



RIPPLEVALE
SCHOOL

Safeguarding Policy

Staff Responsible: Headteacher

Approved by: J. Lovett

Date: October 2019

Last reviewed on: April 2022

Next review due by: September 2023

Safeguarding Policy

Including Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE September 2021)

Key contact personnel in School

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jane Norris
Deputy Safeguarding Leads	Jamie Lovett, Shane Donovan, Jo Baker, Jemma McFadyen, David Parsons
Named Safeguarding Director	Stephen Aiano

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its content.

Name of person Responsible	Jane Norris	
Date of Most Recent Policy Review	April 2022	
Frequency of Review	Annually	
Date of Next Review	September 2022	
Location of Policy	Teacher data / Policies	
Approved by	Date	Signature

Additional issues that need to be considered when dealing with child protection and safeguarding of children with autism:

(This information regarding the vulnerability of our client group is reproduced on all of our key safeguarding documents and therefore results in some necessary repetition)

Children with autism have difficulty with social communication and social interaction and their ability to be able to understand or report potential signs of abuse will be affected, to varying degrees.

If their social understanding is in any way impaired, how they process and understand certain situations will be affected. Difficulty in being able to 'read' other people and therefore understand and interpret their intentions makes children with autism incredibly vulnerable to abuse.

The misconception that a child with autism of average or above-average IQ will be less vulnerable due to having better understanding of what is happening also puts children with autism at further risk.

The nature of autism itself can put people at risk. High levels of stress and anxiety are common, as are self-injurious behaviour, the desire to be alone, behaviour which can be perceived as challenging to others and finding physical contact uncomfortable. This requires an incredibly difficult balance between what is due to autism and how it presents uniquely in each individual and what is a potential sign of abuse.

Sensory factors can also have an impact on the child's behaviour. Seeking sensory stimulation can result in behaviour that is self-injurious. Children with autism sometimes display behaviour that challenges those around them and can therefore be vulnerable to experiencing interventions that are inappropriate, disproportionate or abusive. Children with autism often share environments with other children who may display behaviour which challenges and the child with autism may copy this behaviour.

We teach children from an early age to comply with parents and other adults, but there are a number of situations and certain adults where we wouldn't want them to comply. Children are taught to do as they are told and to listen to adults and do as they say, but the 'grey areas' to these rules can be incredibly confusing for some people with autism. This learned compliance can put them in incredibly vulnerable situations in relation to abuse by adults.

For many children and young people with autism, they may be aware of situations they are in, when they feel that they shouldn't comply and do as an adult has told them. They may instinctively feel a sense of danger. This may not happen instinctively for some children and young people with autism. It is important to explain what those grey areas are and find ways that they may be able to assess the risk themselves.

We are very aware that there is an increased risk of professionals becoming overfamiliar with the behaviour that a child with autism exhibits. They are then at risk of failing to pick up other concerns, or seeing new behaviour as an extension of behaviour they have already observed. A clear understanding of autism and its impact on a child is imperative, as is the ability to recognise subtle changes or other indicators, and remaining open to the possibility of abuse or neglect.

To this end, our safeguarding and child protection policies are also informed by the guidance document; *'Safeguarding Children with autism'*

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INTRODUCTION:

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

- DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE) Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (WTSC)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000)
- Kent and Medway Online Safeguarding Children Procedures (2014)

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.

Ofsted's definition of safeguarding

"Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes a wide range of issues relating to pupil's welfare, health and safety." (Briefing for Section 5 Inspectors on Safeguarding Children, Ofsted April 2015)

Including as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021;

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome

We are aware that child protection and safeguarding are fundamental to the welfare of all children in our care. This Policy, therefore, should be read in conjunction with the wider safeguarding policies as listed below. These can be found in hard copy form in staff room and with folder marked Safeguarding on teacher data. They are also available to access via the school website - <http://www.ripplevaleschool.co.uk/>

All policies will be reviewed on an annual basis by Directors who have responsibility for oversight of school safeguarding and child protection systems. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems in school to the Directors. Directors will not receive details of individual pupil situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

Policies related to this document:

1. On-line safety Policy
2. Behaviour Management Policy and Guidelines for the Use of Physical Intervention
3. Searching screening and confiscation policy.
4. Anti-Bullying Procedure
5. Safe Use of Children's Photographs Policy
6. Policy for Intimate Care
7. Prevent policy
8. Child sexual exploitation Policy
9. Health and Safety Policy
10. Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff policy
11. Low Level Concerns
12. Safer recruitment
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14. Children missing in education policy
15. Attendance policy
16. Child protection policy
17. FGM Policy
18. Risk assessment Policy
19. First Aid and Accident Policy
20. Drug and Alcohol Misuse Policy
21. Everyone's Invited Statement

Guidance to be read alongside this booklet

- Guidelines for Safeguarding Record Keeping in Schools
- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection - Induction Leaflet Guidelines for School Staff
- Advice notes : Dealing with Disclosures in School
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images
- Intimate Care Guidance
- Female genital mutilation guidance
- Prevent (Radicalisation and extremism) guidance
- DOH (2009) "Safeguarding Disabled Children – Practice Guidance"
- Teachers Standards 2012
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and
- Young People / Code of Conduct for Staff
- KSCB document : Safer Practice with Technology – Guidance for Adults who Work with Children and Young People
- Safer Recruitment Guidelines

These documents can be found in hard copy in the staff room. In addition they can be found in teacher data in folder marked safeguarding.

**They are also available to access via the school website <http://www.ripplevaleschool.co.uk/>
Contact details for Education Safeguarding Team:**

***South Kent: Area Safeguarding Advisor at Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park Ashford TN24 8XU
(03000415648) Contact details for LADO Team 03000 410888
If a child is in immediate danger call Integrated Front Door 03000411111***

ETHOS

Our school is a community and all those directly connected (staff, directors, parents, carers, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. We welcome suggestions and comments that will contribute to this process.

“Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children” (Dfe KCSIE September 2021) It is imperative that all staff in Ripplevale School are fully aware of their responsibility to report any concerns they have to the DSL and if not satisfied with the action taken to **contact Area Safeguarding Advisor** at contact details above.

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes in to contact with children has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centered. This means they should consider at all times what is in the best interests of the child. No single professional can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstance. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes in to contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action”

Part of the role of the school’s Designated Safeguard Lead (Jane Norris) is to coordinate information given to them by staff and to decide on the best course of action and this is why it is important that staff pass on all concerns. Initially a concern may appear minor but in the context of a number of minor concerns being highlighted there may appear a significant pattern developing. It is essential that all staff err on the side of caution.

“No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action” (Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021 Part 1 paragraph 3.)

“All school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment”

The early help process includes *“identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and in some cases acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment”* The DSL also has a significant contribution to the process whereby *“If early help is appropriate the DSL should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up inter- agency assessment as appropriate”*

It is also important to remember that *“If early help and or support is appropriate the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children’s social care if the child’s situation doesn’t appear to be improving”*

Ripplevale School recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self- esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness,

humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives.

Ripplevale School will endeavour to support the welfare and safety of all pupils through:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning
- ensuring that child protection is included in the curriculum to help children stay safe, recognise when they don't feel safe and identify who they might / can talk to
- providing suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties
- promoting a positive, supportive, neutral and secure environment where pupils can develop a sense of being valued and heard in their own right
- ensuring all steps are taken to maintain site security and student's physical safety
- working with parents and carers to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations
- ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication
- monitoring children and young people who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals
- developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies
- for students 16 and over Mental Capacity Act should be considered in all decision making
- for students aged 18 any decisions made should consider Deprivation of Liberty.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Schools and colleges form part of the wider safeguarding system for children.

All school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All school and college staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

We recognise that children may not feel ready, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL (Jane Norris) has overall responsibility for the day to day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in school. This includes

- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns
- Maintaining a confidential recording system
- Co-ordinating safeguarding action for individual children
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals as necessary
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences)
- Managing and monitoring the school's part in Early Help / Child in Need / Child Protection plans
- Organising training for all school staff

Directors and School Leadership Team will ensure that the DSL is properly supported in this role at a time and resource level.

The welfare and safety of children however are the responsibility of all staff in school and ANY concern for a pupil's welfare MUST be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Jane Norris).

In order to protect confidentiality, safeguarding information about individual children is shared on a need to know basis only, however, what may seem to be a minor issue to one staff member, may be highly significant to the bigger picture of risk, and therefore this information is often shared.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Ripplevale School adheres to the KSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2014). The full KSCB procedures document and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCB website www.kscb.org.uk

All staff have been provided with a copy of Part one of the DfE guidance “*Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021*” that covers Safeguarding information.

It is the responsibility of the DSL to receive and collate information regarding individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide actions necessary (with parents / carers in most cases). This includes the need to make referrals to partner agencies and services. To help with this decision s/he may choose to consult with the Area Education Safeguarding Adviser. Duty Social Workers who offers opportunities for consultation as part of the Child in Need / Child Protection process.

Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these.

New referrals to Services will be made using the agreed process i.e. The Kent Integrated front door-Children’s portal. These will be made with reference to the Kent Interagency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the Central Duty Team. Concerns for children who are already known to Services will be passed to the allocated social worker/ Team.

In all but the most exceptional circumstances, parents /carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral to Specialist Children’s Services being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought unless there is a valid reason not to do so.

In the absence of the availability of the DSL to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Education Safeguarding Team:

South Kent: Area Safeguarding Advisor at Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park Ashford TN24 8XU (03000 415648)

The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

On occasion, staff may pass information about a child to the DSL, but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to clarify with the DSL further progress, so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe and their welfare is being considered. If after following this process, the staff member remains concerned that appropriate action is not being taken, it is the responsibility of that staff member to seek further direct consultation from either a member of the Education Safeguarding Team who will be able to discuss the concern and advise on appropriate action to be taken, or directly with social services Central Duty Team.

The school has a nominated Director for safeguarding named on the front of this document. The nominated Director will take the lead role in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policy and structures supporting safeguarding children are reviewed annually.

A statement on school website will inform parents and carers about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection and safeguarding procedures. Parents can obtain a copy of the school Safeguarding Policy and other related policies on request or can view via the school website <http://www.ripplevaleschool.co.uk/>

Recognition and categories of abuse:

All 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"

The definition of abuse is *"a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing 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 (eg via the internet). They may be abused by an adult, adults or another child or children"*

All staff in school should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse some of which are listed below. In a school staff should also be aware of the possibility of Child on Child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school's procedures regarding Child on Child abuse.

There are four categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The most up to date definitions and possible indicators and signs of abuse are found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 of this document. Staff should also refer to Part 1 Keeping Children Safe in Education and What to do if you are worried a child is being abused.

Staff need to remember that child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts, and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, including, via the internet. In the case of female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children (Child on Child abuse). An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off

event. Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.

The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Children also develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger child might be normal behaviour for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff should also be alert to parent-child interactions which are concerning and other parental behaviours. This could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health. By understanding the warning signs, 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.

It is also recognised that children who witness domestic abuse are also victims, witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on children and that children can be victims in their own relationships too.

CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

We recognise that young people may be vulnerable and experience multiple harms beyond their families such as in their neighbourhoods, schools and online, including (but not limited to) child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and serious youth violence and Child on Child abuse.

We will engage with individuals and sectors that have influence over or work within these contexts and recognise this as a critical part of safeguarding practices.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or no penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

Child on Child Abuse. (Child on Child). All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as Child on Child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of Child on Child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just

not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding Child on Child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between Children, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

All staff should be clear as to the school’s or college’s policy and procedures with regard to Child on Child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Child on Child Abuse

Child on Child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between young people
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- For further information about sexual violence see Annex. 9 For further information about sexual harassment
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Ripplevale School recognises that during any further pandemic related closures a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of Child on Child abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in KCSIE and of those outlined within the school’s safeguarding & child protection policy.

The school will listen carefully, and work with the young person, family and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

All concerns and actions taken must be recorded on Safeguard My School and appropriate referrals made.

Female Genital Mutilation

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns

about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT+)

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. 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. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory [Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education](#) curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING

All school-based staff will be offered an appropriate level of safeguarding training. This will include internal school responsibilities, child protection processes, how to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms of concern and abuse and safe working practice. Training is organised by the DSL in line with government guidance that currently requires this to be updated annually for staff.

All governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction, which is regularly updated, to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge.

The school leadership team will ensure that all members of Safeguarding Team attends the required DSL safeguarding training when they first take up the role and that they continue to update their knowledge on an on-going basis and at least every year as required by guidance. In addition to the DSL lead there are four other members of staff trained in the role of DSL to act as deputies.

The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted as regards the school's internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines. A summary information sheet is available to be given to staff and volunteers to support this process.

Online Prevent and Channel training is also undertaken at induction of new staff and volunteers. This is repeated by all staff at least every three years or sooner should updates be available or a need is identified through regular checks of the schools safeguarding protocols.

All staff are required to attend safeguarding training annually with updates also being delivered by email where appropriate. Safeguarding is a regular agenda item on all staff meetings

The DSL will provide an annual report to the Directors (Cavendish Education) detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained.

RECORD KEEPING

Staff must record any welfare concern that they have about a child on the school's safeguarding incident/concern form (with a body map where injuries have been observed) and pass this without delay to the DSL. Records must be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event and must be signed and dated.

Incident/concerns are recorded by all staff on 'Safeguard My School', an on line system, which then alerts Safeguarding Leads immediately.

Safeguarding records are kept separate from all other record relating to the child in school. They are retained centrally and securely by the DSL and are shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

The Headteacher has the role of DSL, supported by Designated Safeguarding Deputies.

Detailed guidance on Record Keeping is found in a separate document "**Guidelines for Safeguarding Record Keeping in Schools**" – Staff **MUST** familiarise themselves with the responsibilities outlined in this document.

All safeguarding records will be forwarded to a child's subsequent school under confidential and separate cover to the DSL.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Ripplevale School recognises that it is possible for staff, volunteers and supply staff to behave in a way that might cause harm to children and takes seriously any safeguarding concerns and allegation received.

Such allegations should be referred immediately to the DSL 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. Should staff have concerns about the Headteacher / DSL they should refer direct to the Director responsible for Safeguarding or to the LADO direct.03000410888.

All staff need to be aware of the school's Whistle-blowing procedure and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.

For specific guidance on how to respond to allegations against staff, please refer to the “**Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff**” which can be found on teacher data / policies.

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

(The below excerpts are taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021)

407. As part of their whole school approach to safeguarding, schools and colleges should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

408. Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold (see Part Four - Section one)) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable schools and colleges to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

Ripplevale's procedure for responding to low-level concerns is part of creating a school culture of openness and trust. It helps ensure that adults consistently model the school's values and helps keep children safe. It will also protect adults working in school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

WHAT IS A LOW-LEVEL CONCERN

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough for the school or college to refer to the local authority.

Low-level concerns are part of a spectrum of behaviour. This includes:

- inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour

- behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances
- behaviour which is intended to enable abuse.

Examples of such behaviour could include:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- adults taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils and the use of intimidating, inappropriate, or offensive language.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 4)

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (KCSIE Part Four -Section one), are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

WHAT TO DO SHOULD YOU HAVE A LOW-LEVEL CONCERN

A member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should inform the Head Teacher about their concern using a Low-Level Record of Concern Form. If the Head Teacher cannot be contacted, the relevant Deputy Headteacher should be contacted instead.

LLC forms and follow-up information will be stored securely within the schools safeguarding systems, with access only by the leadership team. This will be stored in accordance with the school's GDPR and data protection policies.

The staff member(s) reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concern with others apart from the DSL/Head Teacher or those aware in the senior leadership team.

Low-Level Concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in disciplinary or misconduct procedures. Whenever staff leave Ripplevale any record of low-level concerns which are stored about them will be reviewed as to whether or not that information needs to be kept.

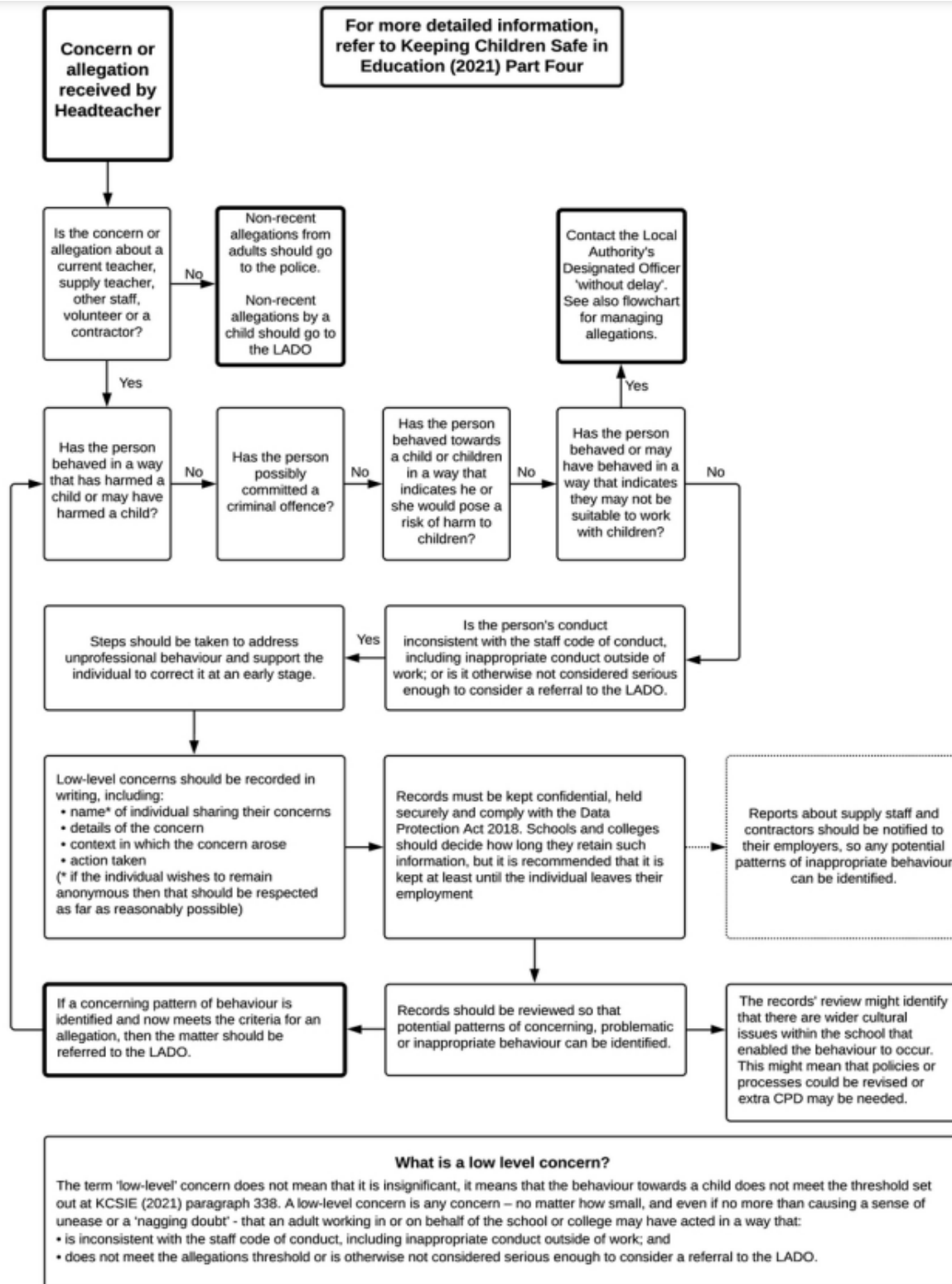
Consideration will be given to: (a) whether some or all of the information contained within any record may have any reasonably likely value in terms of any potential historic employment or abuse claim so as to justify keeping it, in line with normal safeguarding records practice; or (b) if, on balance, any record is not considered to have any reasonably likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly.

KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENT

Read this document for further information about Low-Level Concerns, which is referenced in KCSIE 2021.

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/clients-and-sectors/safeguarding/low-level-concerns-guidance-2020.pdf>

PROCESS TO FOLLOW WHEN A LOW-LEVEL CONCERN IS RAISED



For low level concern form please see Appendices'

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Ripplevale School recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour 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.

Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and the school will therefore pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies. We will however contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required and recognise a crucial part of this may be in supporting the child while these take place.

Ripplevale School recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and Early Help Teams around the Child / Family.

The School Leadership Team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Headteacher or DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. Further advice on dealing with disclosures can be found in the document "Child Protection - Dealing with

Disclosures in School" and in Appendix 1. DoF Guidance on Information Sharing (published March 2015) provides further detail.

CURRICULUM AND STAYING SAFE

We recognise that schools play an 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.

Ripplevale School will use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.

Systems have been established to support the empowerment of pupils to talk to a range of staff. Pupils at Ripplevale School will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

Specific systems outside of expected day to day classroom interaction and support; see provision plans.

ON-LINE SAFETY

It is recognised that the use of new technologies presents particular challenges and risks to children both inside and outside of school. Ripplevale School will ensure a comprehensive curriculum response to enable all pupils/students to learn about and manage the associated risks effectively and will support parents and the school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online. Detailed information can be found in the school's **Online Safety Policy** which can be found in the policies folder in teacher data.

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.

All newly qualified teachers and classroom assistants receive induction training and have a mentor or co-ordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection.

The DSL can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach Support Line directly.

SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

Staff are required to work within clear Guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the school's Code of Conduct.

Children may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. 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 procedure in which appropriate training should be provided.

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 **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People**, the school's **on-line safety policy** and **Acceptable Use Policy** and the **KSCB document : Safer Practice with Technology – Guidance for Adults who Work with Children and Young People**.

COMPLAINTS

The school has a **Complaints Procedure** available to parents, pupils/students and staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found on school hard drive and on website.

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 under the specific **Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff**.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Ripplevale School is committed to ensure that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our pupils/students and have their welfare and protection as the highest priority. The Directors and School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within Guidance, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record; and an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.

The Headteacher and other senior staff responsible for recruitment must complete accredited Safer Recruitment Training in line with government requirements.

With reference to KCSIE Paragraph 220, as part of the shortlisting process, consideration is routinely given to carry out an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates, to help identify any incidents or issues that the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

THE USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Headteacher and Directors will seek assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises may be refused.

SECURITY

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole- school community ethos and welcome comments from pupils/students, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitors badge whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance. The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

LINK TO KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION PART ONE

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.pdf](#)

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
- Take what is said seriously
- Note down what has been said

2. Reassure

- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep eg “It will be alright now”
- **Do not promise confidentiality**; you have a duty to refer
- Reassure and alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it eg “you’re not to blame”
- Reassure the child that information will only be shared with those who need to know

3. React

- React to the pupil 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; Tell explain describe
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; the pupil may have affection for him/her
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to

4. Record

- Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible
- Do not destroy your original notes
- Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. Ensure that as far as possible you have recorded the actual words used by the child. Record statements and observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions

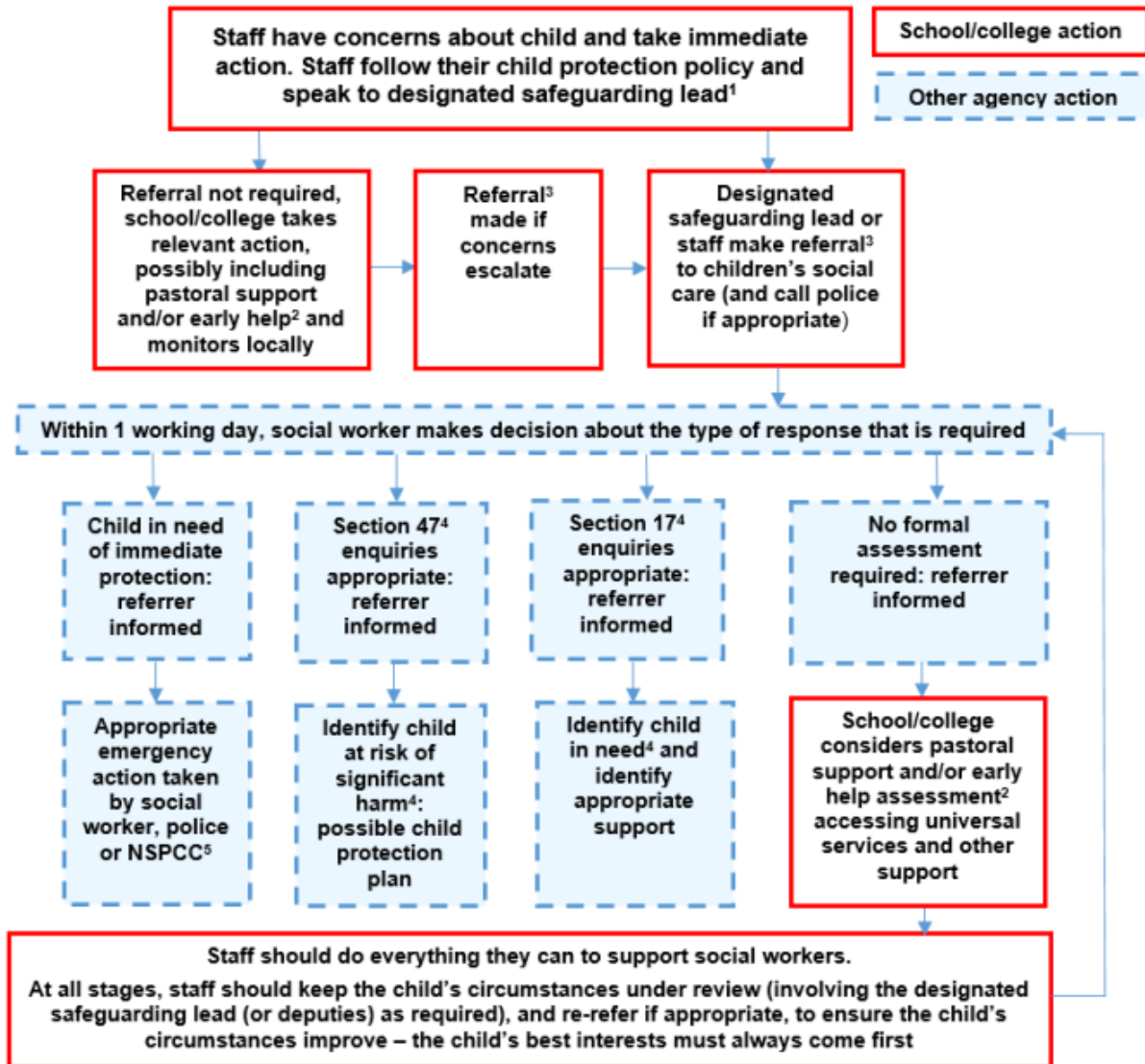
5. Remember

- Contact the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- The DSL may be required to make contact with Front door services and appropriate records available to multiple agencies.

6. Relax

- Get some support for yourself

Actions where there are concerns about a child



STOP ABUSE TOGETHER

This is a Stop Abuse Together campaign for professional and educational staff working with children.

Relevant staff within school will sign up to Thinkuknow professional network and cascade information within school.

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".*

LOW-LEVEL CONCERN FORM

Please use this form to share any concern you have - **no matter how small, even a nagging doubt or sense of unease** that an adult may have acted in a manner that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

Please wherever possible speak to the Headteacher as soon as possible. It may be useful to document your concerns (Please use the fields below) and pass this to the Headteacher or if not available the relevant Deputy Headteacher.

Should the concern be about any of the senior leadership team please refer the concern from to the Cavendish Safeguarding Director, Stephen Aiano. s.aiano@cavendisheducation.com

Name: _____

Position: _____

Time/Date/Location of Concern: _____

Concern:

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Safeguarding Director	Stephen Aino	0203 305 9095	s.aino@cavendisheducation.com
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jane Norris	01304 373866 Or in emergency 07595 708251	Jane.norris@ripplevaleschool.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Jamie Lovett	01304 373866	Jamie.lovett@ripplevaleschool.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Shane Donovan	01304 373866	Shane.donovan@ripplevaleschool.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Jo Baker	01304 373866	Joanne.baker@ripplevaleschool.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Jemma McFadyen	01304 373866	Jemma.Mcfadyen@ripplevaleschool.co.uk
Deputy DSL	David Parsons	01304 373866	David.parsons@ripplevaleschool.co.uk