



Ripplevale Rochester

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date of issue: September 2024

Review Cycle: Annual

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Ripplevale School and College is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Ripplevale School and College documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

The school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)

- Educare (online CPD)

Ripplevale School and College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Ripplevale School and College.

The policy documents of Ripplevale School and College are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Key Contacts

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Designated Safeguarding Lead	Natalie Christie	DSL	nchristie@ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk 01634 812 233 07960 321661
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Nicola Bourne	DDSL	nbourne@ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk 07946 597158

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and can demonstrate they have read and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

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What to do if you have a safeguarding concern at Ripplevale School or College

Concerned about a School and College student?
Step 1
Complete a My Concern report. If you feel the child or young person is at immediate risk of harm you must immediately contact a member of the safeguarding team.
Step 2
If there is no member of the safeguarding team onsite, call the school and college mobiles Georgina Moorcroft 07960 321661 Kelly Bates 07946 597166
Step 3
If you believe a child is in danger and you have not been able to contact any of the safeguarding team or reach anyone on the school mobile, you will now have to make a referral to social services
Step 4
Using the student's postcode, use this link to find which local authority social services you must contact (Ripplevale has students from multiple local authorities. Social services within the local authority where the child lives must be contacted)
Step 5
Follow the onscreen instruction to make the referral
Step 6
Follow social services instructions which may include calling the Police, providing further information or preventing the child from going home. Keep accurate notes of your actions noting the time each step was taken
Step 7
Email safeguarding@ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk as soon as possible providing details of all actions taken

1. Introduction and Ethos

Ripplevale School and College recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, governors, leaders, parents, families, and learners) are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and have an essential role to play in making this community safe and secure.

Ripplevale School and College recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to be safe and feel safe. In our school children are respected and encouraged to talk openly. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion, or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection. Guidance within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy must be followed where a student is over the age of 18 and read in conjunction with this Policy.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and their direct work with families, all staff and volunteers in school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect at an early stage. Our school may be the only secure, stable, and predictable element in their lives.

Ripplevale School and College will endeavor to support the welfare and safety of all students through:

- Ensuring that the child's welfare is of paramount importance.
- All staff are trained and can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication.
- Ensuring that children's mental and physical health or development is not impaired.
- Providing children a balanced curriculum including PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education); RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) to help students stay safe, recognise when they don't feel safe and identify who they might / can talk to.
- Work with parents to ensure that parents understand the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Keep confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- The voice of the child is evident in case files and informs schools policy developments.
- Ensuring that the school practices safer recruitment processes in checking the suitability of staff, supply staff, volunteers, visitors/contractors, and parents about expected behavior and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our children at our school.

Ripplevale School and College expects that if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.

This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 (KCSIE) which requires individual schools and colleges to have an effective child protection policy.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, governors, proprietors, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers) and are consistent with those outlined within [KCSIE 2024](#).

2. Policy Context

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:

- [KCSIE 2024](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(WTSC\)](#)
- [Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework' 2019](#)
- [Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000\)](#)
- [Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures \(Online\)](#)
- [Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2021 \(EYFS\)](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [The Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations 2015](#)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)
- [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#)
- [Information sharing \(2018\)](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#)
- [The use of social media for on-line radicalisation](#)

[Section 175 of the Education Act 2002](#) requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

3. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 as:

- ***protecting children from maltreatment***
- ***preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development***
- ***ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care***
- ***taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (Children includes everyone under the age of 18)***

Ripplevale School and College acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):

- Abuse and neglect
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Children with family members in prison
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)
- County lines and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs and alcohol misuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls
- Hate
- Homelessness
- Human trafficking and modern slavery
- Mental health
- Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or "Sexting"
- Online safety
- Child on child abuse
- Preventing radicalisation and extremism
- Private fostering
- Relationship abuse
- Serious Violence
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- So-Called honour-based abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
- Upskirting

(Also see Annex B within 'Keeping children Safe in Education' 2024)

4. Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review

Ripplevale School and College will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any significant national events, local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures.

Cavendish Education has strategic leadership responsibility for Ripplevale School and College safeguarding arrangements and **must** ensure that the Executive Leadership Team at Ripplevale School and College complies with their duties under legislation. The governing body must ensure policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher - School and College will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems in the school and college to the Directors and proprietors of Cavendish Education. Cavendish Education will not receive details of individual student situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight.

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school or college office) in person, via telephone (01634 812233) or via email office@Ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and the policy is shared at least annually with parents via Parentmail.

5. Key Responsibilities

Cavendish Education Directors, Proprietor and staff have read, understood and will follow Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. The proprietor and leadership team have a strategic responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation.

Ripplevale School and College has a nominated director for safeguarding, Gary Balcombe. Gary Balcombe will take the lead role in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policies are reviewed at least annually and when required.

Cavendish Education, the Executive and Senior Leadership Team should ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Cavendish Education, the Executive and Senior Leadership Team will ensure that the DSL is suitably supported in their role and has the appropriate status, authority, funding, resources, and training and is assured that the DSL understands they have the responsibility in leading safeguarding and child protection across the school.

6. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding lead will carry out their roles in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

The school has appointed the Headteacher of School and College, Natalie Christie as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Lead DSL has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in school and college.

The DSL/Headteacher of the School and College has appointed Deputy DSL and DSL trained staff who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSLs absence and form the safeguarding team at Ripplevale School and College. Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies will undergo appropriate training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role.

The DSL and any deputy DSL's training will be updated formally every **two years**, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods (e-bulletins, conferences, local meetings, other training etc.) at regular intervals and **at least annually**, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

It is the role of the DSL to:

- Act as the main contact point for all school staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Manage and maintain the confidential electronic case management systems to record cause for concerns on students to ensure the quality of information is accurate, proportionate, and timely, also assessment/referrals are made appropriately.
- Coordinate safeguarding action for individual children in the case of Children in Care, the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority who looks after the child.
- To liaise with safeguarding partners, other agencies, and staff in line with KCSIE 2024 and WTSC 2018.
- Ensure that referral procedures are followed as necessary.
- As required, represent and liaise appropriately with other professionals and ensure the school is represented at multi agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences).
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff during term time for staff in the school to be able to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Understand the importance of information sharing both within the school and with other schools and agencies.
- To encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff this will assist with any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
- Ensure all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.
- Liaise with the safeguarding team to inform them of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This

includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#)

For further details and information about the DSL role please refer to [KCSIE 2024 Annex C](#)

6.1 Members of Staff

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn and promote the child's welfare
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and to always act in the best interests of the child
- Understand the early help process and their role in it.
- Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- Consider wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- Be aware of the process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
- Know what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being abused or neglected and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
- Understand that children may not feel ready to, or know how to, tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected and/or that they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or being threatened. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have any concerns about a child.
- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Understand and comply with this policy and understand other safeguarding policies and systems.
- To undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.
- Be aware of and take appropriate action to raise concerns regarding poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. This may include accessing the school Whistleblowing Policy which can be found in the staff handbook.

6.2 Children and Young People

Children and young people (pupils) have a right to:

- Contribute to the development of school safeguarding policies.
- Report abuse confidently knowing concerns will be taken seriously and that they will be listened to and effective action will be taken.
- Seek help from a trusted adult and feel listened to.
- Learn how to keep themselves safe by recognising when they are themselves at risk and how to get help when they need it, including online.
- Know that the adults in school and college will always have the student's best interests at the forefront of everything they do.

6.3 Parents and Carers

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- Work in partnership with the school to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and understand Ripplevale School & College's statutory responsibilities in this area.
- Read and adhere to the relevant school/policies and procedures.
- Talk to their children about safeguarding issues with their children & support the school in their safeguarding approaches.
- Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online.
- Seek help and support from the school, or other appropriate agencies.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so to safeguard a child/ren.

The welfare and safety of children are the responsibility of all staff in school and college and ANY concern for a student's welfare MUST be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7. Recognising Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

As a school we are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely individual events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another for further guidance: [Responding to Abuse and Neglect](#) .

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy).

Abuse is a general term for any 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. 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

All staff in school should be aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect. There are four categories of abuse:

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child 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.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The most up to date definitions and possible indicators and signs of abuse are found in Appendix 1 of this document. Staff should also refer to [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015](#).

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused; however, all concerns should be taken seriously and explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.

The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children also develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviours for a younger child might be normal for an older child.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that its students have additional and complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.

All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. **Extra-familial harms** take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff should also be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.

Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.

By understanding the warning signs, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused.

8 Specific Safeguarding Issues

Ripplevale School and College is aware of environmental factors which may impact on a child's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context.

Ripplevale School and College staff are mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan).

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education, and sharing nudes or semi-nude images (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger. The categories/issues that follow are by no means an exhaustive list but gives an indication of the current themes in safeguarding and protecting children.

All staff should be aware of the [Stop Abuse Together](#) campaign as detailed in Appendix 4.

8.1 Child on Child Abuse

Ripplevale School and College recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. This referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. Ripplevale School and College has a Child on Child Abuse Policy.

Ripplevale School and College believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”. All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place. Ripplevale School and College recognises that even if there are no reports of Child on Child abuse, this does not mean that child on child abuse is not happening.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that child on child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- ‘upskirting’, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- nude or semi-nude image sharing (also known as ‘sexting’ or youth produced/involved sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Staff and leadership recognise that that some child on child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved, (i.e. for gender-based abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators) however, all child on child abuse is unacceptable and all reports will be taken seriously.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that the fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Specific risk issues include: sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. All staff at Ripplevale School and College are aware of these disproportionate vulnerabilities and that risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. Further advice and guidance can be found within [Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England](#).

In order to minimise the risk of child on child abuse, Ripplevale School and College will ensure that students are taught about healthy relationships, bullying, equality and diversity within the curriculum and through drop down days. Ripplevale School and College ensures that all students know how to report incidents or concerns and that this may be done via conversation with staff or via emails to safeguarding@Ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk or bullying@Ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk

Ripplevale School and College will not tolerate, dismiss or minimize any harmful behaviours in school and will take swift action to intervene when this occurs. All allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated school/college policies, including child protection, anti-bullying and behaviour.

Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child on child abuse may be supported by:

- the safeguarding team who will provide case management and act as a central identified support network for the child or young person and their family
- the emotional wellbeing team for pastoral support
- referrals to external agencies for support and direct work with children young people and families
- referrals to sources of mental health support both in the short and long term
- by the approach of staff who will not display behaviours such as victim blaming and will listen to students concerns taking everything that they may report seriously

The school will take steps to ensure that appropriate curriculum time is dedicated to enable children to develop an awareness and understanding of abusive behaviour and minimise the risk of all forms of child on child abuse. We will also ensure that children recognise warning signs and supports both within the school and externally (such as Kent Police, ChildLine etc.).

8.2 Child on Child Sexual Violence or Harassment

Ripplevale School and College will follow the guidance outlined in part five of KCSIE 2022 and the DfE guidance '[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges](#)'. When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment. If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that staff must be vigilant and recognise that information may come from overheard conversations or observed behaviour changes. Ripplevale School and College recognises that as with other forms of child on child abuse, just because there are no reports of child on child sexual violence or harassment, does not mean that this is not happening. Ripplevale School and College promotes a culture of zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment and will take action should such behaviours be displayed.

It is essential that all victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).

When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, adult students and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.

[KCSIE 2024](#) recommends that, where possible, two members of staff manage reports of sexual violence and harassment.

Reports will initially be managed internally by Ripplevale School and College and where necessary will be referred to Integrated Children's Services and/or the Police.

The decision making and required action taken will vary on a case by case basis, but will be informed by the wishes of the victim; the nature of the alleged incident (including whether a crime may have been committed); the ages and developmental stages of the children involved; any power imbalance between the children; if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse; if there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or Ripplevale School and College staff; and, any other related issues or wider context.

We will reassure and teach our pupils to understand that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them.

Ripplevale School and College will regularly review decisions and actions to update and improve policies and practice.

The school will consider the physical and mental health implications for both the victim and perpetrator. It is identified that both individuals will need additional support and provision of further information about harmful sexual behaviours and may need signposting to further sources of support.

8.3 Nude and/or Semi-Nude Image Sharing by Children

DSLs will respond to concerns as set out in the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) (Updated December 2020)

The term 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' is used to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams of/by young people under the age of 18. Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal which makes responding to incidents complex.

When made aware of concerns involving nude or semi-nude image taking/sharing involving children, staff are advised to:

- Report any concerns involving nude or semi-nude image sharing involving children to the DSL immediately.

- Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g., if a child has shown it to them), this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
- Not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- Not say or do anything to blame or shame any children involved.
- Explain to the child(ren) involved that they will report the issue to the DSL and reassure them that they will receive appropriate support and help.
- Not ask the child or children involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery and not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child(ren) involved or their, or other, parents and/or carers. This is the responsibility of the DSL.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that nude and semi-nude image sharing (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “sexting”) is a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).

- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff and will speak with the children involved if appropriate.
- Parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
- A referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if: the incident involves an adult (over 18); there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed; there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, age of SEND) ; the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of 13, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child’s developmental stage, or are violent ; a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- All decisions will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures and will be based on the consideration of the best interests of any child involved. The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.
- The DSL and SLT team will ensure that all those involved in any incidents of creating or sharing nude and semi-nude images will be supported emotionally as well as through education and support inline with safeguarding guidance. Support may take the form of emotional wellbeing sessions, mentoring schemes, 1:1 education sessions around online conduct and safety as well as teaching of the skills necessary to keep themselves safe in future
- If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.

8.4 Gangs, County Lines, Serious Violence, Crime and Exploitation

Ripplevale School and College acknowledges the impact of gangs, county lines, serious violence, crime and exploitation. Any concerns regarding gangs, county lines, serious violence, crime and exploitation will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns.

The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Ripplevale School and College recognises both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Sexual exploitation can be difficult to spot and sometimes mistaken for "normal" teenage behaviour. Knowing the signs can help protect children and help them when they've no one else to turn to. To support in identifying the signs of child sexual exploitation please refer to the [Exploitation Identification – Toolkit Kent and Medway](#) and [the MSCP Risk Assessment tool for sexually active young people](#).

Gangs, County Lines and Serious Violence

Criminal exploitation of young and vulnerable people is a common feature in the facilitation of county lines drugs supply, whether for the storage or supply of drugs, the movement of cash, or to secure the use of dwellings held by vulnerable people in the rural marketplace this is commonly referred to as cuckooing.

All staff have been trained and recognise the need to be vigilant for the signs and aware of risk factors which may increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, exploitation, and gang activity including but not limited to:

- Being male – however girls who are exploited can be very different to that of boys, indicators may not be the same, but professionals need to be aware that girls are just as much at risk as boys.
 - Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
 - Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
 - Change in friendships/relationships with others/groups
 - Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
 - having experienced child maltreatment
 - Unexplained gifts/new possessions – these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs.
 - Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
 - having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery
- Further advice for schools and colleges is provided in the [Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#).

Where an exploitation concern has been identified, the form linked below is to be used to provide intelligence to the police to get a better understanding of local exploitation concerns and issues.

Through this portal you can report **Perpetrators** of child exploitation, **Places and Spaces** where Child Exploitation is suspected of taking place and **vehicles** believed to be connected to be exploiting children. Please use the link to - [Report an Exploitation Concern Online](#).

This is for Child Exploitation specifically. But for general vulnerability concerns, they still need to be reported directly to the police in the usual way (101 or 999).
Please note, this portal is also not suitable for reporting crime as it is not monitored 24/7.

Ripplevale School and College will make referrals to Children's Social Care and the police should we have reason to believe a student has become involved in this activity.

8.5 Mental Health

Ripplevale School and College will ensure that all staff have an awareness of mental health problems and be aware in some cases, that it can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Staff are aware of how children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

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

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are '**well placed**' to identify behaviour suggestive of a mental health problem or being at risk of developing one.

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

8.6 Online Safety

It is recognised by Ripplevale School and College that the use of technology presents challenges and risks to children and adults both inside and outside of the setting. Further information can be found with the Online Safety Policy.

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

Ripplevale School and College will empower, protect and educate the community in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The DSL has overall responsibility for online safeguarding within the school but will liaise as necessary with other members of staff. Peter Morley is appointed as ICT advisor to the safeguarding team.

The DSL and leadership team have read annex D regarding Online Safety within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024.

Ripplevale School and College identifies the breadth of issues within online safety can be considerable, but they can be broadly categorised into three areas of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- **Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm.
- **Commerce** – being exposed to online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Ripplevale School and College recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile phones and cameras and in accordance with [KCSIE 2024](#) and has appropriate policies in place that are shared and understood by all members of the school community. Further information reading the specific approaches relating to this can be found in the school's Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Policy which are available on the school website as well as staff only online systems.

Ripplevale School and College uses a wide range of technology. This includes laptops, chrome books, IPADS and desktop computers, other digital devices, the internet, our learning platform, intranet and email systems.

All School owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place

All members of staff, including governors, have access to appropriate, regular and up-to-date online safety information as part of their safeguarding training.

Ripplevale School and College will ensure that when pupils and staff access the school systems and internet provision appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place.

Filtering and monitoring are an important part of the school's online safety responsibilities, but it is only one part of our approach to online safety. Pupils and adults may have access to systems external to the school control such as mobile phones and other internet enabled

devices and technology and where concerns are identified appropriate action will be taken. School students are required to hand into their form tutors any internet enabled devices at the beginning of each school day. These devices are then returned to the school students at the end of each school day

Ripplevale School and College recognises that many pupils and parents will have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G and 4G in particular This is external to the school's control such as mobile phones and other internet enabled devices. Where concerns are identified, appropriate action will be taken..

Ripplevale School and College will ensure a comprehensive whole school curriculum is developed and in place to enable and equip all pupils with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world and manage the risks effectively. **DSLs and SLT may find it helpful to access UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) 'Education for a Connected World Framework' and DfE 'Teaching online safety in school' guidance..**

The school will also support parents and the wider school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the need to keep children safe online.

We will share information with parents/carers about:

- what systems are in place to filter and monitor online use
- what children do online as part of their learning, including sites they are asked to access
- who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online, as a part of remote learning

The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with the child protection and other associated policies such as anti-bullying and behaviour. Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate. Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

Where children are asked to learn online at home in response to a full or partial closure:

- Ripplevale School and College will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements.
- All communication with learners and parents/carers will take place using Ripplevale School and Colleges provided or approved communication channels; for example, Ripplevale School and College provided email accounts and phone numbers and agreed systems e.g., Google Classroom, Google Meet
- Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.
- Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of Electronic Device policies.
- Staff and learners are encouraged to report issues/concerns experienced at home and will be responded to in line with our child protection and other relevant policies.
- Parents/carers will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access.
- Parents/carers will be encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parent controls are implemented at home.

8.7 Children Missing Education (CME)

All staff should be aware that children going missing, **particularly repeatedly**, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that, when a child is not in school, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep children in school whenever possible. Staff should be aware of their school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures as detailed in the Attendance Policy.

Ripplevale School and College informs their local authority of any student who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the student is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded. The local authority should be notified in advance of the deletion, when the school becomes aware that the deletion will be made.

Ripplevale School and College agrees with the relevant local authority, the regular interval that the school will inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Where a change of placement has been requested either by parents/carers, Ripplevale School and College or the local authority and the student is not attending school or college, referrals to child or adult social services may be made where the school or college can not satisfy themselves of the students welfare.

The lawful grounds for removing a pupil and the information to be reported to the local authority, are set out in detail in both [Working together to improve school attendance updated August 2024](#) and [Children missing education 2016](#). Schools are also under a duty to provide information to the local authority for standard transitions if requested. Inspectors may remind schools that there is overlap also with *KCSIE* which recognises children missing education as a safeguarding issue particularly when a child leaves with no known destination. For this reason, although the legal requirement under the registration regulations is met if the school reports to its 'own' local authority, inspectors may advise that it is helpful for schools also to copy in the local authority where the child is normally resident.

8.8 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people including having long term impacts of witnessing domestic abuse. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and is a form of child abuse.

Ripplevale School and College recognises that domestic abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional abuse.

In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

8.9 So-called 'honour-based' abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All staff need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a **mandatory reporting duty** placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach (see following section).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a **statutory duty** upon **teachers**, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students.

The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e., where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence). In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty [FGM Fact Sheet](#)

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. Forced marriages occur when either or both participants have been pressured into entering matrimony, without giving their free consent. It's not the same as an arranged marriage, which may have been set up by a relative or friend and has been willingly agreed to by the couple.

Ripplevale School and College recognise that some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Sometimes violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Breast Ironing

Breast flattening is a form of child abuse. See the CPS legal guidance on [Child Abuse](#)

Breast Ironing is the process whereby young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down using hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education

There are potentially significant physical and psychological consequences and risks related to this practice. Breast flattening is a form of child abuse. Therefore, professionals must follow their Local Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures.

8.10 Preventing radicalisation

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a duty on specified authorities, which includes schools, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the PREVENT duty). The school's work in promoting life in modern Britain and promoting Fundamental British Values (democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith) through the curriculum and pastoral programs underpins this strategy.

Staff should be aware that there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

The department has published advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

Every member of staff at Ripplevale School and College recognises that children exposed to radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability and should be approached in the same way as protecting children from other risks.

All staff and governors should complete the Prevent online Awareness training package developed by the Home Office which includes guidance on how to identify people who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and how to refer them into the Channel process or other suitable training such as the Level 2 Educare course.

Where there are concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of or has been drawn into terrorism, normal referral processes will be followed along with due regard for advice and consultation received from the PREVENT Education Team in Medway. This may result in a referral to Channel following consideration of risk.

The PREVENT Education Officer for Medway is Sally Green. Sally.green2@kent.gov.uk

Non-emergency advice can be sought from the Department of Education advice and mailbox by staff and governors on: 020 7340 7264 and counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

DSLs/DDSLs have overall responsibility for PREVENT referrals.

8.11 Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers

Ripplevale School and College acknowledges and understands the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable.

The school has a 'designated teacher', Anna Davies, who works with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after or who have been previously looked after.

The designated teacher enables all staff to have appropriate information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.

Ripplevale School and College understands their responsibility to inform the Local Authority via First Response of Private fostering arrangements when they believe that a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement. (When a child under 16, or a8 if they are disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more.

9 Child Protection Procedures

Ripplevale School and College adheres to the MSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures. The full MSCP procedures and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the MSCP website <https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/>

If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. See flow chart at the beginning of this policy setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

If a child is at risk of imminent danger or harm concerns will need to be referred by telephone to **First Response 01634 334466** and/or the police. **If it is an emergency the police need to be called on 999.**

- **If there are child protection concerns the role of the school is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.**
- **Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be referred to Children's social care and Early Help (Called Family Solutions in Medway) via the Medway online form (the portal) or other local authority system as appropriate to where the student lives**

Once staff have spoken to the DSL the options the DSL will take will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes.
- a Family Solutions referral or Early Help Assessment
- Make a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.
- All information and actions taken including the reasons for any decision/actions made, will be fully documented on a child's record.

All staff are aware of the process for making requests for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

Wherever possible the school will share safeguarding concerns, or the intention to refer a child to Children's social care, with parents or carers. **However staff will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.** On occasions it may be necessary to consult with First Response and/ or the police for advice on when to share information with parents/carers.

If the DSL is not available to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Deputy DSL. They may also seek advice from the consultation from the **'No Name' consultation line in First Response (9:30-12:30) on 01634 33 1662 or this service at the relevant local authority where the student lives.** If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, then they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.

Staff may pass information about a child to the DSL but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to check the progress of a case with the DSL so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe and their welfare is being considered. If following this process, the staff member remains concerned it is the responsibility of that staff member to follow the school's escalation process.

If a child's situation does not appear to be improving, then the DSL (or the person that made the request for support) will consider a re-referral.

If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following [MSCP escalation procedures](#) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via the Education Safeguarding Service.

All members of staff are made aware of the internal and local Early Help/Family Solutions support services. Where a child is being offered or receiving Family Solutions support, staff will be supported to understand their role in any Early Help assessment or intervention. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with other professionals, and in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

The DSL will keep all Early Help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to a request for support to the First Response if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Ripplevale School and College is an [Operation Encompass School](#). This means we work in partnership with Kent Police to provide support to children experiencing domestic abuse. All staff know what Operation Encompass is and there is a clear process for managing notifications in school (including cover if a named individual is absent).

The child's wishes

Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the **best** interests of the child at their heart. **However this should not prevent safeguarding action being taken for the child or children involved.**

10 Record Keeping

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing on My Concern which is a secure electronic safeguarding case management system. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

Child Protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if injuries have been observed.

Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words and will be signed and dated by the member of staff. If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they will discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Academic and therapy staff all have access to My Concern where they may report safeguarding concerns. Training occurs annually to ensure the quality and content of reports are maintained. Maintenance and housekeeping staff who do not have immediate access to ICT devices are able to complete a reporting form on paper which they can hand to a member of the safeguarding team or speak with the DSL directly regarding their concern.

Safeguarding records are kept for individual children and are maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the school. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL. Safeguarding records are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only. All safeguarding related administration, discussion, meetings and case management activities take place in the safeguarding office which is located within the school building.

All safeguarding records will be transferred within 5 days of a student enrolling at a new setting in accordance with data protection legislation to the child's subsequent school/setting, under confidential and separate cover. These will be given to the new DSL and a receipt of delivery will be obtained.

11 Child protection file - use of My Concern

When children leave the school or college (including in-year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required. All members of the safeguarding team are made aware of the arrival of new safeguarding files when these are scanned and placed onto the **My Concern** system.

In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives

If a child is subject to a child protection plan or there are other ongoing concerns at the time of transfer, then it is strongly recommended that the transferring DSL arrange to meet with the receiving DSL in person to ensure there is effective transition and handover of information.

Child protection files should always be kept by the current education setting which the child attends. Transferring settings do not need to keep copies of child protection files, but if there is reason to, they must be kept in accordance with data retention (see section 7). In cases where there may be ongoing involvement from transferring settings, for example if any siblings still attend your setting, DSLs may wish to take copies of chronologies etc.

12 Multi-agency Working

Ripplevale School and College identifies that they have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Ripplevale School and College recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the MSCP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The leadership team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.

Ripplevale School and College will endeavor to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals (in discussion with parents/carers) as appropriate.

Ripplevale School and College recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will support attendance at relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings

13 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Ripplevale School and College expect all staff to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner. Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than a **'need to know basis'**.

All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies. Ripplevale School and College recognises our duty to share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within [KCSIE 2024](#).

The Data Protection Act 2018 places a duty on organisations and individuals with regards to processing personal information fairly and lawfully. As a school we adhere to data protection, yet we do not allow this to stand in our way in the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of our children in our care. DfE "[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)" (2018) provides further detail

Ripplevale School and College has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that our school/college is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. This professional is Lesley Cook.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further referral and subsequent investigation by the appropriate authorities.

14 Complaints

Ripplevale School and College has a complaints procedure as detailed in the Complaints Policy. As a school we encourage children and families to raise complaints, concerns or comments and have a robust internal investigation process.

Whilst we encourage members of our community to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse at school can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on 0800 136 663 or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Safeguarding concerns should be raised with school immediately. If a concern or a child is at immediate risk, then the individual needs to contact First Response 01634 334466, the relevant local authority where the student lives or the police on 101. All visitors are informed of our safeguarding procedures and how to share concerns and code of conduct expected by visitors/contractors.

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process.

Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 19 of this policy.

15 Staff Induction, Awareness and Training

All members of staff have been provided with a copy of Part One of "*Keeping Children Safe in Education*" (2024) which covers Safeguarding information for all staff.

School leaders including the DSL and governors will read the entire document. School leaders and all members of staff who work directly with children will access Annex B within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

All Members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood Part One and Annex B and completed a written assessment of their knowledge. Records of this are kept within the Single Central Register and DSL files.

The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive child protection training and information to ensure they are aware of the Ripplevale School and College internal safeguarding processes as part of their induction. All governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training in order to provide strategic challenge and have appropriate knowledge for their role. All new staff and volunteers meet with the DSL on their first day of employment and this meeting is documented as part of the induction and probation process. All new staff complete online training through Educare. All staff should undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training should be in line with advice from the local three safeguarding partners. This training will include online safety and will take place at least annually.

In addition to child protection training all members of staff should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff members (including temporary/supply staff) will be made aware of the school's expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff behaviour policy (or code of conduct) and Acceptable Use Policy. This forms part of the induction process is documented within the individual's personnel file or volunteer file as appropriate.

Cavendish Education should recognise the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. Opportunity should therefore be provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

The DSL and Head Teacher will provide an annual report to the Proprietors and Directors detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain an up-to-date register of who has been trained. This is reported three times a year as part of the head teachers report to governors.

Cavendish Education has a nominated lead for safeguarding, Gary Balcombe, all Proprietors will access appropriate safeguarding training which covers their specific strategic responsibilities on a regular basis.

16 Safe Working Practice

All members of staff are required to work within clear guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the school's Code of Conduct. The DSL will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the child protection policy and staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.

Staff should be aware of the school's **Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention Policies**, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.

A list of staff that have accessed Team Teach physical intervention training will be kept by the Headteacher of the College and Deputy Headteacher of School who are Ripplevale's Advanced Team Teach Professionals in-line with [use of reasonable force](#) DfE guidance. All incidents will be recorded in-line with guidance and stored within the My Concern secure electronic case management system..

There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force in order to safeguard children from harm. Further information regarding our approach and expectations can be found in our Behaviour Policy and Physical De-escalation Policy.

If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with, for how long. Doors, ideally, should be left open.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This advice can be found in [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings May 2019](#) (Safer Recruitment consortium). All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (e-mail; mobile phones; texting; social network sites) and should familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in the school's Online Safety Policy, Use of Mobiles and Acceptable Use Policy.

17 Staff Supervision and Support

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.

The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

The school will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff to ensure that:

- All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- All staff will be supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
- All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.

18 Safer Recruitment

Ripplevale School and College values the importance of developing a safe culture and is committed to ensure that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our pupils and staff.

Ripplevale School and College will use the recruitment and selection process including overseas checks to deter, identify and reject unsuitable candidates. We will ensure that detailed checks are carried out and evidence is provided e.g. criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with references and interview information. This will aid the school in deciding about the suitability of the prospective employee. The school will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online

Cavendish Education will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts the interview has completed safer recruitment training. At all times the Interim Headteacher School and

College and Cavendish Education will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and laid out in the Ripplevale School and College's Safer recruitment Policy. These procedures will include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance (see: [Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment](#))

The school maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.

We are also committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.

We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, cautions, reprimands and warnings.

Where the school places a learner with an alternative provision provider, the school will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child. The school will undertake appropriate checks to ensure the provider meets the needs of the pupil, including written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.

As part of the recruitment process, all applicants must declare if they are related to or in a relationship with any member of staff. All potential appointments are discussed with the Cavendish Education Director of People before offers of employment are made.

19 Allegations Against Members of Staff, volunteers including supply staff and contractors

Ripplevale School and College recognises that allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur, they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns will always be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Ripplevale School and College understands the duty to refer to the LADO where it is alleged that anyone working in the school has:

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

In depth information regarding staff allegations can be found within our Procedures for Managing Allegations against staff Policy and the Low Level Concern Policy. These can be found on the staff only Intranet area. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise

concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the schools safeguarding regime. The leadership team at Ripplevale School and College will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.

If staff have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including volunteers/supply staff/visitors) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

- Allegations should be referred immediately to the Headteacher and DSL or deputy in their absence in addition to the HR Manager who will first contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. Please refer to the Medway [LADO Leaflet](#) if you need further information.
- In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher, the staff are advised that allegations should be reported to Cavendish Education who will contact the LADO in the first instance.
- Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or Cavendish Education should contact **the LADO directly on 01634 331065**.
- The Headteacher or Cavendish Education will seek advice from the LADO within 24 hours of the alleged incident. No member of staff or Cavendish Education will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

Where Headteachers are unsure how to respond, for example if the school is unsure if a concern meets the harm 'thresholds', advice will be sought via the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Enquiry Line and/or the Education Safeguarding Service

Ripplevale School and College has a legal duty to refer to the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR and/or the Cavendish Safeguarding Lead.

Related Staff

Staff who are related to each other or in a relationship with another member of staff may not be timetabled to work together. A risk assessment and safety plan is in place and has been read by all staff. This details measures in place and the actions staff must take to ensure that related members of staff do not, unless in exceptional and recorded circumstances, support students without another member of staff present.

19.1 Concerns that do not meet the ‘harms threshold’

Ripplevale School and College has policies and processes in place to deal with low-level concerns and allegations that don't meet the ‘harm threshold’. Please see the Low Level Concerns Policy.

A low-level concern is any concern (no matter how small and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’) that a member of staff has acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

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

Where low-level concerns are reported, the headteacher/principal should share or liaise with the LADO enquiries officer via the [LADO Enquiry Line](#).

Should there be a low level concern or allegation against the headteacher, the headteacher must not be informed of the allegation prior to the Safeguarding Director being informed and the LADO as appropriate.

The Medway LADO policy states that all allegations, including low level are considered with the LADO. Please communicate with the LADO in relation to all low-level concerns.

Ripplevale School and College staff code of conduct explains what a low-level concern is and the importance of sharing concerns. All staff have read and signed these documents to confirm that they understand their contents.

Ripplevale School and College staff should report any low level concerns on the ‘Confide’ software that all staff have access to. Once completed, the Headteacher is alerted to the low level concern.

19.2 Whistleblowing Procedure

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns will always be taken seriously by the leadership team. All members of staff are made aware of the school's Whistleblowing procedure. Full details of the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure can be found within the Staff Handbook.

It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk. Support and guidance can also be found at [Acas](#).

20 Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Ripplevale School and College understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. These children may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. All Ripplevale students have an EHCP and have varying levels of vulnerability. Ripplevale School and College recognises that its LAC learners are the most vulnerable group within the school and college community.

All staff will ensure that children with SEN/disabilities will be able to overcome the barriers that exist for this group of children and specifically ensure that those with communication difficulties will be supported to make sure their voice is listened to and acted upon.

It is important that all staff are aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse and that some children can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying and exploitation without outwardly showing signs.

All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse. To address these additional challenges, our school will always consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

21 Curriculum and Staying Safe

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) states that the curriculum should ensure opportunities for “developing children’s understanding, awareness and resilience”.

Schools play a pivotal and essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is safe, to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.

The school uses the PSHE and RSE curriculum to increase self-esteem, self-awareness and social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making. This ensures that our pupils have a range of strategies to ensure their own protection and that they are able to also protect others. Online safety is also integrated into the curriculum

The school ensures that teachers that teach the PSHE curriculum have been trained and equipped to deliver high quality PSHE education in a safe way. For further information and training on Medway PSHE programs please follow the link: [School PSHE programmes](#)

Children feel they can talk to a range of staff when they feel they are worried and can feedback about their school experience. Children at Ripplevale School and College will be listened to, heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

Other systems that exist outside of expected day to day classroom interaction and support include: emotional wellbeing mentors, safeguarding@ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk and bullying@ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk email addresses and access to the LAC team.

22 The Use of School Premises by Other Organisations

Services or activities provided separately by another organisation from time to time. The Headteacher will seek written assurance that the organisations concerned have suitable policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made for all staff and volunteers.

Without this assurance then an application to use the premises will be refused.

23 Security

Ripplevale School and College has a responsibility to provide a secure site that is controlled by clear management directives, but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. Therefore, all staff and people on the site have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

Visitors and volunteers must only enter through the main entrance and after signing in at the office will be issued with a school lanyard and visitor's pass. Ripplevale School and College has a clear system of ensuring visitors are to be accompanied/supervised by [regulated staff member](#).

Ripplevale School and College will not tolerate or accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. This type of behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

Any individual on site who is not known or identifiable by a visitor's pass may be challenged by any staff member for clarification and reassurance. [Visiting Speakers Policy](#)

24 Monitoring and Review

All school staff (including temporary/supply staff and volunteers) will have access to a copy of this policy. The policy will also be available to parents/guardians.

This policy has been written in September 2024 to reflect the new guidance and legislation issued in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its contents. The DSL will review the policy following any child protection concerns (including following learning identified from serious case reviews) or allegations against staff to ensure that it reflects appropriate, accurate and up-to-date safeguarding practice.

The policy forms part of our school development plan and will be reviewed at least annually.

25 Local Support

All members of Staff in Ripplevale School and College are made aware of local support available.

If a child may be at risk of **imminent harm**, you should call **Children's Services First Response Team on 01634 334466** (or other relevant local authority where the student lives) and/or the **Police on 999**

Medway's Education Safeguarding Officer (Education Safeguarding Service)

01634 331017
fiona.veitch@medway.gov.uk
educsafeguarding@medway.gov.uk

Operational LADO and Education Safeguarding Manager

Maisie Adkins
01634 331065
maisie.adkins@medway.gov.uk

Education MASH – For MASH Enquiries only.

01634 334525
educsafeguarding@medway.gov.uk

Contact details for the LADO:

Telephone: 01634 331065
Further information and contact details found: [Advice and resources for professionals](#)

Children's Social Work Services

First Response: 01634 334466 (Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm)
Out of Hours: 03000 419 191

Kent Police

101 (or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm)

Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP)

mscp@medway.gov.uk
01634 336 329

26 National Support

Support for staff

- Education Support Partnership: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline

Support for Pupils

- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk

- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Fearless: www.fearless.org
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Support for adults

- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): napac.org.uk
- MOSAC: www.mosac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org

Date updated: September 2024
Date of next review: September 2025

Gary Balcombe, Cavendish Safeguarding Director

Natalie Christie Headteacher and DSL, School and College

APPENDIX 1: Definitions of Forms of Abuse/Specific Safeguarding Issues

Definitions of Forms of Abuse

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

- **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or 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.
- **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Please click on the hyper link for further information, advice and guidance: [NSPCC Physical Abuse](#)

- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child 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.

Please click on the hyper link for further information, advice and guidance: [NSPCC Emotional Abuse](#)

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

other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Please click on the hyper link for further information, advice and guidance: [NSPCC Sexual Abuse](#)

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

Please click on the hyper link for further information, advice and guidance: [NSPCC Neglect](#)

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Please see below links to information and guidance about specific safeguarding issues. You will find further information in [KCSIE 2024](#)

Additional advice and support

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point as well as consulting KCSIE 2022 Annex B

Abuse

[Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse - CSA Centre](#) Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual abuse.

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) – DfE advice

[Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance](#) - Home Office (HO)

[Faith based abuse: National Action Plan](#) - DfE advice

[Disrespect NoBody campaign](#) - GOV.UK - Home Office website

[Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper

[Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

Bullying

[Preventing bullying including cyberbullying](#) - DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

[Children missing education](#) - DfE statutory guidance

[Child missing from home or care](#) - DfE statutory guidance

[Children and adults missing strategy](#) - Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

[National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#) - Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service

Child Exploitation

[Trafficking: safeguarding children](#) - DfE and Home Office guidance

[Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – HO statutory guidance

[Child exploitation disruption toolkit](#) - HO statutory guidance

[County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) - The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

Confidentiality

[Gillick competency Fraser guidelines](#) - Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs

[Drug strategy 2021](#) - Home Office strategy

[Information and advice on drugs](#) - Talk to Frank website

[Drug and Alcohol education](#) — teacher guidance & evidence review – PSHE Association

(so called) “Honour Based Abuse” including FGM and forced marriage

[Female genital mutilation: information and resources](#)- Home Office guidance

[Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\)](#) - Mandatory Reporting Procedural Information - Home Office and Department for Education

[Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance](#) - DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

[Forced marriage](#) - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

[Forced marriage](#) - Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

[FGM resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

Health and Well-being

[Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) - Public Health England

[Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions](#) - DfE statutory guidance

[Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) - DfE advice
[Overview - Fabricated or induced illness](#) - NHS advice

Homelessness

[Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#) – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance

Information Sharing

[Government information sharing advice](#) - Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

[Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub](#) - Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety-advice

[Childnet](#) provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying

[Educateagainsthate](#) provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

[London Grid for Learning](#) provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[NSPCC E-safety for schools](#) provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[Safer recruitment consortium](#) "guidance for safe working practice", which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

[Searching screening and confiscation](#) is departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

[South West Grid for Learning](#) provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[Use of social media for online radicalisation](#) - A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq

[Online Safety Audit Tool from UK Council for Internet Safety](#) to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

[Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform](#) DCMS advice

[A business guide for protecting children on your online platform](#) DCMS advice

UK Safer Internet Centre provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Online safety- Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

[Case studies](#) for schools to learn from each other

[Guidance Get help with remote education resources](#) and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and students

[Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

[London Grid for Learning guidance](#), including platform specific advice
[National cyber security centre](#) guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing
[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) guidance on safe remote learning

Online Safety- Support for children

[Childline](#) for free and confidential advice
[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) to report and remove harmful online content
[CEOP](#) for advice on making a report about online abuse

Online Safety - Parental support

[Childnet offers a toolkit](#) to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support
[Commonsensemedia](#) provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents
[Government advice](#) about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
[Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
[How Can I Help My Child? Marie Collins Foundation](#) – Sexual Abuse Online
[Let's Talk About It](#) provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
[London Grid for Learning](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
[Stopitnow](#) resource from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)
[National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
[Net-aware](#) provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
[Parentzone](#) provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online
[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the [Children's Commissioner's parent guide on talking to your children about online sexual harassment](#)
[#Ask the awkward](#) – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre guidance to parents to talk to their children about online relationships

Private fostering

[Private fostering: local authorities](#) - DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

[Prevent duty guidance](#)- Home Office guidance
[Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers](#) - DfE advice
[Educate Against Hate website](#) - DfE and Home Office advice

[Prevent for FE and Training](#) - Education and Training Foundation (ETF)
[Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources](#) – Resources by London Grid for Learning

Serious Violence

[Serious violence strategy](#) - Home Office Strategy
[Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention](#) – Home Office
[Youth Endowment Fund](#) – Home Office
[Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges](#) - Home Office advice
[Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#)- Home Office strategy
[Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) - Home Office guidance

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Specialist Organisations

[Barnardo's](#) - UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.
[Lucy Faithful Foundation](#) - UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential [Stop it Now! Helpline](#).
[Marie Collins Foundation](#) – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.
[NSPCC](#) - Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.
[Rape Crisis](#) - National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.
[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

[Rape Crisis](#) (England & Wales) or [The Survivors Trust](#) for information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.
[NICE](#) guidance contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.
[HSB toolkit The Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) - designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.
[NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC](#) - Harmful sexual behaviour framework- free and independent advice about HSB.
[Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals](#) (Schools) provides a school selfassessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

[Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children](#) - Stop It Now provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

Support for Victims

[Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

[Rape Crisis](#) - Provide and signpost to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

[The Survivors Trust](#) - UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

[Victim Support](#) - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

[Childline](#) provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

[ask AVA](#) - The Ask AVA prevention platform has been created to support education practitioners across the UK to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme to stop Violence Against Women and Girls.

[NSPCC - Online Self-assessment tool](#) to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

[NSPCC](#) - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

[NSPCC](#) also provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework

[Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co.](#) and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire - Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child on child abuse.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network](#) – self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB.

[Childnet - STAR SEND](#) Toolkit equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

[Childnet - Just a joke?](#) provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.

[Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up](#) a practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

[NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals](#) - Schools levers for addressing HSB in schools.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

[London Grid for Learning-collection of advice](#) - Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

[UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings](#) working with children and young people - Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

Support for parents/carers

NCA CEOP [Thinkuknow](#): Advice/resources on how to deal with concerns about what children may be doing online including advice on how to help challenge harmful sexual attitudes and start a conversation to support [positive sexual behaviour](#).

APPENDIX 2: Related Safeguarding Policies

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio and should be read in conjunction with the policies as listed below: (to be read and followed alongside this document).

All documents are available to staff within internal staff only online systems.

Selected policies are available via the [school and college website](#) or by email request via office@Ripplevaleschoolrochester.co.uk

- Behaviour
- Use of physical intervention
- Code of Conduct
- Online Safety
- Incident
- Looked After Children
- Anti-Bullying
- Data protection and Information sharing
- Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)
- Personal and intimate care
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- LOTC (Learning Outside of the Classroom)
- First aid and accidents
- Managing allegations against staff
- Staff behaviour policy, including Acceptable Use of Technology Policies (AUP)
- Safer recruitment
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints (within the staff handbook)
- Self Harm Policy

APPENDIX 3: Procedure for dealing with disclosures (the 6 R's – what to do if)

1. Receive:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief you display denial to a child or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down.
- Accept what is being said without judgement.
- Take it seriously.

2. Reassure:

- Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "everything will be all right now".
- Don't promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns.
- Tell the child that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect children.
- Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk and reassure them they have done the right thing.

3. React:

- React to the student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- **Do not** ask leading questions; "Did he/she....?" Such questions can invalidate evidence.
- Do ask open "TED" questions; **T**ell **E**xplain **D**escribe
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; the student may have affection for him/her
- Do not ask the student to repeat it all for another member of staff
- Explain what you have to do next and who you must talk to

4. Record:

- Make very brief notes at the time and write up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes
- Record the date, time, place, words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used by the child
- Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.

5. Remember:

- Contact the designated member of staff
- The designated safeguarding lead may be required to make appropriate records available to other agencies

6. Relax

- Get some support for yourself

APPENDIX 4 - Stop Abuse Together Campaign

Stop Abuse Together

If you're concerned about a child in your care, you should follow your organisation's safeguarding procedures. You can find more advice in our [keeping children safe in education guidance](#).

If you are a professional working with children, you can sign up to the [Thinkuknow professional network](#) to get the latest resources and support on tackling child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation.

The [Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse](#) offers evidence-based practice resources for professionals and can provide training and development courses online and in-person. Their [Signs and Indicators template](#) can help you identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse with confidence. You can also visit the [NWG Network](#) for training and advice.*

You can also read The Children's Society [Guidance for professionals](#) on how to respond when children share experience of sexual harassment and abuse.

You can find more information about teaching pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse in the [relationships, sex and health education statutory guidance](#).

**Please note with caution that the CoEoCSA site says that "the [Signs and Indicators](#) template is designed to inform practice, rather than determine decision-making. The [Signs and Indicators](#) template is not a risk assessment tool, substitute for further observation or for directly communicating with children and their families".*