Cornwall Education Learning Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Policy Suite

Cornwall Education Learning Trust Policies
Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), Atlantic Centre, Trenance Leisure Park, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 2LZ

Our Mission

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), our mission is clear: to provide every learner with an **exceptional educational experience.** One that enables them to thrive, achieve and succeed in life. We believe in a **100%** mindset, that every learner, in every classroom, in every school, deserves the very best we can offer. For us, 100% means no compromise: no learner left behind, no community overlooked, and no opportunity wasted.

Our strategic goals reflect this ambition. We are committed to empowering and growing our people, building an ambitious all-through entitlement, forging exceptional relationships with our communities, transforming provision through meaningful partnerships, and leading an ethical, effective and innovative organisation. These are not just aspirations; they are promises that shape the way we work and the culture we are building together.



Our Values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. We believe in the power of **Collaboration**, building strong relationships and working together as one team to achieve our collective goals. We are committed to **Empowerment**, creating a culture where initiative, innovation and trust flourish, and where every individual feels valued, respected and motivated.

As a Trust, we are grounded in promoting **Leadership**, sharing a moral and ethical purpose to improve the lives of others and make a lasting difference for our learners and communities. And we embrace **Transformation**, approaching change positively so that we can all become our best selves and do our best work.

These values guide every decision we make and every action we take. They are the foundation of our Trust and the reason we can offer such exceptional opportunities for our learners and staff. If you choose to join CELT, you will be part of a values-driven organisation where people are supported to grow, contribute, and thrive.

Policy Contents

1. Policy Overview 6
   1.1 Statement of Commitment 6
   1.2 Policy Approval and Review 6
   1.3 Policy Version History 6
2. Policy Definitions and Framework 7
   2.1 Definitions 7
   2.2 Legislation and Statutory Framework 8
   2.3 Local Safeguarding Arrangements 9
   2.4 Key Personnel 9
3. Our Safeguarding Culture 9
   3.2. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Discriminatory Safeguarding Practice 10
   3.3 Safer Practice and Continuous Improvement 11
4. Roles and Responsibilities 11
   4.1 All Staff Responsibilities 11
   4.2 Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) 12
   4.3 Deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL) 12
   4.4 Headteacher 12
   4.5 Trust Safeguarding Lead 13
   4.6Trustees 13
5. Family Help 13
   5.1 Universal and Community-Based Support 14
   5.2 Targeted Family Help 14
   5.3 Child in Need and Statutory Support 14
   5.4 Escalation of Concerns 15
6. Recognising and responding to abuse and neglect 15
   6.1 Definition of abuse and neglect 15
   6.2 Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns 16
   6.3 Responding to a disclosure 16
   6.4 If the DSL or DDSL in unavailable 16
   6.5 Referrals and Multi-Agency Working 17
   6.6 Working with Parents and Carers 17
   6.7 Working together with agencies 18
   6.8 Learners who may not be ready to disclose 18
   6.9 Escalating concerns 18
   6.10 Resolving professional differences 18

7. Safeguarding Issues 19
8. Extra-familial harms and contextual safeguarding 20
9. Learners who may be particularly vulnerable 20
9.1 Learners who may be particularly vulnerable overview 20
9.2 Our approach to supporting learners who may be particularly vulnerable 21
9.3 Learners with special education needs, disabilities or health needs 21
9.4 Children who are questioning their gender and requests for support with social transition 22
9.5 Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 23
9.6 Children with a Social Worker 23
9.7 Children in Kinship Care 24
10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing 24
11. Specific Safeguarding Circumstances 25
11.1 Child-on-Child Abuse, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Violence 25
11.2 Children Missing or Absent from Education 25
11.3 Online Harm 26
11.4 Young Carers 26
11.5 Private Fostering 26
11.6 Alternative Provision 26
11.7 Temporary Part-Time Timetables 27
11.8 Work Experience 27
11.9 Learners staying with host families 27
12. Filtering and Monitoring 27
13. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing 28
14. Reasonable force and restrictive interventions 29
15. Teaching our learners about safeguarding 30
15.1 Teaching of safeguarding 30
15.2 Promoting Educational Outcomes 30
16. Staff Training 31
16.1 All Staff 31
16.2 Designated Safeguarding Leads 31
16.3 Trustees 32
16.4 Designated Teachers 32
16.5 Volunteers including community champions 32
16.6 Contractors, Visitors and Third – Party Providers 32
17. Safer Recruitment and adults working in school 32
18. Extended Provision, Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities 33
18.1 Extended Provision, Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities 33

18.2 Sport, Changing Facilities and Residential Visits 33
19. Site Security 33
20. Police Investigations and the Appropriate Adult 34
21. Early Years Foundation Stage 34
22. Allegations and safeguarding concerns about adults 35
22.1 Raising a Concern About an Adult 35
23. Whistleblowing 36
24. Safeguarding Quality Assurance and Governance 36
25. Learning from Reviews and Continuous Improvement 37
Appendix 1 38

1. Policy Overview

1.1 Statement of Commitment

"It could happen here." We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We make every effort to provide an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to talk if they are worried, believing they will be effectively listened to. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure at Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT). The policy also informs parents and carers how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

This policy provides the framework within which all staff, volunteers and trustees will work to keep children safe.

1.2 Policy Approval and Review

Policy Version Number:	6
Approved By:	Board of Trustees
Approved On (Date):	
Review Period:	Annually

We recognise that effective safeguarding extends beyond compliance with statutory requirements. Therefore, safeguarding practice is regularly reviewed. This policy will be reviewed annually by Trustees, or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements or organisational learning require. The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated through safeguarding audits, trustee activity, inspection outcomes, stakeholder feedback, safeguarding data and quality assurance processes.

Whilst we are proud to be part of CELT, this policy has an appendix available on the individual school website to reflect the unique context, needs and safeguarding risks within our school community.

1.3 Policy Version History

Policy Version	Date Issued	Summary of Changes
1	30.11.2022	First Issue – No Changes
2	29.08.2023	Updated in line with KCSIE 23
3	23.08.2024	Updated in line with KCSIE 24
4	19.12.2024	Updated safeguarding trustee
5	17.08.2025	Updated reference to KCSIE 25
6	07.08.2026	Updated in line with KCSIE 26 Updates are in blue.

2. Policy Definitions and Framework

2.1 Definitions

For this document the following terminology should be considered:

Safeguarding is the overarching term for everything done to support children and young people, keep them safe, and promote their welfare. It encompasses the full spectrum of measures to prevent harm, promote wellbeing, and ensure children are able to achieve their best outcomes.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding extends beyond child protection and includes:

- promoting children's health and wellbeing, including mental health;
- preventing harm from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or radicalisation;
- ensuring online safety and protection from digital risks;
- early identification and support for children with additional needs (early help);
- addressing risks in the wider environment (contextual safeguarding); and
- listening to learners' voices and involving them in decisions affecting their welfare.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part-time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the School.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example, step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Extra familial Harm refers to abuse or exploitation occurring outside the family environment.

Contextual safeguarding refers to the approach used to understand and respond to the wider relationships, environments and circumstances in which such harm occurs.

Family Help refers to support provided to children and families as soon as problems emerge. It includes targeted early help and, where appropriate, statutory support provided to children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children in need refers to a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health and development, or whose health and development is 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 the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. (Section 17, Children Act 1989)

Child protection, as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)', refers to the activity undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. (Section 47, Children Act 1989) This includes timely assessment, intervention, and referral to statutory services where necessary.

2.2 Legislation and Statutory Framework

All staff (including supply staff), volunteers, community champions, trustees and any other adults working in or on behalf of our trust are expected to read and understand, at a minimum, Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 alongside our policies.

This policy forms part of the school's wider safeguarding suite of policies and should be read alongside the following policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Managing Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Restrictive Intervention Policy
- Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions / Managing Medicines Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Young Carers Statement
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Critical Incident, Fire and Lockdown Procedures
- Designated Teacher Policy

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following statutory guidance, legislation and national publications:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services (2024)
- What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)
- Prevent Duty Guidance: Guidance for Specified Authorities in England and Wales (2023, updated March 2024)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (February 2024)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- When to Call the Police: Guidance for Schools and Colleges
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings
- The Teachers' Standards (2012, updated 2021)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Code C 2019
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (where applicable)

- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended)
- Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

2.3 Local Safeguarding Arrangements

The school follows the safeguarding procedures and multi-agency arrangements established by:

- Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Partnership (CiOS SCP)
- Southwest Child Protection Procedures
- Local safeguarding partnership threshold documents, referral pathways and multi-agency procedures

In accordance with these arrangements, each school within CELT undertakes an annual safeguarding audit (Section 175/157 Education Act requirements), which is submitted to the Local Authority and contributes to safeguarding quality assurance across CELT.

2.4 Key Personnel

Please see Safeguarding Suite School Level Context Appendix on the school's website for individual school leads.

Director of Inclusion: Amy Daniels. Contact details: dsl@celtrust.org

Trust Safeguarding Lead: Heidi Spurgeon Contact details: dsl@celtrust.org

The Safeguarding Trustee is Jon Newnes: jnewnes@gov.celtrust.org

Multi Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH): 0300 1231 116

If the concerns arise out of office hours, emergency duty services (EDS) contact 01208 251300

Devon and Cornwall Police via 101, in an emergency please dial 999

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01872 326536

3. Our Safeguarding Culture

At CELT, safeguarding is the golden thread that runs through every aspect of our work. We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that effective safeguarding is built on a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity, openness and accountability. All staff, volunteers and trustees are expected to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here", recognising that any child may be vulnerable to harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation at any time.

We are a child-centred organisation and place the voice, wishes and lived experiences of children at the heart of all safeguarding practice. We are committed to creating environments where children feel safe, valued, respected and listened to, and where they know how and where to seek help. We view all aspects of school life, including attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and achievement, through a safeguarding lens.

We are committed to:

- Promoting the welfare, safety and best interests of all children.
- Ensuring children are listened to and their views inform decision-making.
- Identifying concerns early and providing the right support at the right time.

- Creating safe, inclusive and nurturing environments where children can thrive.
- Working collaboratively with families, schools and partner agencies to improve outcomes for children.
- Maintaining robust safeguarding systems, safer recruitment practices and effective staff training.
- Fostering a culture where concerns are shared, recorded and acted upon promptly.
- Challenging poor practice and advocating for children when their needs are not being met.

3.2. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Discriminatory Safeguarding Practice

CELT is committed to ensuring that all children receive equal protection, support and opportunity regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, culture, language or social background.

We recognise that some children may face additional barriers to recognising harm, disclosing concerns, accessing support or having their needs fully understood. These barriers may increase vulnerability and place children at greater risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or poorer outcomes. We are committed to ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are inclusive, responsive and tailored to individual need.

CELT adopts an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive approach to safeguarding. We recognise that discrimination, prejudice, racism, bias, stereotyping and inequality can affect children's experiences, influence professional decision-making and create barriers to effective protection. We are committed to creating a culture in which all children feel safe, respected, valued and able to access help when needed.

The Trust will actively identify, challenge and address discrimination, bias and disproportionality where these may impact safeguarding decision-making, access to support or outcomes for children and families. We will seek to understand each child's lived experience and ensure that safeguarding assessments, interventions and decisions are informed by the child's individual circumstances, strengths, identity, culture and needs.

To achieve this, CELT will:

- promote inclusive, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist safeguarding practice across all schools and services;
- identify and remove barriers that may prevent children and families from accessing support;
- listen to and act upon the views, wishes and experiences of children and their families;
- challenge assumptions, stereotypes, prejudice and unconscious bias in safeguarding practice;
- monitor safeguarding information and outcomes to identify and address disproportionality or inequality;
- ensure safeguarding training promotes cultural competence, professional curiosity and reflective practice; and
- work collaboratively with families, communities and partner agencies to improve outcomes for all children.

Through this approach, CELT aims to ensure that every child is seen, heard, understood and protected, and that safeguarding practice promotes equity, dignity, inclusion and the best possible outcomes for all children.

3.3 Safer Practice and Continuous Improvement

Our safeguarding culture is reinforced through:

- Robust safer recruitment procedures.
- Comprehensive safeguarding training and regular updates for all staff and volunteers.
- Effective supervision and support for safeguarding personnel.
- Clear reporting and recording procedures.
- Strong governance and safeguarding oversight.
- Regular safeguarding audits and quality assurance activity.
- Ongoing review of policies, systems and practice.
- Learning from safeguarding incidents, reviews and emerging themes locally and nationally.

We recognise that safeguarding work can be challenging and emotionally demanding. We are committed to promoting staff wellbeing and ensuring that staff involved in safeguarding work have access to appropriate support, guidance and supervision and where needed additional support will be provided.

By maintaining a culture of vigilance, respect, professional curiosity and continuous improvement, we aim to ensure that every child feels safe, valued, listened to and supported to achieve their very best outcomes.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 All Staff Responsibilities

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers and trustees have a role in creating a safe environment in which children can learn, thrive and achieve their best outcomes.

All staff will:

- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and act in the best interests of the child at all times.
- Provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where children feel valued, listened to and able to share concerns.
- Be alert to indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health concerns and extra-familial harm, both online and offline.
- Understand that safeguarding concerns may present through attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, appearance, disclosure or changes in presentation.
- Know the identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs).
- Read and understand at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education and comply with all Trust safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Complete safeguarding, child protection, Prevent and online safety training, including awareness of emerging risks such as artificial intelligence, misinformation and online harms.
- Record concerns promptly and accurately on CPOMS and report them immediately to the DSL/DDSL if immediate action is required in accordance with Trust procedures.
- Never promise confidentiality to a child and only share information on a need-to-know basis in order to safeguard children.
- Be confident in responding to disclosures and understand how to escalate concerns where necessary.

- Identify children and families who may benefit from early help and contribute to assessments, plans and multi-agency working where required.
- Support children who are subject to safeguarding, child protection, child in need or family help plans.
- Understand their duty to report concerns about the conduct of adults, including low-level concerns and allegations against staff.
- Promote positive behaviour, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice, recognising that some children may face additional vulnerabilities or barriers to seeking help.
- Maintain accurate safeguarding records and contribute to effective information sharing to support children's safety and wellbeing.
- All staff should feel confident to seek advice from the DSL/DDSL whenever they are concerned about a child. If something does not feel right, no matter how small the concern may seem, staff are expected to act and report it without delay.

4.2 Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. The DSL's role must be explicitly set out in their job description. The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and oversight of filtering and monitoring, which cannot be delegated. The DSL will fulfil all responsibilities set out within Annex B of KCSIE 2026.

4.3 Deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL)

The Deputy DSL(s):

- are trained to the same standard as the DSL and receive the same regular safeguarding updates;
- support the DSL in carrying out the safeguarding and child protection responsibilities set out in this policy;
- have access to the safeguarding information and systems necessary to discharge their responsibilities effectively;
- act as a source of advice and support to staff on safeguarding and child protection matters; and
- carry out the necessary functions of the DSL during periods of absence to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of learners.

Although safeguarding duties may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the DSL retains ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This responsibility must not be delegated.

The responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL(s) are clearly set out in the relevant postholders' job descriptions.

4.4 Headteacher

The headteacher In addition to the roles and responsibilities of all staff, the headteacher will ensure that:

- this policy and all related safeguarding policies are implemented and followed by all staff
- the DSL has appropriate time, training, resources, funding and support including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL to carry out their role effectively, including the provision of advice and support to school staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions/meetings and other inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so; and to contribute to the assessment of children

- allegations against staff are managed in accordance with this policy and KCSIE 2026 Part 4
- safe recruitment procedures are followed and the Single Central Record is maintained
- either collaborate with the DSL or take the ultimate decision in respect of all low-level concerns.
- deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL and they are clear about their role as set out in this policy and related national guidance. DSLs and deputy DSLs will receive annual written confirmation of their appointment to/continuation of their role
- adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements are in place for any out-of-hours and out-of-term activities
- child-centred systems and processes are in place for learners to express their views and give feedback

4.5 Trust Safeguarding Lead

The Trust Safeguarding Lead will ensure that:

- a training curriculum is available that ensures all staff, including the headteacher, and volunteers receive appropriate and regular, safeguarding and child protection training and updates as required (at least annually). This includes ensuring that the DSL receives refresher training and regular updates as defined under the DSL's duties above

4.6Trustees

Trustees must:

- ensure the school has an effective child protection policy that is reviewed annually and published
- ensure that all trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge, to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective
- ensure a nominated trustee takes lead responsibility for safeguarding
- ensure safe recruitment procedures and pre-appointment vetting checks are followed, including for the Headteacher
- ensure appropriate cyber security systems are in place
- understand how to comply with data protection law and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches
- receive regular safeguarding reports
- seek assurance that the Single Central Record (SCR) is complete, accurate and regularly audited.

5. Family Help

Providing help and support as soon as concerns emerge is an important part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and Cornwall's Family Help arrangements, CELT schools are committed to identifying needs early and ensuring that children and families receive the right support at the right time.

All staff have a responsibility to be alert to emerging concerns and to identify learners who may benefit from additional support. Concerns should be discussed promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), who will consider the most appropriate level of intervention.

5.1 Universal and Community-Based Support

Many children and families can be effectively supported through universal services and community-based early support. Schools may provide support directly through pastoral provision, wellbeing services, attendance support, mentoring, counselling and other targeted interventions, as well as signposting families to appropriate local services.
Where families require advice or support beyond that available within school, we will help them access local services and community resources, including those provided through Cornwall's Family Help offer.

5.2 Targeted Family Help

Some children and families may require a more coordinated package of support through Cornwall's Family Help arrangements. Family Help is a voluntary approach that brings together practitioners to assess needs, coordinate support and improve outcomes before concerns escalate to statutory intervention.
Any child may benefit from Family Help; however, staff should be particularly alert to learners who:

- have SEND, disabilities or significant health needs;
- are young carers;
- have emotional wellbeing or mental health needs;
- are experiencing difficulties with attendance or engagement in education;
- are at risk of exclusion or have experienced repeated suspensions;
- are experiencing domestic abuse, parental substance misuse or parental mental ill-health;
- are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation or serious violence;
- are missing from home, care or education;
- have a parent in custody;
- are privately fostered or living in kinship care; or
- are experiencing multiple or complex vulnerabilities.

The local authority has their own universal and community based early support offer, where amongst other things parents/carers can contact Kernow Education Advice Line (KEAL) to find the answer to any education related query. 01872 324497 Kernow Education Advice Line - Cornwall Council or seek independent support through the Family Information Service and parenting offer.

If a parent/carer requires any help or support but they are unsure how or where to access it, we encourage them to ask any member of our school staff, who will help to find the appropriate service.

5.3 Child in Need and Statutory Support

Family Help in Cornwall includes support for children assessed as Children in Need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. A Child in Need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development without the provision of services, whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without those services, or who is disabled.

In line with Cornwall's Family Help arrangements, requests for support, safeguarding advice and referrals to children's social care are made through the Multi-Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH), which acts as the single point of access for Family Help and safeguarding services.

Where the DSL considers that a Child in Need assessment or other statutory intervention may be required, they will make a referral to Cornwall's MASSH, or to the relevant children's social care service where the child resides in another local authority area. Referrals will normally be discussed with parents and carers and their consent sought where appropriate, reflecting the partnership approach underpinning Family Help. However, a lack of consent or engagement will not prevent the school from seeking advice from, or making a referral to, children's social care where this is lawful and considered necessary to safeguard a child or promote their welfare.

The school will work collaboratively with learners, families and partner agencies and will actively contribute to Child in Need assessments, plans, reviews and multi-agency meetings to ensure learners receive the right support at the right time and that their needs are met effectively.

Further guidance can be accessed through Cornwall's Family Help arrangements and local multi-agency safeguarding procedures.

5.4 Escalation of Concerns

Family Help and early support arrangements will be reviewed regularly. Where concerns increase, support is not improving outcomes, or there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the DSL will make an immediate referral to children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and actions will be recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

For any learners who attend school and do not live in Cornwall then we will refer to the County that the child lives in. Contact details for other South West local authorities are on the South West Child Protection Procedures website.

6. Recognising and responding to abuse and neglect

6.1 Definition of abuse and neglect

Abuse is defined in Annex A of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)' as:

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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour and economic or financial abuse, where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial context by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. 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. This includes in teenage relationships, or under the guise of 'honour' based abuse including forced marriage and female genital mutilation, or abuse related to faith or belief such as allegations of demonic possession

To ensure that children and young people are protected from harm, staff must understand the behaviours and indicators associated with abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are rarely isolated issues and may overlap. Children may be harmed by adults or by other children. Children may also cause harm to parents, carers or other family members, sometimes referred to as child-to-parent or caregiver abuse.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 identifies four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. These are set out in Appendix 1, together with relevant indicators of harm.

6.2 Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

All staff should be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding risks, both within and outside the home, including online. Any child, in any family, at any time, may be vulnerable to harm. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

Safeguarding concerns may arise from a disclosure, an injury, a change in behaviour, presentation, attendance, emotional wellbeing, relationships, work produced by a child, information shared by others, or a pattern of low-level concerns over time. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and act on concerns; however small they may appear. Examples of indicators of abuse, neglect are provided in Appendix 1.

If a member of staff has any concern about a child's welfare, they must act without delay by:

- Reporting the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).
- Recording the concern factually and accurately on CPOMS on the same day.
- Sharing information only with those who need to know.
- Not attempting to investigate the concern themselves.
- Seeking support if they are affected by the concern.
- All safeguarding concerns must be recorded on CPOMS. Recording a concern on CPOMS will automatically notify the appropriate safeguarding team members; however, staff remain responsible for ensuring that urgent concerns are brought directly to the attention of the DSL or DDSL without delay.
- Early information sharing is essential. What may appear to be an isolated or minor concern could form part of a wider safeguarding picture and contribute to identifying a child who requires support, Family Help or statutory intervention.

6.3 Responding to a disclosure

Staff will respond to disclosures in accordance with Trust safeguarding procedures and training. Key principles include listening carefully, avoiding investigation and reporting concerns without delay.

6.4 If the DSL or DDSL in unavailable

The DSL or DDSL should always be contacted in the first instance.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff must contact the police on 999 without delay. Where immediate advice or intervention is required and the safeguarding team cannot be contacted, staff may seek advice directly from Cornwall's Multi-Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH). The DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

6.5 Referrals and Multi-Agency Working

The DSL will make referrals to the Multi-Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH), the police or other agencies where concerns meet the relevant threshold for support or intervention.

The school will support and contribute to assessments, Child in Need plans, Child Protection plans, Family Help plans, strategy discussions and other multi-agency processes as required. All safeguarding decisions, actions and outcomes will be clearly recorded on CPOMS.

6.6 Working with Parents and Carers

At CELT, we recognise that effective safeguarding is built on strong partnerships with parents, carers and families. We are committed to working openly, honestly and collaboratively with families to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners and to help them understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

We believe that concerns are best identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity. Wherever appropriate, we will work with parents, carers and families to provide support through universal services, early help and family help, with the aim of improving outcomes for children and preventing concerns from escalating. We seek to build positive, trusting relationships and encourage families to engage with school staff, including members of the safeguarding team, whenever they have concerns or require support.

In most cases, we will discuss safeguarding concerns with parents and carers and seek their involvement in plans to support their child. However, our first responsibility is always to the child. We may make referrals to MASSH, the police or other agencies without parental knowledge or consent where this is necessary to protect a child, where seeking consent may place a child or another person at increased risk of harm, prejudice a criminal investigation, compromise a child protection enquiry, where it is otherwise lawful to do so or otherwise not be in the child's best interest. A lack of parental engagement will not prevent us from taking action where safeguarding concerns exist.

We are mindful that some families may face barriers to engagement, including language differences, disability, cultural factors, previous experiences with services or other vulnerabilities. We will seek to understand and respond to these barriers in a respectful and inclusive manner.

To support children's safety and welfare, parents and carers are expected to provide and maintain accurate and up-to-date information, including:

- Current contact details for parents, carers and all adults with parental responsibility.
- At least two emergency contacts.
- Details of adults authorised to collect their child from school (where appropriate).
- Information relating to court orders, bail conditions, child arrangements orders, special guardianship orders or any other legal arrangements that affect parental responsibility or contact arrangements.

The school will maintain this information securely and process it in accordance with data protection legislation.

The school will always seek to work in partnership with parents and carers wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so and will provide advice, support and signposting to additional services where needed. In line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, we work with parents and carers to promote online safety and digital resilience. Information and guidance

regarding online risks, filtering and monitoring arrangements, emerging technologies and wider safeguarding matters will be shared through school communications, including newsletters, the school website and other established communication channels. This helps parents and carers to understand how they can support their children to stay safe both online and offline.

6.7 Working together with agencies

CELT will cooperate with multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including attending child protection conferences, core groups and strategy discussions as required, and sharing information as necessary to protect children.

Where police attend school in connection with a child safeguarding matter, staff must contact the DSL immediately, cooperate fully with the police, and must not question the child about the subject of the attendance or take any action that could prejudice a police investigation.

Staff may contribute to the process of risk assessment and the decision about the child being in receipt of a child protection plan. This will be undertaken using the signs of safety model. For more information about signs of safety discuss with the allocated social worker or the independent chair prior to the meeting.

6.8 Learners who may not be ready to disclose

All staff should be aware that learners 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. They might feel embarrassed, have misguided feelings guilt, humiliated or be being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation or language barriers. None of this should prevent staff from having 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

6.9 Escalating concerns

Staff need to be aware of those times when concerns may look as though they are not progressing to an outcome or some form of action. This may be indicated by:
difficulty in getting hold of a DSL;

- staff not being satisfied with the decision of the DSL or headteacher/principal;
- staff aware that a colleague has not passed on a concern;
- external agencies not accepting a referral from the school when it is felt one is needed;
- staff not aware of what has happened to their concern because of a lack of feedback.

Staff must not close down a concern because they feel "stuck" or "they can't do any more". It is important to escalate concerns to DSL, headteacher, trust safeguarding lead or director of inclusion. The important principle is not to allow a concern to be "closed down" without it having received the necessary attention, assessment and resolution.

6.10 Resolving professional differences

Safeguarding practice across CELT is grounded in a commitment to collaborative and respectful partnership working. We recognise we are more likely to achieve the best outcomes for children and families when we work collaboratively with others. However, we also recognise that protecting learners sometimes requires the courage to challenge the decision making of others.

This is particularly true when we believe the actions of partner agencies falls below the expectations we hold and where decision making threatens our commitment and promise to safeguard and protect all learners in our care. In these instances, we will use the Resolving Professional Differences (RPD) process. Further information is available within local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Where disagreements arise, we ensure that our professional challenge is seen not as conflict but as a shared responsibility to uphold the highest standards of safeguarding. By engaging openly with colleagues across agencies, we aim to strengthen collective decision-making across Cornwall, while honouring our promise to change and to save learners lives when they are at risk of harm or in need. Our determination to speak up, question, and escalate concerns, when necessary, reflects our unwavering belief and commitment that every child deserves safety, advocacy, and the strongest possible protection.

We will not cease challenge until we believe a child is adequately protected and safeguarded and are confident to use all levels of this process, including challenge to Heads of service or the OSCP when appropriate.

When significant harm or death has occurred to a child and where there are concerns about the way in which partner agencies have worked with us, we will raise concerns through the appropriate statutory review, complaints or escalation mechanisms where concerns exist about professional conduct or multi-agency practice.

7. Safeguarding Issues

There are specific issues that have become critical issues in safeguarding our learners. At CELT we ensure all our staff are familiar with; having processes in place to identify, report, monitor and which are included within teaching the wide range of safeguarding issues. Guidance on each of these issues, including indicators and the appropriate response, is set out in the CELT Staff Safeguarding Playbook and Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

All staff have an awareness of the following safeguarding issues through regular training and briefings. Staff are aware that these behaviours can make children vulnerable and that this can put them in danger. Often these issues overlap. Staff are particularly aware of the behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse and are vigilant around unexplainable and/or persistent absence from our schools including patterns of lateness. Where staff have a concern about a child's welfare, they raise concerns using the protocols outlined in the policy.

Safeguarding issues include:

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Child on child abuse (including harassment, online and violence).
- Children with family members in prison
- Cybercrime
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs

- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) – teaching staff have a mandatory duty to report known cases of FGM in girls under 18 to the police
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Homelessness
- Honour based abuse
- Mental health
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Online safety
- Perplexing presentations and/or fabricated or induced illness
- Private fostering
- Preventing extremism and radicalisation
- Serious violence
- The Prevent Duty and Channel
- Trafficking
- Unexplainable or persistent absence from education

8. Extra-familial harms and contextual safeguarding

Extra-familial harm refers to abuse or exploitation that occurs outside a child's family environment. Contextual safeguarding is the approach used to understand and respond to the wider relationships, environments and circumstances in which such harm may occur.

Leaders will assess the risks and issues within the school and the wider community when considering the safety and wellbeing of learners. These risks may include:

- child sexual exploitation and sexual harassment;
- abuse within children's intimate relationships, including physical, sexual or emotional abuse and stalking;
- child criminal exploitation, including county lines and financial exploitation;
- serious youth violence, gang involvement and threats involving weapons;
- radicalisation; and
- online abuse, exploitation and harmful digital content.

Each school also identifies and responds to risks that are specific to its local context, including particular locations, peer groups, times of day, transport routes and online environments. These risks will inform safeguarding practice, staff training, the curriculum and partnership work with parents/carers, the police, children's social care and other relevant agencies.

Please see Safeguarding Suite School Level Context Appendix on the school's website for individual schools' contextual information.

9. Learners who may be particularly vulnerable

9.1 Learners who may be particularly vulnerable overview

Some learners may be at greater risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, or may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting harm. Factors may include prejudice and discrimination, isolation, dependency on adults, communication difficulties and assumptions that indicators of abuse relate to a child's disability or additional needs.

To ensure that all learners receive appropriate protection and support, we will give particular consideration to learners who:

- are disabled, have special educational needs or certain medical conditions;
- are young carers;
- are pregnant or are parents themselves;
- are affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse, parental mental health needs or parental offending;
- are asylum seekers or refugees;
- are living away from home, in temporary accommodation or experiencing homelessness;
- live transient lifestyles or in chaotic and unsupportive home circumstances;
- are looked after, previously looked after or have a social worker;
- are vulnerable to bullying, prejudice, discrimination or social isolation;
- have communication needs or do not have English as their first language;
- are dependent on adults for personal or intimate care;
- may have difficulty recognising that behaviour towards them is abusive;
- have experienced repeated removal from the classroom, multiple suspensions or a part-time timetable, or are at risk of permanent exclusion;
- display early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviour;
- are at risk of child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, trafficking or modern slavery;
- are at risk of female genital mutilation, forced marriage, or other honour or faith-based abuse;
- are involved in the court system or have a family member in prison;
- are at risk of serious violence, gang involvement or county lines; or
- are at risk of being radicalised into terrorism.

This list provides examples and is not exhaustive. We will consider each child's individual circumstances and ensure that safeguarding information and support are provided in accessible formats and, where appropriate, community languages.

9.2 Our approach to supporting learners who may be particularly vulnerable

Keeping Children Safe 2026 explains in more detail about these groups. We support these groups by keeping each child at the centre of our actions and by having:

- Vigilance: to ensure adults notice when things are troubling them
- Understanding and action: to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- Stability: to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- Respect: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent, rather than not.
- Information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- Explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments, decisions and how they have been reached, positive or negative.
- Support: to be provided with support as well as a member of their family.
- Advocacy: to be provided with advocacy, to assist them in putting forward their views.

9.3 Learners with special education needs, disabilities or health needs

Learners with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Staff in our

school understand that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of learners. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- these learners being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other learners
- the potential for learners with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand what is happening to them is abuse
- the need for intimate care or that these learners are isolated from others
- that these learners are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- these learners may have issues over cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving learners with SEND therefore lead immediately to close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

A child having a medical condition (including allergies and conditions requiring delegated healthcare tasks) is not in itself an indicator that a child is at greater safeguarding risk. In the event of a clinical incident taking place in our school, the responsible healthcare professional, in conjunction with the DSL will consider whether any safeguarding duty has been triggered and whether any further action is required based on the nature of the incident.

For more details, please see our Children with medical conditions and allergy policy

9.4 Children who are questioning their gender and requests for support with social transition

CELT will support all children, including those who are LGBT or are questioning their gender identity, in a manner consistent with their welfare and with the requirements of KCSIE 2026.

At CELT we will provide a respectful and supportive environment for learners who are questioning their gender. Bullying, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated, and any related safeguarding or wellbeing concerns will be addressed promptly.
CELT will not initiate or encourage a child to socially transition. Individual members of staff must not independently agree or implement arrangements relating to social transition, including changes to names, pronouns, uniform, facilities, sport or other school arrangements.

Where a child or their parent or carer requests support involving social transition, the matter will be referred to the Headteacher and the DSL. The request will be considered through a careful, documented and case-by-case process.

Parents or carers will be involved as a matter of priority, and their views will be given proper consideration. In the rare circumstances where there is reason to believe that involving parents or carers may place the child at increased risk, the DSL will determine what safeguarding action is necessary before parents or carers are contacted or any decision is made.

In addition, CELT will consider clinical evidence or advice and seek any additional non-clinical professional advice where relevant. The school will consider all issues that could be affecting a child, including whether they have any wider health issues or neurodiversity.

Decisions will take account of:

- the welfare and best interests of the learner and other learners;
- the child's age, development, wishes and individual circumstances;
- any wider mental health, medical, neurodevelopmental or safeguarding needs;
- relevant clinical or other professional advice;
- the impact of agreeing or declining the request;
- the Academy's safeguarding responsibilities; and
- its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

CELT will explain that support with social transition will not include access to toilets, changing rooms, showers or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex, or participation in sport designated for the opposite sex where single-sex participation is necessary for safety as set out in KCSIE 2026 and in accordance the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 that schools must not require a child aged 8 or over to share toilet facilities without single-occupancy lockable cubicles and must not allow a child aged 11 or older at the start of the school year to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex.

The child's biological sex will be recorded accurately. Information will only be shared with staff who need it to safeguard and support the child and other learners. Decisions and their rationale will be recorded and reviewed where circumstances change, including where a child wishes to reverse or amend an earlier arrangement.

Primary-age requests will be approached with particular caution. Staff will not provide clinical advice or undertake functions that require clinical expertise.

CELT will act carefully to not discriminate against learners with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment when taking decisions in this area. In practice, it may be very difficult to determine whether a gender-questioning child has this protected characteristic or not. CELT shall proceed as if the child does have the protected characteristic and apply the considerations relating to the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

9.5 Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The Trust recognises that looked after and previously looked after children may face additional safeguarding challenges.

Each school has a Designated Teacher who works closely with the DSL, carers, social workers and the Virtual School to promote educational achievement, attendance, welfare and safeguarding.

9.6 Children with a Social Worker

Learners who have, or have previously had, a social worker may be more vulnerable to poor outcomes. Knowledge of a child's social care involvement will inform safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and pastoral support decisions.

9.7 Children in Kinship Care

We acknowledge the increasing number of children living in kinship care arrangements and the unique vulnerabilities they may face. While Virtual School Heads (VSHs) now have a non-statutory role in promoting the education of children in kinship care, CELT schools will work in partnership with VSHs, local authorities, and families to ensure these children receive appropriate support. DSLs should be aware of the potential safeguarding needs of children in kinship care and ensure that these are considered in all aspects of safeguarding planning, including Early Help, attendance monitoring, and transitions.

10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Effective information sharing is essential to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners. All staff, volunteers and trustees must understand that concerns about confidentiality or data protection must never prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to protect a child.

Child protection information is highly sensitive and will be shared only with those who need to know in order to safeguard and support a child. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child, parent, colleague or any other person. Where a child discloses information, staff should explain that they may need to share the information with appropriate people who can help keep them safe.

CELT schools recognise that the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes. Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so and where sharing the information is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. This includes the sharing of special category personal data where appropriate and lawful.

Where it is safe and appropriate, we will seek to work openly with learners, parents and carers and explain what information is being shared and why. However, consent is not required where:

- seeking consent may place a child or another person at increased risk of harm;
- seeking consent may prejudice a criminal investigation or child protection enquiry;
- it is not possible or reasonable to obtain consent; or
- sharing the information is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

Information shared will be:

- lawful, necessary and proportionate;
- relevant, accurate and up to date;
- shared in a timely manner;
- restricted to those who need to know; and
- transferred and stored securely.

All safeguarding and child protection records are maintained securely within CPOMS and are kept separately from the main learner record. Access is restricted to authorised safeguarding personnel and information is shared only where necessary to safeguard and support learners.

CELT schools will act in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and the Department for Education's Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners (2024),

ensuring that information sharing supports timely, effective and child-centred safeguarding practice.

11. Specific Safeguarding Circumstances

Some learners may be at increased risk of harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation because of their individual circumstances, experiences or vulnerabilities. Staff should be particularly vigilant where safeguarding concerns may be less visible or where learners face additional barriers to seeking help or disclosing concerns.

11.1 Child-on-Child Abuse, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Violence

CELT recognises that children can abuse other children and that all forms of child-on-child abuse are safeguarding concerns. Such behaviour may occur inside or outside school, online or offline, and may cause significant harm to those involved.

CELT operates a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. Such behaviour will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up, or harmless behaviour. In rare circumstances, it may be necessary to temporarily prevent a learner from attending the school's premises in order to separate them from another learner for safeguarding purposes. This may include circumstances where an allegation of serious harm has been made by one learner against another. This is not a suspension or permanent exclusion on disciplinary grounds and will not be used as an informal or precautionary exclusion.

All concerns must be reported to the DSL immediately and managed in accordance with Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Trust's Child-on-Child Abuse policy.

Support and safeguarding consideration will always be provided to both the child who has experienced harm and the child displaying the behaviour.

11.2 Children Missing or Absent from Education

Knowing where learners are during school hours is an important aspect of safeguarding. Repeated or prolonged absence from education may be an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation, including child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery, serious violence, forced marriage or female genital mutilation.

Each school will monitor attendance carefully and respond promptly to unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence. Particular consideration will also be given to learners who:

- are repeatedly absent during parts of the school day;
- have experienced repeated classroom removal or multiple suspensions;
- are placed on a temporary part-time timetable;
- are at risk of permanent exclusion; or
- fail to take up an allocated school place.

The Trust will:

- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities for responding to absence from education;
- maintain clear procedures for following up unexplained absence and escalating safeguarding concerns;
- make reasonable enquiries to establish a child's whereabouts and safety;

- work with parents/carers, the local authority, children's social care, the police and other agencies where appropriate;
- notify the local authority where required under the relevant attendance and admission-register regulations; and
- follow CELT's missing learner protocol when a learner's whereabouts cannot be established.

When a learner leaves the Academy, we will take reasonable steps to identify their destination, record the name of the receiving school and expected start date, and transfer safeguarding information securely in accordance with this policy.

Staff must remain alert to patterns of absence or changes in attendance that may indicate a wider safeguarding concern. Where the relevant threshold is met, concerns will be referred to children's social care or the police. Parents and carers are expected to provide the school with at least two current emergency contact numbers and to notify the school promptly of any changes.

11.3 Online Harm

Technology is a significant safeguarding factor in many child protection concerns. Online risks can occur alongside offline abuse and may include:

- child-on-child abuse;
- online exploitation and grooming;
- harmful or extremist content;
- cyberbullying;
- sexual harassment;
- abusive online influences;
- misuse of artificial intelligence;
- deepfakes and AI-generated imagery; and
- the creation, sharing or possession of nudes and semi-nudes.

CELT takes online safety and cyber-crime very seriously in terms of our learners and staff. Please refer to CELT online safety policy. All concerns relating to online harm must be reported to the DSL.

11.4 Young Carers

The Trust seeks to identify young carers early and provide appropriate support, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact attendance, wellbeing, progress and participation in school life.

Please read the CELT Young Carer statement for further information.

11.5 Private Fostering

Where the school becomes aware that a child is living in a private fostering arrangement, the DSL will notify the local authority and ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken.

11.6 Alternative Provision

The Trust remains responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of all learners educated off-site, including those attending alternative provision (AP), commissioned services, or other education arrangements.

Before any placement begins, the school will undertake CELT's alternative provision due diligence process to ensure the provision is safe, suitable and able to meet the learner's individual needs. This responsibility applies regardless of whether the provider appears on a local authority approved list.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, or the Trust is no longer assured that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place, the placement will be reviewed immediately and appropriate action taken, which may include suspending or ending the placement until concerns have been satisfactorily resolved.

The Trust recognises that learners educated in alternative provision may be particularly vulnerable to harm and will maintain robust oversight throughout the placement to ensure they remain seen, heard, safe and supported.

11.7 Temporary Part-Time Timetables

The school retains full safeguarding responsibility for the learner throughout the school day while a temporary part-time timetable is in place. Further guidance is available in the Trust Attendance Policy.

11.8 Work Experience

We have detailed procedures in the CELT Staff Safeguarding Playbook to safeguard learners undertaking work experience and will ensure that placement providers have appropriate policies and procedures in place to protect learners from harm.

Where an adult provides teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision to a learner frequently, for more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight, this will be treated as regulated activity, even where the adult is supervised. The placement provider must ensure that no person who is barred from working with learners undertakes such activity.

All checks and safeguarding arrangements will be considered in accordance with Part Three of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, including the specific checking restrictions that apply where learners aged 16 or 17 undertake work experience.

11.9 Learners staying with host families

Leaders may make arrangements for learners to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas learners may reside with host families during term time and we will work with the Local Authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable. In such circumstances, we follow the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

12. Filtering and Monitoring

The Trust recognises that effective filtering and monitoring are essential components of safeguarding and online safety. In accordance with KCSIE 2026 (paragraphs 171–175) and the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges, each

school ensures that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to protect learners while supporting teaching and learning.

Each school will:

- implement filtering and monitoring systems that are proportionate to the safeguarding risks within the setting and appropriate to the age and needs of learners;
- ensure clear roles and responsibilities are assigned for the management, oversight and review of filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- ensure the DSL works alongside the IT provider or technical staff around filtering and monitoring;
- review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements at least annually, following any significant change, or where safeguarding risks indicate, and retain a record of these reviews;
- ensure systems effectively reduce access to harmful or inappropriate content, including content relating to abuse, exploitation, extremism, violence, pornography, self-harm and AI-generated sexual imagery, whilst avoiding unnecessary restrictions on legitimate educational activity;
- ensure filtering and monitoring alerts are reviewed promptly, with safeguarding concerns referred immediately to the DSL (or Deputy DSL) and managed in accordance with this policy.

All staff receive appropriate training to understand the Trust filtering and monitoring arrangements, recognise online safeguarding concerns and follow the appropriate reporting and escalation procedures.

Further detail is set out in the Trust Online Safety Policy.

13. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The Trust recognises that positive mental health and emotional wellbeing are fundamental to children's safety, development, learning and overall outcomes. We are committed to creating inclusive, supportive environments where learners feel safe, valued, listened to and able to access help when they need it.

All staff should be aware that mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be an indicator that a learner has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse experiences. Equally, safeguarding concerns may contribute to, or exacerbate, mental health difficulties. Staff should therefore view mental health through a safeguarding lens and remain professionally curious about the underlying causes of changes in a learner's presentation or behaviour.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions. However, they are well placed to identify changes in a learner's behaviour, emotional wellbeing, attendance, relationships or engagement that may indicate they require additional support. Early identification and timely intervention are central to our approach.

Particular attention will be given where learners present with concerns including, but not limited to:

- significant or sustained changes in behaviour, mood or presentation;
- withdrawal, anxiety, low mood or emotional dysregulation;
- persistent absence or disengagement from learning;
- self-harm, suicidal thoughts or behaviours;

- eating difficulties or disorders;
- trauma-related responses or other indicators of emotional distress.

Where a member of staff has concerns about a learner's mental health that may also constitute a safeguarding concern, they must record the concern immediately in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding procedures and speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL without delay. The DSL will consider the wider context, undertake any necessary safeguarding actions and coordinate support with relevant professionals and agencies. Where a learner is at immediate risk of serious harm, staff must take urgent action by contacting the emergency services and informing the DSL as soon as possible.

The Trust adopts a whole-school approach to promoting positive mental health through:

- a culture where learners are seen, heard, known and valued;
- high-quality relationships and emotionally available adults;
- inclusive practice;
- teaching that promotes resilience, emotional literacy and wellbeing through the curriculum;
- early identification and graduated support;
- effective partnership working with parents, carers and external agencies, including health, social care and mental health services where appropriate.

Each school has a designated Senior Mental Health Lead who works alongside the DSL, SENDCo and pastoral leaders to coordinate whole-school approaches to mental health and wellbeing. The Senior Mental Health Lead does not replace safeguarding responsibilities, and any mental health concern that presents a risk of harm will always be managed through the Trust's safeguarding procedures.

The Trust has regard to statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and the Department for Education's Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance when promoting learners' mental health and responding to concerns.

14. Reasonable force and restrictive interventions

The Trust is committed to creating safe, calm and inclusive learning environments where positive relationships, de-escalation, reasonable adjustments and proactive behaviour support reduce the need for restrictive intervention wherever possible.

The Trust will not operate a blanket 'no contact' approach. There are limited circumstances where appropriately trained staff may use reasonable force or restrictive intervention to safeguard a learner or others. This may include preventing a learner from:

- causing injury to themselves or others;
- committing a criminal offence;
- causing serious damage to property; or
- seriously prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline.

Any intervention will be lawful, proportionate, necessary, reasonable and used for the shortest time required to reduce the immediate risk of harm.

When responding to learners with SEND, disabilities, medical conditions or mental health needs, staff will consider the learner's individual needs, vulnerabilities, reasonable adjustments and the Trust's duties under the Equality Act 2010. Individual risk assessments and co-regulation plans will be used where appropriate to minimise the need for restrictive intervention.

All incidents involving reasonable force or restrictive intervention will be recorded, reported and reviewed in accordance with the Trust's Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy. Where an incident raises a safeguarding concern, allegation or concern regarding professional practice, it will also be managed in accordance with this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. Teaching our learners about safeguarding

15.1 Teaching of safeguarding

The Trust recognises that safeguarding is both a protective and preventative responsibility. Through a whole-school approach, we equip learners with the knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise risks, make informed decisions, build healthy relationships and seek help when they need it.

Safeguarding education is delivered through an age, stage and developmentally appropriate curriculum, including statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), online safety, assemblies, pastoral programmes and the wider curriculum. Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, including those with SEND and those who may be particularly vulnerable.

Our curriculum promotes a culture of safety, inclusion, equality and respect, preparing learners for life in modern Britain and reinforcing that abuse, discrimination, harassment and violence are never acceptable.

Learners are taught about safeguarding, including:

- healthy, respectful and positive relationships;
- personal boundaries, consent and recognising abusive or coercive behaviours;
- online safety, including managing online relationships, privacy, cyberbullying, sharing images, deepfakes, pornography, harmful online content and inappropriate influence;
- recognising different forms of abuse, exploitation and harm, including child-on-child abuse;
- equality, diversity and challenging prejudice, discrimination and harmful stereotypes;
- emotional wellbeing, resilience and how to seek support for themselves or others; and
- identifying trusted adults and understanding how to report worries or concerns.

The Trust has regard to the statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance and Teaching Online Safety in Schools guidance when planning and delivering safeguarding education. Safeguarding messages are reinforced throughout school life, creating a culture in which learners feel safe, listened to and confident that concerns will be taken seriously.

15.2 Promoting Educational Outcomes

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will work closely with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher for Previously Looked After and Looked After Children, SENDCo and other relevant leaders to promote the educational outcomes of learners who have, or have previously had, a social worker.

The DSL will understand the safeguarding and welfare issues affecting these learners and consider how their experiences may impact attendance, engagement, behaviour, wellbeing, progress and achievement.

This includes:

- maintaining an overview of learners who have, or have previously had, a social worker;
- promoting high aspirations and ambitious educational outcomes;
- supporting staff to provide appropriate pastoral support, reasonable adjustments and academic intervention;
- recognising that the impact of abuse, neglect and adverse childhood experiences may continue long after statutory involvement has ended; and
- working collaboratively with Children's Social Care, the Virtual School Head and other relevant professionals to improve attendance, engagement and educational outcomes.

16. Staff Training

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all adults working with learners have the knowledge, skills and confidence to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

16.1 All Staff

All staff, including supply staff, agency staff, volunteers and those who do not work directly with learners, receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role. This includes online safety and is provided as part of induction before working with learners.

All staff are required to:

- read and understand the relevant parts of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, together with the Trust safeguarding policies appropriate to their role;
- complete the Trust's safeguarding induction and annual safeguarding training;
- undertake safeguarding knowledge checks as required by the Trust;
- receive safeguarding and child protection updates throughout the year, and at least annually, to ensure their knowledge remains current; and
- understand how to identify, respond to and report safeguarding concerns in accordance with Trust procedures.

The Trust delivers safeguarding training through a planned programme led by the Trust Safeguarding Lead, supported by regular safeguarding briefings, updates and the Trust's monthly bulletin to ensure staff remain informed of emerging safeguarding themes, local issues and changes in statutory guidance.

Training reflects current safeguarding risks and statutory requirements, including child protection, early help, online safety, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, mental health, attendance, filtering and monitoring, Prevent, professional conduct and safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable learners.

16.2 Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs undertake role-specific multi-agency safeguarding training appropriate to their responsibilities at least every two years and refresh their knowledge at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up to date with national developments, local safeguarding arrangements and multi-agency practice.

The Trust ensures DSLs are supported to access continuing professional development, safeguarding briefings and specialist training relevant to their role.

16.3 Trustees

Trustees receive safeguarding training appropriate to their governance responsibilities, including online safety, to enable them to provide effective strategic challenge and assurance regarding the Trust's safeguarding arrangements. Training is provided on induction and refreshed regularly, and at least annually.

16.4 Designated Teachers

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children will undertake appropriate role-specific training and continuing professional development to fulfil their statutory responsibilities annually.

16.5 Volunteers including community champions

Volunteers receive safeguarding training appropriate to their responsibilities, including online safety. Training is provided on induction and refreshed regularly, and at least annually.

16.6 Contractors, Visitors and Third – Party Providers

Contractors, Visitors and Third-Party Providers
The Trust will seek appropriate assurance that contractors, commissioned providers and third-party organisations working with learners have received suitable safeguarding training relevant to their role.

All contractors and third-party providers receive local safeguarding information, including the Trust's expectations for professional conduct and procedures for reporting concerns. Where necessary, additional safeguarding guidance or training will be provided to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are fully understood.

17. Safer Recruitment and adults working in school

The Trust complies with the safer recruitment requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and operates robust procedures to help deter, identify and reject unsuitable individuals from working with children.

Those involved in recruitment receive appropriate safer recruitment training in line with statutory guidance. All recruitment panel members are expected to understand the safeguarding requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, including Part Three.

Appropriate safeguarding and pre-employment checks are undertaken for employees, agency workers, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and other adults working with learners, in accordance with statutory guidance. The Trust maintains an accurate Single Central Record and ensures that no individual who is barred from working with children undertakes regulated activity.

The Trust also has procedures to ensure visitors and contractors are appropriately managed while on Trust premises and receive safeguarding information relevant to their role.

Further detail is contained within the Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy, HR Policies and CELT Staff Safeguarding Playbook.

18. Extended Provision, Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

18.1 Extended Provision, Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

The Trust recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond the normal school day and apply whenever learners participate in activities organised or commissioned by the school.

All educational visits, residential visits, work experience, extended school activities and off-site provision will be planned and delivered in accordance with statutory guidance and will be supported by appropriate safeguarding, health and safety and educational visit risk assessments. Where activities are organised directly by the school, this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and all Trust safeguarding procedures will apply.

Where external organisations deliver activities or services on behalf of the school, the Academy will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place, including suitable safeguarding policies, safer recruitment arrangements and procedures for managing and reporting safeguarding concerns. These expectations will be reflected within commissioning or service level agreements where appropriate.

The Trust will have regard to the Department for Education guidance Keeping Children Safe in Out-of-School Settings when commissioning or working with external providers.

18.2 Sport, Changing Facilities and Residential Visits

The school will manage participation in sport, residential visits, overnight accommodation, toilets, changing facilities and showers in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

Arrangements will always prioritise the safety, privacy, dignity and wellbeing of all learners. Appropriate risk assessments will be completed before educational visits and residential activities, with safeguarding considerations forming an integral part of the planning process.

Any individual arrangements required to support a learner will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the learner's needs, the rights and safety of others, and the school's statutory duties. Where appropriate, arrangements will be recorded, communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis and reviewed regularly.

19. Site Security

CELT is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all learners, staff and visitors. Appropriate physical security measures, visitor management procedures and emergency arrangements are in place across all Trust schools to support safeguarding and minimise risk.

The school will:

- maintain secure access to the site during the school day;

- operate robust visitor management procedures, including identification, sign-in arrangements and appropriate supervision where required;
- ensure learners are only collected by authorised adults in accordance with the school's procedures;
- undertake regular risk assessments relating to site security, safeguarding and emergency planning;
- maintain and regularly test emergency procedures, including evacuation and lockdown arrangements; and
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities for maintaining a safe and secure environment and for reporting security concerns immediately.

CELT will comply with any duties under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 where applicable. Further information is contained within the Trust's Health and Safety Policy, Visitor Procedures, Educational Visits Policy and Emergency Planning Procedures.

20. Police Investigations and the Appropriate Adult

The Trust recognises that learners who come into contact with the police, whether as victims, witnesses or suspected offenders, remain entitled to safeguarding and child protection. The welfare of the learner will remain a primary consideration throughout any police involvement.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or Deputy DSL, will work with the police and other agencies in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code C, Working Together to Safeguard Children, and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Where the Trust believes a learner's rights or welfare are not being appropriately safeguarded, the DSL will raise concerns with the police and escalate these where necessary.

Further operational guidance is contained within the CELT Staff Safeguarding Playbook.

21. Early Years Foundation Stage

The Trust recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is of paramount importance. Where the Trust operates early years provision, safeguarding arrangements comply with Section 3 of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and other relevant safeguarding legislation.

Recognising that younger learners may be unable to communicate concerns verbally, staff working in the EYFS place particular emphasis on building secure, trusting relationships, careful observation, professional curiosity and the early identification of emerging safeguarding concerns. Practitioners understand the importance of noticing changes in behaviour, presentation or development, listening to learners verbal and non-verbal communication, and working closely with families and partner agencies to ensure learners receive timely support and protection.

Further operational guidance is contained within the CELT Staff Safeguarding Playbook.

22. Allegations and safeguarding concerns about adults

The Trust recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise in relation to any adult working in or on behalf of the Trust, including employees, agency staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors, governors, trustees and visitors.

The Trust promotes a culture of openness, transparency and professional challenge, where all adults understand their responsibility to report concerns about the conduct of another adult. Concerns raised by learners, parents, carers, staff, volunteers or members of the public will be taken seriously, responded to promptly and managed fairly, with the welfare of learners as the paramount consideration.

All concerns about adults will be managed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (Part Four) and the Trust's Managing Allegations Against Staff (including Low-Level Concerns) Policy.

Concerns will be managed under one of two categories:

- allegations or concerns that may meet the harm threshold; or
- low-level concerns, where behaviour is inconsistent with the Trust's Staff Code of Conduct but does not meet the harm threshold.
-

Where there is any doubt about whether the harm threshold has been met, advice will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) before further action is taken.
The Trust recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise from behaviour both inside and outside the workplace and will consider any behaviour that may indicate an adult poses a risk to children, including concerns relating to transferable risk.

Where concerns relate to individuals employed through third-party organisations, including supply agencies, contractors or initial teacher training providers, the Trust will work collaboratively with the employer whilst retaining responsibility for safeguarding learners.

All adults working within the Trust are expected to:

- maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times;
- understand their responsibility to report concerns about another adult without delay;
- report concerns, including low-level concerns, in accordance with Trust procedures; and
- cooperate fully with safeguarding enquiries where required.

22.1 Raising a Concern About an Adult

The Trust encourages learners, parents, carers, staff, volunteers and members of the public to raise any concern about the behaviour or conduct of an adult working in or on behalf of the Trust where they believe it may affect the safety or welfare of a child.

Concerns should normally be reported to the Headteacher. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Executive Team via the complaints process. Contact details for senior leaders and safeguarding contacts are available on each school's website.

Further information regarding reporting arrangements, liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), management of allegations, low-level concerns and record keeping is contained within the Trust's Managing Allegations Against Staff (including Low-Level Concerns) Policy.

23. Whistleblowing

The Trust is committed to maintaining a culture of openness, honesty and accountability where all adults feel able to raise genuine concerns about safeguarding, child protection, unsafe practice or the conduct of colleagues without fear of disadvantage or reprisal.

All staff, volunteers and those working on behalf of the Trust are expected to report safeguarding concerns promptly and, wherever possible, use the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy where they believe that safeguarding concerns are not being appropriately addressed or where they feel unable to raise concerns through normal management or safeguarding arrangements.

The Trust will ensure that no individual suffers detriment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith. Further information is contained within the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

24. Safeguarding Quality Assurance and Governance

CELT recognises that effective safeguarding requires robust governance, scrutiny and assurance at all levels of the organisation. Trustees, leaders and safeguarding professionals share responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are effective, compliant and focused on improving outcomes for children. In accordance with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, safeguarding governance is an active process of challenge, support and continuous improvement.

The Trust will maintain a comprehensive programme of safeguarding quality assurance to evaluate the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements and to identify areas for further development. This will include:

- regular safeguarding audits and self-evaluation activities;
- safeguarding reviews and quality assurance of safeguarding practice and records;
- half termly audits of the Single Central Record (SCR) and safer recruitment arrangements;
- gathering and responding to learner voice to understand children's experiences, perceptions of safety and access to support;
- scrutiny of attendance, suspension, exclusion and vulnerability data to identify safeguarding themes, trends and disproportionality;
- regular review of online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- safeguarding reporting to Trustees to provide assurance regarding compliance, effectiveness and emerging risks; and
- review safeguarding themes and trends arising from complaints, concerns, allegations and low-level concerns.
- reviewing and implementing learning from local and national safeguarding reviews, inspections and thematic reports.

Trustees will receive regular safeguarding information to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities, provide effective strategic challenge and satisfy themselves that safeguarding arrangements are operating effectively across the Trust. Safeguarding reports will focus on the quality and impact of safeguarding practice, as well as compliance with statutory requirements.

Where quality assurance activity identifies areas for improvement, leaders will take timely and proportionate action to strengthen practice, monitor progress and evaluate impact. Through a culture of transparency, reflection and continuous improvement, CELT will ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective, responsive and centred on the needs of children.

25. Learning from Reviews and Continuous Improvement

CELT is committed to being a learning organisation and recognises that effective safeguarding practice is strengthened through reflection, evaluation and continuous improvement. We will actively seek, review and apply learning arising from:

- National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews;
- Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews;
- Rapid Reviews;
- Local safeguarding partnership reviews and learning briefings;
- Domestic Homicide Reviews where relevant to safeguarding practice;
- Thematic reviews, research findings and national safeguarding reports;
- Serious incident reviews and investigations undertaken within the Trust; and
- Findings from inspections, audits and quality assurance activity.

Where learning is identified, the Trust will evaluate its relevance to local practice and take appropriate action. This may include reviewing policies, strengthening procedures, updating risk assessments, adapting curriculum content, improving safeguarding systems, enhancing multi-agency working, and delivering targeted training and professional development.

Trust leaders will ensure that learning is communicated effectively across schools and that opportunities for reflection and improvement are embedded within safeguarding supervision, quality assurance processes, leadership meetings and trustee oversight arrangements. The impact of identified actions will be monitored to ensure that lessons learned result in tangible improvements to safeguarding practice and children's experiences.

Through a culture of openness, professional curiosity and continuous learning, CELT will use local and national learning to strengthen safeguarding arrangements and ensure that every child receives the protection, support and advocacy they need. Further details can be found in the organisational learning procedures document.

Appendix 1

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery. All staff are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery so they can identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

If staff are unsure, they always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. 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 by another child or children.

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 born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
Ensure access to appropriate medical care or 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, weight.
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially.
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings.
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.
- Adolescent neglect
- Affluent neglect
- Educational neglect

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

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.
- 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.
- 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 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; or
- Isolation from peers.

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 the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or object penetration) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet and/or use of Artificial Intelligence). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by individuals known to the victim.

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 pains.
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia.
- Attention seeking 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; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

Following the Rotherham review and more recently noted in the Crime and Policing Bill 2026, all staff follow their mandatory reporting duty to report sexual abuse directly to the police. This is included in staff training.

Further help and support can be gained from the Lucy Faithful Foundation

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as 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 maltreatment of a child, although 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 – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Delayed physical, mental, or emotional development.
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders.
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies.
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches.
- Self-harming, drug, or solvent abuse.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing.
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

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

Parental response

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously 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; or
- Violence between adults in the household.
- Evidence of coercion and control.

Disabled Children: 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 may not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, maybe 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, inappropriate splinting.
- Misappropriation of a child's finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.