DAY See Appendix 2.

25.3 The following procedure should be applied in all situations **If a concern has reached the harm threshold:**

The following procedure will be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

(*Person could be anyone working in the Academy that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Whilst we are not the employer of supply teachers, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly. When using a supply agency we will inform the agency of our process for managing allegations but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This will include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at work, at home or in another setting and whether the individual was in the school or college at the time of the allegation, and whether there were any witnesses and if there is any CCTV footage.

25.4 A senior member of the Human Resources section of the agency must also be consulted. The LADO will discuss the matter with the CEO/ Associate Principal to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to Children's Services is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

25.5 Suspension will not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. All options to avoid suspension will be considered before taking that step. The CEO/ Associate Principal/Trustee must consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at school, or until the allegation is resolved. It will be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at school is/is at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. If in doubt, the CEO/ Associate Principal/Trustee will seek views from our personnel adviser and the LADO, as well as the police and Children's Services where they have been involved. Where it is deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be given within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. It is not acceptable for an employer to leave a person who has been suspended without any support. The person should be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the Academy and provided with their contact details.

25.6 Parents or carers of the child or children involved should be:

- formally told about the allegation as soon as possible. The CEO/ Associate Principal/Trustee will consult the LADO and where involved Children's Services and/or the police on what information can be disclosed
- kept informed about the progress of the case, only concerning their child – no information can be shared regarding the staff member
- made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

25.7 Where the initial discussion leads to no further action, our CEO/ Associate Principal/Trustee and the LADO will:

- Record the decision and justification for it.
- Agree on what information will be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

25.5 Some allegations will require immediate referral to Children's Services and the Police, but common sense and judgment must be applied in deciding what action to take.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, the LADO will immediately refer the matter to Children's Services and ask for a Strategy Discussion/Meeting to be convened.

25.6 Where the safety of other children is in question as a result of the allegation, consideration should be given to invoking the Complex (Organised or Multiple) Abuse Procedure, this can be found on the [Walsall Safeguarding Partnership website](#).

25.7 Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Children's Services. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently, the LADO should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult Police and social care colleagues as appropriate.

25.8 Where a referral is made directly to Children's Services, they will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Police and the CEO.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

1. The police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
2. Enquiries and assessment by Children's Services as to whether the child requires protection or need of services.
3. Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

25.9 The definitions that will be used when we determine the outcome of an allegation are set out below:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation.
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

25.10 If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation need help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to Children's Services may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per behaviour policies.

25.11 **Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.** Where an adult makes an allegation to our school that they were abused as a child, the individual will be advised/supported to report the allegation to the police. Non-recent allegations made by a child will be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with Children's Services and the police.

25.12 **Allegations against supply teachers and all contracted/agency staff.** In some circumstances Joseph Leckie Academy will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply because agencies will have

their policies and procedures; for example, supply teachers or contracted staff provided by an employment agency or business.

Whilst Joseph Leckie Academy is not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances will our Academy decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Our senior leaders and/or Trust Board will discuss this with the supply agency or agencies. They will decide in partnership with the LADO, whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher or redeploy them to another part of the Academy, whilst they carry out their investigation.

Agencies should be fully involved and cooperate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social care. Joseph Leckie Academy will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process.

Supply teachers, whilst not employed by us, are under the supervision, direction and control of the Trust Board when working in the Academy. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support.

An allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency or agencies are taken into account during the investigation.

When using a supply agency, Joseph Leckie Academy will inform the agency of its process for managing allegations, but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

If a concern has not reached the harm threshold/lower level concerns:

25.13 **Low-level concerns about staff behaviour.** Concerns may arise in several ways and from several sources. For example, suspicion, complaint or disclosure made by a child, parent/carer or other adult within or outside our Academy; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

A low-level concern is still a concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of our Academy may have acted in a way that:

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

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over-friendly with children.
- having favourites.
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phones.
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.

- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Our training helps staff understand that such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

If low-level concerns are shared initially with the DSL or with the CEO/ Associate Principal, it is a matter for our Academy to decide. If the former, then our DSL will inform the CEO/ Associate Principal of all the low-level concerns in a timely fashion according to the nature of each particular low-level concern.

Our CEO/ Associate Principal will be the ultimate decision maker concerning all low-level concerns, although it is recognised that depending on the nature of some low-level concerns and/or the role of the DSL in our Academy the CEO/ Associate Principal may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision-making approach.

Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If we are in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the relevant LADO.

As part of our whole Academy approach to safeguarding we ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of our Academy (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harm threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. When implemented correctly, this will enforce our open and transparent culture, enable us to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse, and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of our school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and following the ethos and values of our Academy as set out in part one of the policy.

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

Our records for such level of concern will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). This allows for records to be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

26. Additional Academy safeguarding policy and guidance

26.1 This policy should be read and referenced alongside other Academy safeguarding policies and guidance:

- e Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy

- Remote Learning Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Reasonable force Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Behaviour, Inclusion and Relationships Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Radicalisation and Extremism guidance for schools Sept 2015
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Searching Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy
- Weapons Policy

Section 4 Definitions and Specific Risks

27. Definitions of Abuse and Neglect and Exploitation

27.1 **Abuse:** A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of the home and online.

All staff are aware of safeguarding issues and aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol, truanting and sexting unexplained and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lies), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi nude images and/ or videos can be signs that children are at risk and place a children in danger.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Academy. Our staff, especially the designated safeguarding lead will be considering the context of such incidents and/or behaviours. Such contextual safeguarding means our assessments of children will consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Additionally, Children's Services assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so we must provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This allows any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

27.2 **Physical abuse:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, suffocating, burning or scalding, drowning 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 whom they are looking after.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape.
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt a liner bruise;
- Bite marks.
- Round burn marks.
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks.

- An injury that is not consistent with the account given or the development/ability of the child;
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred.
- Bald patches.
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning.
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather.
- Fear of going home or parents/carers being contacted.
- Fear of medical help.
- Fear of changing for PE.
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance.
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying.
- Isolation from peers.

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

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways, for example, as stupid, naughty, hopeless, and ugly.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development.
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders.
- Inappropriate emotional responses, and fantasies.
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches.
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse.
- Fear of parents/carers being contacted.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing.
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia.
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.
- High criticism, and low warmth observed from the parents/carers

N.B. Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as "traumatic mutism") can indicate maltreatment.

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

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge.
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness.
- Refusal to communicate.
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pain.
- Eating disorders, for example, anorexia nervosa and bulimia.
- Attention seeking/needing behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse.
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation.
- Unusual compliance.
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling.
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately.
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group.
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming.
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

We understand that staff need support when managing cases of sexual abuse and will access materials from the CSA Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse, which has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual abuse.

[Supporting Practice in tackling child sexual abuse](#)

27.5 **Neglect:** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is borne, it may involve a parent/carer:

- failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing.
- failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- failing to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers).
- failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger.
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food.
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness.
- Frequently dirty or unkempt.
- Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather.
- Poor school attendance or often late for school.
- Poor concentration.
- Affection or attention-seeking behaviour.
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated.
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example, growth, and weight.
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially.
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, and caring for siblings.
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school.
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.

27.6 **Child Sexual and Child Criminal Exploitation:** All staff should be aware that child sexual and child criminal exploitation are forms of child abuse.

27.7 **Contextual Safeguarding.** Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Academy and/or can occur between children outside the Academy. All our staff, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and or Deputies) will be considering the context within which such incidents and behaviours occur. [contextual safeguarding](#) means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

27.8 All staff are aware of safeguarding issues and aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

28. Specific Risks

28.1 All staff will have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can place children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education, and sexting (also known as youth-produced sexual imagery) place children in danger.

Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2024 will be provided at induction, read and understood by all staff/volunteers outlining risk as below:-

28.2 **Children and the Court System.** Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11 years old [Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and 12-17 years old [Young witness booklet for 12 to 17 year olds - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). The guides explain each step of the process, support and available special measures. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench family conflict. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online

child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service [Get help with child arrangements - GOV.UK \(justice.gov.uk\)](https://www.justice.gov.uk/get-help-with-child-arrangements). This may be useful for some parents and carers.

We will recognise these vulnerabilities and offer early help where necessary for the children, young people, and their families to safeguard their emotional well-being; we will access resources as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

28.3 Children Absent from Education. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities must establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Children absent from school, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

We have procedures in place in response to children absent from education which support identification of such abuse and also help prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority Children Services and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. We will always follow up with parents/carers when students are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up-to-date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents are reminded to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

Our Academy has:

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who are absent from education (especially on repeat occasions)
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
- Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take a child off-roll when they:
 - leave school to be home-educated (see below).
 - move away from the Academy's location.
 - remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age.
 - are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards).
 - are permanently excluded.

28.4 We will ensure that students who are expected to attend the Academy but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a student leaves the Academy, we will record the name of the student's new school and their expected start date.

Our Academy will inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the Academy and the local authority

28.3.1 Home Educated. We know that many home-educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We expect parents' decisions to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, we know this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

When a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from our Academy to educate at home, we will work together with other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. We refer to [Elective Home Education Guidance](#) to support our processes and decisions.

28.4 Children with family members in prison. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health. We will work with the children and their families as much as possible to mitigate the harm by offering early help and emotional well-being support where necessary and recognise additional risks such as witnessing arrests, the trauma of prison visits, concerns regarding an offender's release and return home. This may include working with specialist agencies such as WPH counselling, Early Help Family Support Practitioners or Barnardo's.

28.5 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & Child Sexual Exploitation CSE.

Both CSE and CCE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity or sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology.

Our staff are aware that some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through the county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Our staff have been alerted to the fact that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. We know that both boys and girls who are being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Some of the following can be indicators of Child Criminal Exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.

- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- children who go missing for periods or regularly come home late.
- children who are regularly absent from school or education or do not take part in education.

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or another form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure the compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Further information [County Lines Guidance](#)

Any concerns will be referred to Children’s Services and support will also be sought from the Principal Exploitation Reduction Officer & Exploitation and Missing Team Manager, Katie Storer-Young, who manages the Walsall Exploitation team. If you are worried about exploitation or have concerns about a child, please refer to MASH or the child’s social worker. You should also copy missingexploitedchildren@walsall.gov.uk into any referrals.

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

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child’s immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship or may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.

- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequent areas known for sex work.
- Concerning the use of the internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours.
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include (Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues):

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past. For example, domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality.
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories).
- Sexual identity.

Joseph Leckie Academy refers to Walsall Safeguarding Partnership procedures to consider the completion of the screening tool and/or NWG risk assessment. [Walsall Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Any concerns will be referred to Children's Services and support will also be sought from the Principal Exploitation Reduction Officer & Exploitation and Missing Team Manager, Katie Storer-Young, who manages the Walsall Exploitation team. If you are worried about exploitation or have concerns about a child, please refer to MASH or the child's social worker. You should also copy missingexploitedchildren@walsall.gov.uk into any referrals.

Further Information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

28.7 Domestic Abuse. We know that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and maybe a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer

domestic abuse in their intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Our staff/volunteers understand that exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Domestic Abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, and can be perpetrated by intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

The Academy is signed up to Operation Encompass, the Walsall Joint Agency Protocol for Domestic Abuse – notifications to Schools. This protocol sets out the Walsall plan for a multi-agency operation to notify schools when a student has experienced domestic abuse in their household, which will allow the Academy to provide appropriate early intervention and support promptly. The DSL will receive notifications and ensure the children receive the right help at the right time.

Additional support is available from Operation Encompass which provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse.

The helpline is available 8 AM to 1 PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

Further information can be accessed via:-

[Domestic violence and abuse](#)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

[Refuge what is domestic abuse/effects of domestic abuse on children](#)

[Safelives: Young people and domestic abuse](#)

28.8 Homelessness. Joseph Leckie Academy staff understand that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy DSLs) are aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

We understand that a referral to Children's Services where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm may still be made to Children's Services.

We are aware that indicators may be:

- household debt

- rent arrears
- domestic abuse
- anti-social behaviour
- the family being asked to leave a property

We recognise that in some cases 16 and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents/carers, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a level of intervention and support.

Further explanation is found in Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets [Homeless reduction factsheet](#) 28.9 So called **Honour based abuse** (Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Breast Ironing). So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called honour-based abuse are *abuse* (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and *escalated* as such.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA or if they have suffered HBA, they must contact the DSL (or Deputy DSL) as a matter of urgency. We understand that if FGM has taken place, since 31st October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach as below.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that many cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society.
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM.
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE.
- visiting female elders from the country of origin.
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin.
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman.

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out of school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting, or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.

- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g., withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return.
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

We know that where a teacher (including HLTA's and cover supervisors) discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there is a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police. We know teachers (including HLTA's and cover supervisors) must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Unless our teachers (including HLTA's and cover supervisors) have a good reason not to, they will still consider and discuss any such case with our Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) and involve Children's Services as appropriate. The duty does not apply to risk or suspected cases i.e., where teachers (including HLTA's and cover supervisors) do not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers (including HLTA's and cover supervisors) will follow our safeguarding procedures and those set out in Walsall's procedures.

Further information:

[Mandatory reporting of FGM factsheet](#)

Forced marriage. The legal age at which a marriage can take place is now 18 and applies to non-binding, unofficial marriages as well as legal marriages.

A forced marriage is one entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter a marriage. Threats can be physical emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture to coerce a person into marriage. We can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage, our staff have been briefed on the indicators of possible forced marriage and honour-based violence and will refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately

Further information:

[Guidance for forced marriage](#)

[The Right to Choose-guidance on forced marriage](#)

28.10 Preventing Radicalisation.

Preventing radicalisation note:

This preventing radicalisation section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 14th of March 2024. [New definition of extremism \(2024\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-definition-of-extremism-2024).

Joseph Leckie Academy staff are aware that children are susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of Joseph Leckie Academy's safeguarding approach.

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools must 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where Academy staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or showing signs of becoming radicalised, they will discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL has received training about Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and can support staff with any concerns they may have.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of the Academy's wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and deputies and senior leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also cover childcare). The guidance is set in terms of three general themes: Leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments. [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/prevent-duty-guidance)

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of terrorist violence. Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern. [Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/managing-risk-of-radicalisation-in-your-education-setting)

Staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSLs) making a Prevent referral.

We are committed to ensuring that our students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the Academy's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just, and civil society. We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes.
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures.
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school.
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature.
- advocating messages like illegal organisations or other extremist groups.

- out-of-character changes in dress, behaviour, and peer relationships. There are also very powerful narratives, programmes, and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.
- secretive behaviour.
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles.
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race, or sexuality.
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes.
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views.
- advocating violence towards others.

Joseph Leckie Academy Trust Board, Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Single Point of Contact will assess the level of risk within the Academy and put actions in place to reduce that risk. We have risk assessments that include consideration of the Academy's RE curriculum, SEN Policy, the use of Academy premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, Anti-Bullying Policy and other issues specific to the Academy's profile, community, and philosophy.

The broader responsibilities of the Academy are defined within the Walsall Radicalisation and Extremism guidance in September 2015.

Joseph Leckie Academy refers to Educate Against Hate, a website launched by Her Majesty's Government that has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers and parents with information, tools, and resources (including on the promotion of Fundamental British Values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people.

[Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation |](#)

If a member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they will speak with the SPOC - Mrs M De Rome. Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance and Channel training from the Home Office. [Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel \(PMAP\) guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Additional training is available through The Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation (etfoundation.co.uk) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty. [Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation \(et-foundation.co.uk\)](#)

Niall Markham is the Walsall Prevent Coordinator.
niall.markham@walsall.gov.uk

28.11 Channel. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any Deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Further information:

[Channel Guidance](#)

28.12 Child on child abuse. Joseph Leckie Academy staff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse).
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery).
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- upskirting (which is a criminal offence).
- Sexting.
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Abuse is abuse and will not be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘growing up’ or ‘having a laugh’ as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse.

Joseph Leckie Academy believes that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the Academy and other students. We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under our Behaviour and Relationships Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Online Safety Policy. Staff are clear as to the Academy’s policy and procedures about child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Allegations may be made against students by other students which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a student, some of the following features will be found.

- is made against an older student and refers to their behaviour towards a younger student or a more vulnerable student.
- is serious, possibly including a criminal offence.
- raises risk factors for other students in the Academy.
- indicates that other students may have been affected by this student.
- indicates that young people outside the Academy may be affected by this student.

All allegations will be taken seriously. All victims will be offered appropriate support. Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Gender questioning are at greater risk.

Academy staff will record and report all issues of child-on-child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) and ensure the best action is taken to safeguard children and young people. The Academy curriculum endorses child-on-child abuse is not acceptable and our actions are supported by our associated Safeguarding Policy and procedures (Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour Inclusion and Relationship Policy, e Safety, Acceptable User and broader child protection procedures).

Children and young people who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others within the Academy/community through a multi- agency assessment. We ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims. We will actively consider the risks posed to all our students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe. Our risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such assessments will be used to inform our approach to supporting and protecting our students and updating our own risk assessment.

29. Other risks and areas for awareness.

29.1 The Academy also recognises the need to be aware of the following risks, all staff and volunteers are aware of these and will report concerns to the DSL.

29.2 **Childhood Mental Health.** Joseph Leckie Academy staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

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

We understand that when children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences (especially in the context of COVID-19), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. We know that early help is critical when supporting children and young people who are suffering from trauma, depression, anxiety, low mood, and other indicators of mental health.

- Worries that stop them from carrying out day-to-day tasks.
- Sudden outbursts of anger directed towards others or themselves.
- Loss of interest in activities that they used to enjoy.
- Problems eating or sleeping.

If a member of staff has a mental health concern about a child they know that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken about a child immediate action will be taken as with all other childhood vulnerabilities. A report will be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and SENCO.

Joseph Leckie Academy offers additional pastoral support through the Student Support staff and Mr J Greaves. We have a School-based counsellor and a School Nurse who can assist/support areas of support.

Our school promotes resilience as part of a whole school approach to social and emotional wellbeing, and this is tailored to our students.

Further advice can be found via

[Senior mental health lead training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training)

[Preventing and tackling Bullying](#)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#)

[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#)

[Rise Above PHSE curriculum support](#)

[Every Interaction Matters](#)

[Wellbeing for Education recovery including bereavement, loss, anxiety, stress and trauma](#)

29.3 Children Who Are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Or Gender questioning

N.B This section remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation and final gender questioning documents being published.

A child or a young person identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor of harm, however, students may be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children who are questioning their gender as there are many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/ or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It is recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender-questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

Risks can be compounded when children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where children can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and a range of support is available to us to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse in the link below.

[RSE curriculum](#)

29.3 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Academy understands that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child.
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment.
- Poor toileting arrangements.
- Lack of stimulation.
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint.
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food, or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries.
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication.
- Ill-fitting equipment, for example, callipers, sleep boards, and inappropriate splinting.
- Misappropriation of a child's finances.
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

At Joseph Leckie, we provide additional pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate communication support is in place. Essentially students are supported via a graduated approach:

- Wave one: quality first teaching.
- Wave two: TA support in addition to wave one.
- Wave three: all the above and support from external agencies.

students transition to Joseph Leckie Academy with an IEP from Primary school, this information is transferred to the student's profile; this outlines their targets and needs.

Students who need further assessment can be referred to EP or School Health Advisory Services. The academy follows guidance given by local authorities in line with the SEND 2014.

29.4 Private Fostering Arrangements. Joseph Leckie Academy staff are aware that a private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e., a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) or stepparent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangements are due to start; not doing so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery. Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement.

Academy staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The Academy itself has to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the Academy, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered

If Joseph Leckie Academy plans for children to have learning experiences where, for short periods, the children may be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to whom they are not related then we will consider whether the arrangement where children stay with UK families could amount to "private fostering". Joseph Leckie Academy staff will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) of any children that fall into the category of private fostering.

29.5 Young Carers. Joseph Leckie Academy staff understand that a young carer is someone aged 18 or under who helps look after a relative who has a condition, such as a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug or alcohol problem.

Most young carers look after one of their parents or care for a brother or sister. They do extra jobs in and around the home, such as cooking, cleaning, or helping someone to get dressed and move around. Some children give a lot of physical help to a brother or sister who is disabled or ill. Along with doing things to help their sibling/parent, they may also be giving emotional support. We know that some of the risks associated with being a young carer are risk of truancy, under-achievement, isolation, mental and physical ill health, poverty, and stress.

We will follow our safeguarding and child protection procedures if we are concerned and complete the Young Carers screening and assessment tool using our local procedures; found at <http://www.mywalsall.org/walsallearlyhelp/providers-youngcarers/>

29.6 Serious Violence. Joseph Leckie Academy staff are aware of indicators which may signal children are at risk of or involved in serious crime or gangs. This includes an increased absence from

the Academy, changes in friendship groups, relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or significant changes in their well-being, and signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. Our PDP curriculum explores understanding for students to be resilient and to talk to a trusted adult.

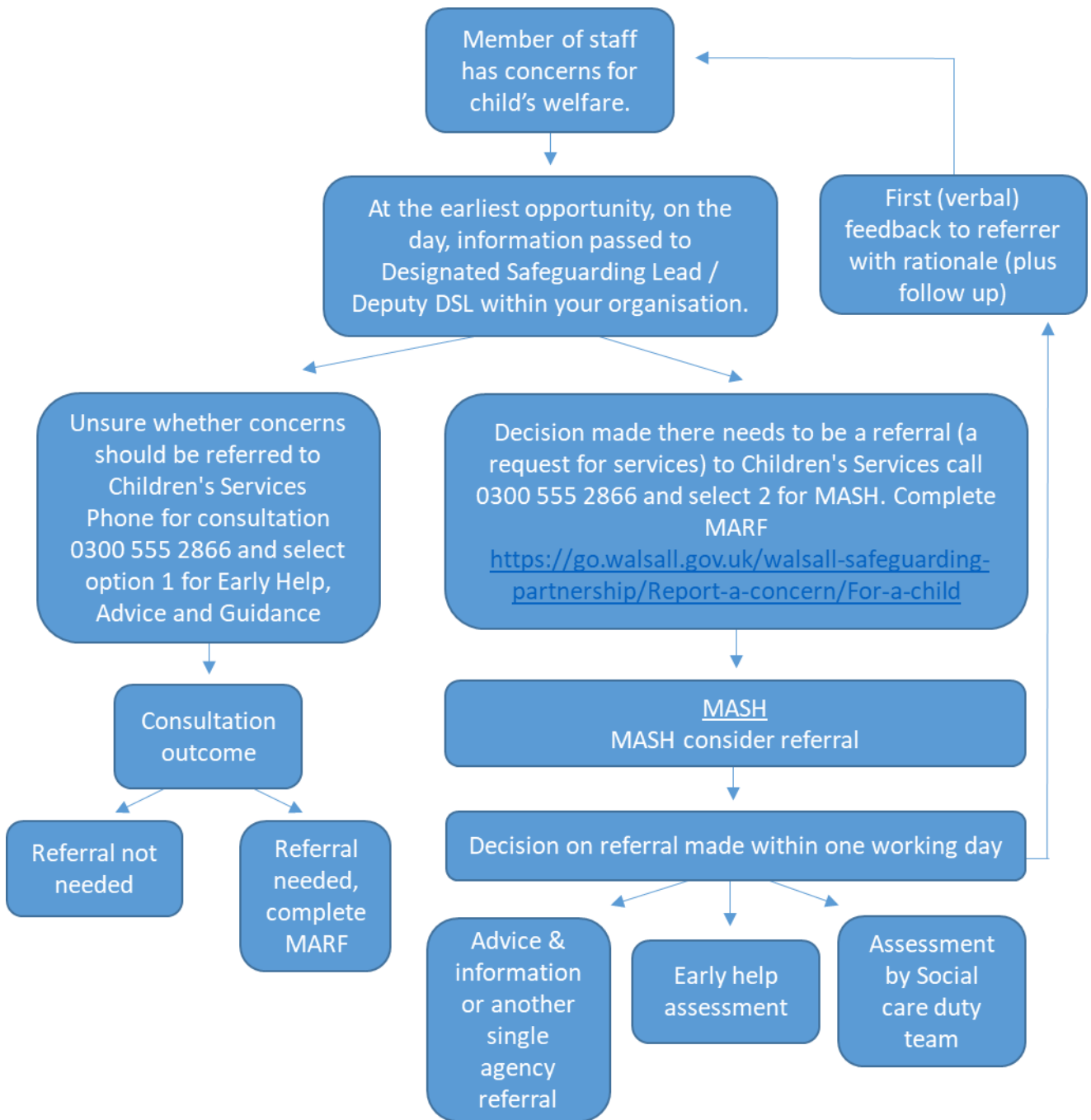
Staff are aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence

- such as being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Further information:

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

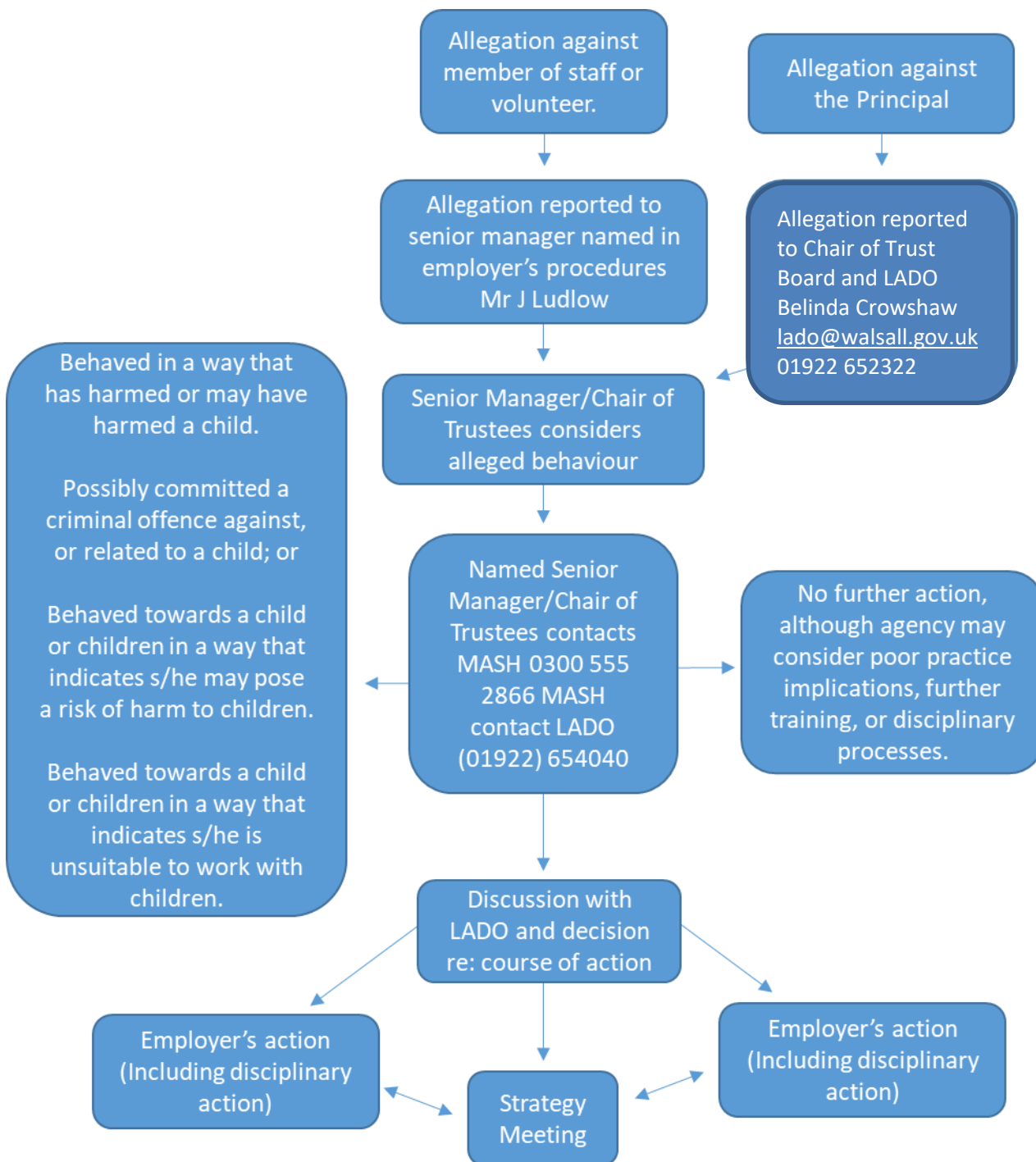
Appendix 1: Reporting a concern about a student/Referral Process



Appendix 2: Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

If you wish to refer an adult in a position of trust please use the online form on Walsall Safeguarding Partnership Website – The link is as follows

[Safer Employment & the LADO \(Allegations\) - Walsall Safeguarding Children \(walsallsp.co.uk\)](http://walsallsp.co.uk)



Assessment by Children’s Services e.g. s47 Child Protection Enquiry

LADO tracks progress, monitors outcomes and reports to Walsall Safeguarding Partnership and DfE

Appendix 3: The Seven Golden Rules to Sharing Information for staff and volunteers to follow

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Appendix 4: Children in specific circumstances additional advice and support

Abuse or Safeguarding issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Abuse	What to do if you are worried a child is being abused	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2
	Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help
	Faith-based abuse: National Action Plan	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief
	Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disrespect-nobody-campaign
	CSA Centre, supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse.	https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/film-series/
	The Lucy Faithfull Foundation also run shorespace.org.uk which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support to prevent harmful sexual behaviours.	https://shorespace.org.uk/
	Contextual Safeguarding Network – a self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools.	https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/toolkits/beyond-referrals/
	Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE advice https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Children and the courts	Advice for 5-11-year olds witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
	Advice for 12–17-year-old witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice 12 -17 year olds Young witness booklet for 12 to 17 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Children missing from education, home, or care	Children missing education	DfE statutory guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education
	Child missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care
	Missing children and adults' strategy	Home Office strategy https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/missing-children-and-adults-strategy
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) advice https://www.nicco.org.uk/
Child exploitation	County Lines: a toolkit for professionals	Home Office guidance https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit
	Care of unaccompanied migrant children and victims of modern-day slavery.	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-of-unaccompanied-and-trafficked-children
	Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked	DfE and HO guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance
	Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-exploitation-disruption-toolkit
Children with a social worker	Role of Virtual School	DfE guidance
Drugs	Drugs-advice for schools	DfE and ACPO advice
	Drug strategy 2017	Home Office strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website
	ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: covering drug	Website developed by Mentor UK

	(& alcohol) prevention.	
“Honour Based Abuse” (so-called)	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office
	Faith-based Abuse: National Action Plan	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief
	Female genital mutilation: Multi-agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance
Health and Well-being	Forced marriage: information and practice guidelines	Foreign Commonwealth Office and Home Office https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/forced-marriage-resource-pack
	The Right to Choose	
	Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing, and resilience	Public Health England resources
	Medical conditions: supporting students at school	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE advice
Homelessness	Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions	HCLG
Online	Sexting: responding to incidents and safeguarding children	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
	Teaching online safety in school	DfE – statutory guidance DfE Advice
	Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes	
	Technical standards for schools for	DfE advice
	Cybersecurity Filtering and monitoring	DfE advice

Private fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE - statutory guidance
Police Powers	PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) CODE C
Public Health England	Rise Above: secondary school mental health lessons and support	Public Health
Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty advice for schools	DfE advice
	Educate Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office
Violence	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges	Home Office advice
	Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy	Home Office strategy
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office guidance
	Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges	DfE advice (now incorporated into KCSIE 2024)
	Serious violence strategy	Home Office Strategy

Appendix 5: Host families (homestay during exchange visits)

Schools and colleges often plan for children to take part in exchange visits, either to other parts of the UK or abroad. Exchanges can benefit learning across a range of subjects. In particular, foreign visits can enrich the languages curriculum and provide exciting opportunities for students to develop their confidence and expertise in the use of other languages.

We have a duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This extends to considering their safety and how best to minimise risk of harm to those children during any exchange visit the school or college arranges, and when organising for the care and accommodation of a child with a host family (known as homestays) as part of the exchange.

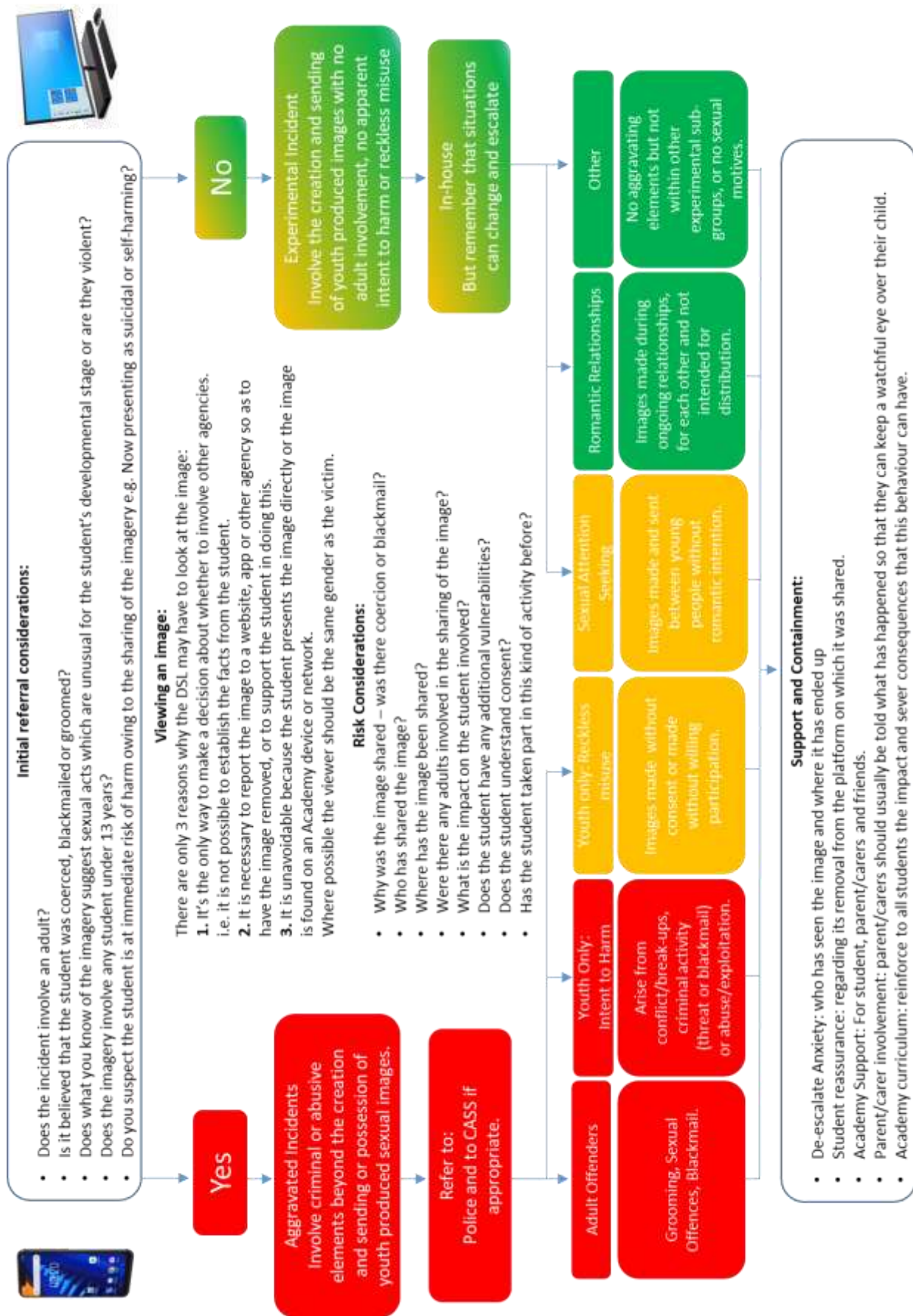
When arranging a homestay, schools should consider the suitability of the adults in the respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay.

In circumstances where we arrange for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK (including where they engage a company to make those arrangements) in the home of a family to which the child is not related the responsible adults will be engaging in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases and where the school or college has the power to terminate such a homestay the school or college would be the regulated activity provider.

A regulated activity provider commits a criminal offence if it knows or has reason to believe that an individual is barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from engaging in regulated activity but allows that individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

Where the child's parent(s) or a student themselves arranges their own homestay, this would be a private arrangement therefore the school or college would not be the regulated activity provider.

Appendix 6: Flowchart for responding to young people engaged in potentially harmful youth generated imagery (sexting).



Appendix 7 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children/Child On Child Abuse

All of our staff and volunteers are aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are **never** acceptable. We know this abuse may be driven by wider societal factors beyond our school, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language and adapt our curriculum as below to overcome this wherever we can.

We make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated and it will never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. We will challenge physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.

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

It is vital that we deliver a curriculum that is balanced in supporting children and young people to understand what child on child sexual abuse is, and this needs to be delivered to all key stages to ensure that we are:



All staff in our Academy are regularly provided with updated and appropriate safeguarding training that enables them to understand:

- Their role in preventing child on child abuse.
- How to identify the indicators of abuse.
- What to do if they have a concern about a child.
- How to respond to a report of abuse.
- How to offer support to the victim(s) and alleged perpetrator(s).
- Where to go if they need support.
- That children can abuse other children inside and outside of school, as well as online, and that online abuse can take the form of:

- Abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages.
- Non-consensual sharing of indecent nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, especially around chat groups.
- Sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who don't want to receive such content.
- That they need to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**'.
- That even if there are no reports in school, **it doesn't mean it's not happening**.
- The importance of challenging inappropriate and abusive behaviour.
- That girls are more likely to be victims and boys are more likely to be perpetrators.
- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.
- To keep in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.
- Abuse may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of our Academy.

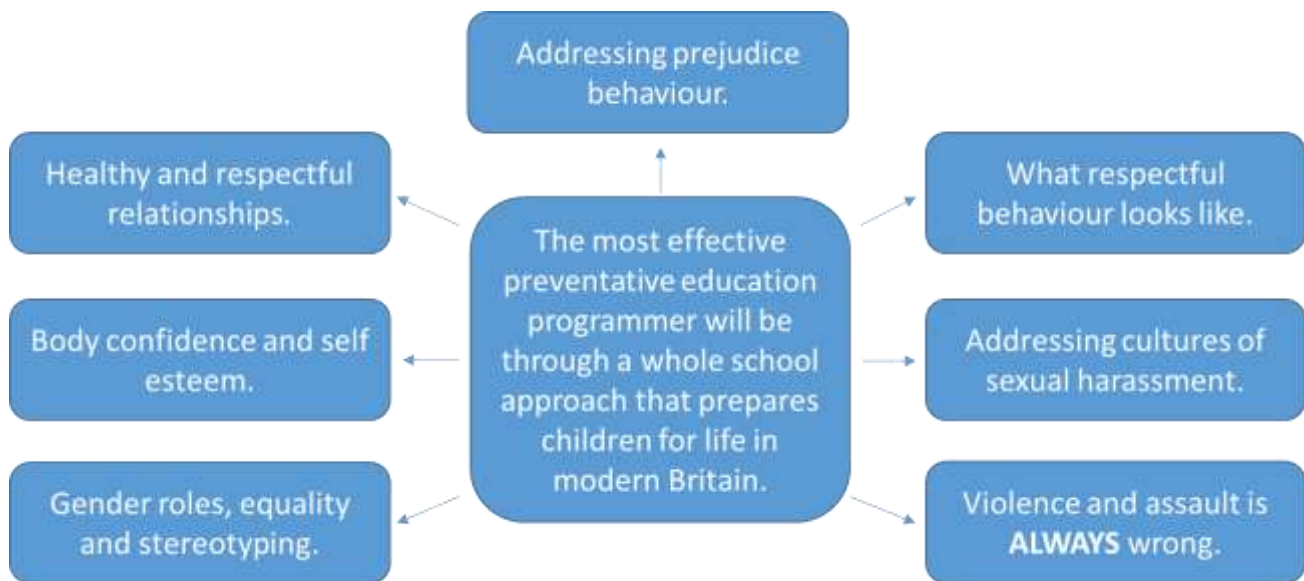
We teach our students:

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others, including in a digital context.
- 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 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
- They will be taken seriously
- They will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- They will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The curriculum includes teaching about:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- What respectful behaviour looks like.
- Consent.
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- Prejudiced behaviour.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Consent and the curriculum



Consent is defined as: having the freedom and capacity to choose.

- A child under the age of 13 can **never** consent to any sexual activity.
- The age of consent is 16.
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Sexual violence is defined as:

Rape: Person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, person (B) does not consent to the penetration and person (A) does not reasonably believe that person (B) consents.

Assault by Penetration: Person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, person (B) does not consent to the penetration and person (A) does not reasonably believe that person (B) consents.

Sexual Assault: Person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that person (B) consents. (We are aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: Person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, person (B) does not consent to engaging in the activity, and person (A) does not reasonably believe that person (B) consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

Sexual harassment is defined as:

- ‘Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside
- And outside of school.
- Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.
- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (we consider when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos.
- Sharing of unwanted explicit content is an offence.
- Upskirting (is a criminal offence).
- Sexualised online bullying is an offence.
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media.
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). Children’s sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB will be considered in a child protection context and Walsall Right Help, Right Time Continuum of Need guidance will be referred to.

When considering HSB, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years’ difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Online Abuse. Sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online (either in isolation or in connection to face to face incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. These include the potential for the incident to take place across a number of social media platforms and services, and for things to move from platform to platform online.

It also includes the potential for the impact of the incident to extend further than a schools’ local community (e.g. for images or content to be shared around neighbouring schools/colleges) and for a victim (or alleged perpetrator(s)) to become marginalised and excluded by both online and offline communities. There is also the strong potential for repeat victimisation in the future if abusive content continues to exist somewhere online.

The Legal Status. It is unlawful for our Academy to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. These rights include:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right).
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity.
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination.
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to an effective education.

The Academy Procedures for Responding to Reports of Sexual Harassment/Violence

Our starting point regarding any report will always be that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated. It is especially important, not to pass off any sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Confidentiality. As a matter of effective safeguarding practice we will do all we reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved. We will also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities. If required, we will provide a physical space for victims to withdraw.

[Gillick Competence - Fraser Guidelines](#)

Risk assessment. When there has been a report of sexual violence our Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment will consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- Whether there may have been other victims.
- The alleged perpetrator(s).
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) in school especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harm.

Risk assessments will be recorded and be kept under review. At all times we will be actively considering the risks posed to all students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required also.

The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in school will be especially important when considering any immediate actions such as teaching timetables, break times and travelling to and from school.

Online Abuse. Our procedures for dealing with the concern relating to online abuse are:

- We will **never** view, download or share the imagery, or ask a child to share or download, **this is illegal.**
- If we have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), we will report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputies).
- We will **not delete** the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- We will **not ask** the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or our statutory partners.
- We will **not share** information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers unless advised by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or our statutory partners to do so.
- We will **not say or do** anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- We will recognise the importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.
- We **will** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Internal Management. In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, we may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or require referrals to be made to statutory services and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising our behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded

Early help. We may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help, meaning providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: school may manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and perpetrator(s).

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded

Referrals to Children's Services.

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger we will make a referral to Children's Services. At the point of referral to Children's Services we will generally inform parents/carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent/carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision will be made with the support of Children's Services.

If a referral is made Children's Services will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.

Where statutory assessments are appropriate we will work alongside, and cooperate with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.

We will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a Children's Services investigation before protecting the victim and other children in school. It is important for our school to work closely with Children's Services (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions we take do not jeopardise a statutory investigation.

In some cases, Children's Services will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. We will be prepared to refer again if we believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm, referring to FaST: Finding a Solution Together if still not in agreement with the decision. <https://walsallsp.co.uk/children/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/02/WSP-FaST-Final-Policy-v01-KPSN.docx>

If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, we will consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.

All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for decisions will be recorded

Referrals to Police. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting principle is that we will refer on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach in these cases. Referrals to the police will often be a natural progression of making a referral to Children's Services. Our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will liaise closely with the local police presence.

The police will consider what action to take to manage the assessed risk of harm. This could involve the use of police bail with conditions, before a suspect appearing in court, or court bail with or without conditions after the first appearance.

Alternatively, the person suspected of an offence could be 'released under investigation' (RUI). People released under RUI can have no conditions attached to their release from custody and it is possible for a person on bail also to have no conditions.

Whatever arrangements are in place we will consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise.

Particular regard will be given to the additional stress and trauma that might be caused to a victim and the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness. We will ensure that any risk management measures strike a balance between the management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc.).

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence we will update the risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all children in school and, (if we have not already done

so) consider any suitable action in line with our behaviour policy. This process will include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remain(s) in school and the victim is still a registered student, we will be very clear as to our expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions we think are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other students in our school. We will ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

If the case is classed as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. A not-guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. We will discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. We understand the alleged perpetrator(s) is also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

We may make a referral to Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) which is a law enforcement agency which aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and abuse. Online sexual abuse can be reported on their website and a report to one of their Child Protection Advisors will occur.

Working with all partners. We acknowledge that we should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree to the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of our local arrangements.

Walsall Safeguarding Partnership publishes its local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, our DSLs (and their deputies) are familiar with this document.

Victims. We know it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. We ensure that we explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

Guidance is listed below to support our procedures, including LGFL 'Undressed' providing us with advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders

[Searching, screening and confiscation advice for schools.](#)

[Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) (statutory guidance for schools and colleges)

[Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education](#) (statutory guidance for schools)

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and PRUs](#) (statutory guidance for schools)

[Behaviour and Discipline in Schools](#) (advice for schools)

[Children Missing Education](#) (advice for schools)

[Cyberbullying](#) (advice for schools)

[The Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)

[Equality Act 2010](#) and [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (advice for schools)

[Equality Act 2010 Technical Guidance](#) (advice for further and higher education providers)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) (advice for schools)

[Rise Above](#) (advice by Public Health England for schools)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#) (advice for schools)

[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#) (advice for schools)

[Teaching about relationships sex and health](#) (guidance for schools)

[UKCIS sharing nudes and semi nudes advice for dealing with concerns](#)

[HSB toolkit](#)

[Undressed](#) resources from LGFL

Appendix 8

Our Safer Recruitment processes

As part of our culture of a commitment to safeguarding our trustees and senior leaders adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in our Academy.

Key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake Safer Recruitment Training offered by the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership

Our recruitment and selection process

Our adverts make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken and make clear our commitment to safeguarding by;

- outlining the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. This means that when an individual is applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. For clarity and further information about filtering offences can be found in the [DBS filtering guidance](#)

Where a role in our Academy involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children we will include a statement in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants

that it is an offence to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children,

We will provide a copy of our child protection policy and practices, and policy on employment of ex-offenders in the application pack or refer to a link on its website.

We require applicants to provide:

- personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award
- details of referees/references
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person's specification.

Our school does not accept copies of curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to [Ministry of Justice guidance](#) on the disclosure of criminal records. (i.e. if they have a criminal history, whether they are included on the barred list, whether they are prohibited from teaching, whether they are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school, information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted, if they are known to the police and Children's Services have they been disqualified from providing childcare and any relevant overseas information). The information will only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted. The information will not be requested in the application form to decide who should be shortlisted.

Our procedures are clear that applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate will physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of the interview.

When shortlisting at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise, we consider any inconsistencies, and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them. We explore all potential concerns and as part of the shortlisting process and inform candidates that should they be shortlisted we will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at the interview.

We seek references for all potential candidates (including volunteers) to allow us to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. Wherever possible we request references before the interview, this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at the interview.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding:

- we do not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern

- we do not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- we ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college-based, the reference will be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations)
- we obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- we secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer
- we always verify any information with the person who provided the reference
- we ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- we contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- we compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- we establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- we ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before an appointment is confirmed.

We ensure the information confirms whether we are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding allegations but do not include information about allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious.

Our interview questions will always include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role
- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

Our interviews will always be used to explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further probing will include:

- the applicant's implication that adults and children are equal
- the applicant's lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- the applicant's inappropriate idealisation of children
- the applicant's inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children
- the applicant's indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours

Any information about past disciplinary actions or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

Our school believes children and young people should be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way. Observing short-listed candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with pupils/students is common and recognised as good practice in our school.

All information considered in decision-making will be recorded along with decisions made.

Our pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

Such checks will help us identify whether a person may be unsuitable to work with children (and in some cases is legally prohibited from working with children and/or working as a teacher). They are seen as part of a wider safeguarding regime, which will carry on following appointment.

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. Joseph Leckie Academy:

- verifies a candidate's identity because it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Wherever possible and as part of best practice we check the name on their birth certificate. We use [government guidance for these checks](#).
- obtains (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children). When using the DBS update service we still obtain the original physical certificate
- obtains a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available
 - verifies the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities (as defined in Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003)
 - verifies the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then we follow advice on the [right to work website](#)
- checks if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, and makes any further checks considered appropriate
- verifies professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA) Employer Access Service is used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation
- ensure that an applicant to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State

When obtaining an enhanced DBS; if an applicant is moving from a previous post which ended not more than three months before the person's appointment within our school we will follow the guidance as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

We use [DfE guidance DBS and barring checks](#) to ensure that the right level of DBS and barring checks are completed in our school. Once complete we will be able to compare any information disclosed on the certificate with any information shared by the applicant during the recruitment process. When assessing any disclosure information on a DBS certificate we will take into consideration the explanation from the applicant, including:

- the seriousness and relevance of the post applied for
- how long ago the offence occurred
- whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents
- the circumstances around the incident
- whether the individual accepted responsibility for their actions

We will also consider the incident in the context of the Teachers' Standards and Teacher Misconduct guidance if the applicant is applying for a teaching post.

When using the Update Service we will:

- obtain consent from the individual to carry out an online check to view the status of an existing standard or enhanced DBS check;
- confirm the DBS certificate matches the individual's identity
- examine the original certificate to ensure that it is valid for our school
- ensure that the level of the check is appropriate to the job they are applying for

Our procedures for prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions

A person who is prohibited will not be appointed to a role that involves teaching work (as defined in the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012. We are aware that a number of individuals are still subject to disciplinary sanctions, which were imposed by the GTCE (before its abolition in 2012). We will access details to the TRA Secure Access system where GTCE checks can be made. We have a DfE Sign-in account to log onto the service.

We complete checks under section 128 direction to check if someone is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school.

From 01 January 2021, the TRA Teacher Services system no longer maintains a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states.

We maintain a single central record of pre-appointment checks, this is checked for accuracy by senior members of staff and nominated trustee. We keep evidence of all safer recruitment checks. Our single central record includes all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff, (even if they work for one day, all members of the governing body and volunteers. We also record safer recruitment checks for contractors where necessary.

For agency and third-party supply staff, we include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, the date this confirmation was received and whether details of any enhanced DBS certificate have been provided in respect of the member of staff.

The details of an individual will be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at our school. We know that we do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates to fulfil the duty of maintaining the SCR. If we choose to retain a copy of DBS checks we will comply with requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, by recording a valid reason for doing so and that it will not be kept for longer than six months. When the information is destroyed we may keep a record of the fact that vetting was carried out, the result and the recruitment decision taken if they choose to. A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications will be kept on their personnel file.

Our school has procedures in place to check Section 128 directions, meaning a person subject to a Section 128 direction is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school. Governors in our school are required to have an enhanced DBS check. It is the responsibility of our governing body to apply for the certificate for any governors who do not

already have one. As governance is not a regulated activity relating to children, governors do not need a children's barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

We have procedures in place to undertake the necessary childcare disqualification checks for staff who work with children aged 5 and under, including reception classes, but also apply to those working in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, such as breakfast clubs and after-school care. We refer to [Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018](#) for clarity of checks.

Our procedures for other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers and others

In our school individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK undergo the same checks as all other staff. This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK. In addition, we make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Following the UK's exit from the EU, we apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

To consider the suitability of the applicant where available we:

- obtain criminal records checks for overseas applicants
- obtain a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach.

We are aware and consider that not all countries provide criminal record information, and where they do, the nature and detail of the information provided varies from country to country. We are mindful that the criteria for disclosing offences in other countries often have a different threshold than those in the UK.

To support us in this process we refer to [Recruiting teachers from overseas guidance](#)

When employing third-party or agency/supply staff we obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working in our school. In respect of the enhanced DBS check, we ensure that written notification confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business. Where the agency or organisation has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate before the person is due to begin work in a school, which has disclosed any matter or information, or any information was provided to the employment business, we obtain a copy of the certificate from the agency. We always check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

We ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at our school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information). For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) will be required. Under no circumstances will a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work

unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. We check the identity of contractors on arrival at our school.

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by our school, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. If the trainee teachers are engaging in regulated activity relating to children (which in most cases by the nature of the work, they will be), an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information) will be obtained. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks. We obtain written confirmation from the provider that it has carried out all pre-appointment checks that we would otherwise be required to perform, and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

We have an assurance letter from Walsall Local Authority that Children's Services and Health staff (including Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Officers, SEND Case Workers, Early Help Officers and other roles that involved working with children, young people and their families) and who are in our Academy have had the appropriate DBS check. We will request evidence of their Walsall Council/Health ID/photo card, we understand that such staff are not required to present their DBS certificate.

We know that whilst external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help our school and enrich children's education, careful consideration is given to the suitability of any external organisations.

In Joseph Leckie Academy under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. We complete risk assessments for volunteers and these consider:

- the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
- what we know about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers;
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability; and
- whether the role is eligible for a DBS check and if it is, what level is appropriate bearing in mind DBS checks for volunteers are free.

Details of the risk assessment will always be recorded.

Ongoing vigilance in our school

Senior leaders, DSL/DDSLs and trustees ensure we have processes in place for continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. This includes regular safeguarding training/briefings, audits of our safeguarding recording systems, and promotion and challenge of staff's understanding of our safeguarding ethos supported by safeguarding policies.

The Academy senior leaders have created the right culture and environment so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters both within, and where it is appropriate, outside of the workplace, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children. This can assist us in supporting staff,

where there is a need, and help them manage children's safety and welfare, potentially providing them with information that will help them consider whether there are further measures or changes to procedures that need to be put in place to safeguard children in their care.

Our Academy is alert to the requirements of referring an individual to the DBS if we believe they have:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults which should result in them being unable to perform regulated activity
- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence

Our Academy is alert to the duty to consider referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency because of an individual's serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first.