

St John's C of E VA First School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



'Together we have roots to grow and the wings to fly.'

This policy should be taken as part of St. John's C. of E. First School's overall strategy and is implemented within the context of our vision of Government aims and our values as a Church of England School.

Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
Annual	September 2022		September 2023

Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Claire Levene-Plumb		27 March 2023
Head Teacher	Jo Greathead		27 March 2023
DSL	Nicole Simenton		27 March 2023

Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
01/09/2021	Update and re-written to reflect new statutory guidance issued in 2021.
10/10/2022	Update and information added to reflect new guidance issued in 2022
27/03/2023	Updated 2.1, Appendix B, and Appendix F to reflect changes to record keeping following Ofsted recommendations

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1.1 Definitions

Safeguarding is defined as:

- ❖ Protecting children from maltreatment.
- ❖ Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ❖ Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- ❖ Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

1.2 Introduction

At **St John's C of E VA First School**

- ❖ Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who encounters children, their families, and carers, has a role to play.
- ❖ In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should always consider what is in the **best interests** of the child.
- ❖ We take an '**it can happen here**' approach where safeguarding is concerned.
- ❖ **Everyone** who encounters children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.
- ❖ Victims of harm should **never** be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

St John's C of E VA First School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by:

- ❖ The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.
- ❖ Acting on concerns about a child's welfare immediately.
- ❖ Fulfilling our legal responsibilities to identify children who may need early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

All action taken by **St John's C of E VA First School** will be in accordance with:

- ❖ **Current legislation** (these are summarised within [Working Together to Safeguard Children: statutory framework](#))
- ❖ **Statutory, national, and local guidance – this includes:**
 - **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**, which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and

protect them from harm; in addition, it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)** is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (2021)** is statutory guidance which sets standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to 5.

❖ **Local Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Partnership:** around particular safeguarding topics are available on the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership

❖ **Government guidance in relation to:**

COVID19: The full collection is available on the [government website](#). **St John's C of E VA First School** have created an addendum to this document to reflect changes made during lockdown or in the event of a further lockdown; please see Appendix F

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Recruitment and Selection
- How to report Low Level Concerns
- Whistleblowing and Public Interest Disclosure
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Behaviour and Relationships for Learning Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety
- Supporting Children in Care Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Health and Safety

Head Teachers/Principals should ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by governing bodies and proprietors, are accessible, understood and followed by all staff.

1.3 Equalities Statement

With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and our general and specific duties under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#). General duties include:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Details of our specific duties are published under **St John's C of E VA First School's** Equality Information and Objectives, available on our [website](#)

We adhere to [Somerset Children and Young People Plan, 2019-2022](#)

Staff are aware of the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This will be in line with our [Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy](#)

St John's C of E VA First School also adheres to the principals of and promotes anti-oppressive practice in line of the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

1.4 Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to the safeguarding of children at **St John's C of E VA First School** by:

- ❖ Clarifying safeguarding expectations for members of the education setting's community, staff, governing body, learners, and their families.
- ❖ Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture in the setting built on shared values; and that our learners are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.
- ❖ Supporting contextual safeguarding practice recognising that the setting's site can be a location where harm can occur.
- ❖ Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within the setting's community (staff, learners, parents/carers) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them.
- ❖ Early identification of need for vulnerable learners and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety.
- ❖ Working in partnership with learners, parents, and other agencies in the Local Safeguarding Partnership including Early Help.

St John's C of E VA First School is named as a relevant agency in the Local Safeguarding Partnership (Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership). This policy sets out its statutory duty to co-operate, follow and comply with published arrangements as set out by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership's professional expectations, roles, and responsibilities

1.5 Professional Expectations and Roles and Responsibilities

1.5.1 Role of all staff

- ❖ All staff will read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022). Those working directly with children will also read Annex B. Those who do not work directly with children will have the option of reading Annex A instead.
- ❖ In addition to this all staff will be aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including reading this Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy; the Behaviour Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct; safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- ❖ Know who and how to contact the DSL and any deputies, the Chair of Governors, and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.

- ❖ All staff will be able to identify vulnerable learners and take action to keep them safe. Information or concerns about learners will be shared with the DSL where it includes those:
 - who may need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect.
 - requiring mental health support.
 - may benefit from early help.
 - where there is a radicalisation concern.
 - where a crime may have been committed.
- ❖ Be clear as to the setting's policy and procedures about [child on child abuse](#), children missing education and [those requiring mental health support](#), and the [impact of technology in relation to online safety](#).
- ❖ Be involved where appropriate, in the implementation of individual plans to further safeguard vulnerable learners and understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- ❖ Record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using the setting's safeguarding systems.
- ❖ To be aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the school.

1.5.2 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies (DDSL)

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022, Part 2)

Details of our DSL and Deputy DSL are available on the **St John's C of VA First School's** website, our newsletters, or the notice board in reception.

- ❖ The DSL is a senior member of staff who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the setting.
- ❖ The DSL has undertaken the **SSCP** training to ensure they are compliant with the Local Authority requirement for DSLs.
- ❖ The DSL works with the headteacher, and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that learners in need are experiencing or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on learner's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.
- ❖ Activities include the management of work undertaken by any Deputy DSLs.
- ❖ Manages early identification of vulnerability of learners and their families from staff through cause for concerns or notifications. This will ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- ❖ Manages referrals to local safeguarding partners where learners with additional needs have been identified. These can include those –
 - who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect.
 - requiring mental health support.
 - who may benefit from early help.
 - where there is a radicalisation concern.
 - where a crime may have been committed.

The DSL will also:

- ❖ Work with others – acting as a point of contact for outside agencies about safeguarding.
- ❖ Support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies.
- ❖ When required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- ❖ Coordinate safeguarding training and raise awareness and understanding to the school community around policies and practice in relation to safeguarding.
- ❖ Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable learners with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
 - Know who these children are,
 - Understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
 - Are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face.
 - Provide additional academic support or make reasonable adjustments to help children who have **or have had** a social worker to reach their potential.
- ❖ Ensure the successful transfer of the Safeguarding/Child Protection File when a learner moves on to a new setting within 5 days for in year transfer or the first 5 days of the start of a new term.
- ❖ Ensure appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time, any out of hours and out of term activities managed by the school.

1.5.3 Role of the Governing Body

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022, Part 2)

There is a named governor who takes responsibility for the setting's safeguarding responsibility to ensure that safeguarding and child protection practice, process, and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance, and Local Safeguarding Partnership arrangements.

- ❖ The appointed Safeguarding Governor will liaise with the Head Teacher and the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the S. 175 (Annual Safeguarding) Audit for the Somerset Education Safeguarding Service.
- ❖ Ensure that the school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay;
- ❖ Ensure that this document is updated annually (or when there are significant updates)
- ❖ Ensure that the DSL is an appropriate senior member of setting's senior leadership team and ensure that they have adequate time, funding, training, resources, and support to carry out their role effectively.
- ❖ Ensure that they attend Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership training and that safeguarding learning for the school community is robust and effective.
- ❖ Ensure that learners are taught about safeguarding on the curriculum including online safety in compliance with statutory guidance [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education) and [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-statutory-framework)

- ❖ To ensure that teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors have appropriate checks carried out in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022, Part 3).
- ❖ Ensure that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors who may not be suitable to work with or pose a risk to learners, this includes having a process to manage low level concerns.
- ❖ Ensure that systems are in place for learners to effectively share a concern about a safeguarding issue they are experiencing, express their views and give feedback.
- ❖ Ensure that the setting has systems in place to prevent, identify and respond to child on child harm (including sexual abuse and sexual harassment) and mental health concerns, and review the effectiveness of the setting's online safety practices.
- ❖ Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement for children in care and other care arrangements.
- ❖ Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors will be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors will ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Governing bodies and proprietors will consider the age range of their children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs verses safeguarding risks

1.6 Safeguarding training for staff

1.6.1 - All staff:

- ❖ Governing bodies and proprietors will ensure that all staff members undergo the Somerset Safeguarding Child Partnership (SSCP) safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) training at induction.
- ❖ Will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) refresher training at least annually (via formal training, email e-bulletins and staff meetings).
- ❖ All staff must complete FGM awareness training and will understand their legal duty under the Mandatory Reporting Duty.
- ❖ All staff must complete PREVENT awareness training. This is to ensure that they can comply with the legal expectations under the PREVENT duty.
- ❖ Staff training includes clear reference to internal whistleblowing policy and guidance for escalating concerns.

1.6.2 - Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies:

- ❖ Will undergo formal training provided by the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP) to provide them with the knowledge and skills (including online safety) training required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years.
- ❖ Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL.

- ❖ The DSL and any deputies will liaise with the SSCP and Somerset Education Safeguarding Service to ensure that their knowledge and skills are updated via e-bulletins, attend DSL network meetings, and take time to read and digest safeguarding bulletins.

1.6.3 - Other Training Considerations:

- ❖ The governing body will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training, in line School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.
- ❖ Members of the senior leadership team will make themselves aware of and understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. This will ensure that those who have responsibility for the management of behaviour, inclusion, Special Educational Needs, attendance, and exclusions will carry out their duties with a safeguarding consideration.
- ❖ The Designated Teacher for Children in Care will undergo appropriate training to fulfil their role to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are in care.
- ❖ The mental health lead has access to appropriate training.
- ❖ Training around safeguarding topics in Annex B (including online safety) will be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of a whole school safeguarding approach.
- ❖ Appropriate colleagues have received appropriate training in relation to use of reasonable force and positive handling.
- ❖ Governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection at induction

1.7 Safeguarding in the curriculum

St John's C of E VA First School is dedicated to ensuring that learners are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all learners, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable learners, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

This includes:

- Working within statutory guidance in respect to [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education); and [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-statutory-framework)
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying.
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that 'over- blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what learners can be taught about online teaching and safeguarding.
- The curriculum will be shaped to respond to safeguarding incident patterns in the setting identified by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team (e.g., to respond to an increase in bullying incidents).
- Providing engagement opportunities with parents and carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum.
- Learners can inform the curriculum via discussions within their own classroom discussions and the school council.

1.8 Safer Recruitment and Safer Working Practice

1.8.1 - Safer recruitment

St John's C of E VA First School pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022;)

- This includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. References are always obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- It also includes undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the barred list checks and prohibition checks (and overseas checks if appropriate), dependent on the role and duties performed, including regulated and non-regulated activity.
- Applicants must provide an application form and Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted as a stand-alone.
- As a setting we will consider online searches as part of our due diligence checks on short listed candidates.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to **St John's C of E VA First School's** commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of learners.

1.8.2 - Use of Reasonable Force

'Reasonable force' refers to the physical contact to restrain and control children using no more force than is needed.' The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances and the vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) will be considered.

- The use of reasonable force will be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation and will follow government guidance ([Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013; Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention, 2019](#)).
- There is robust recording of any incident where positive handling or restraint has been used. Further review of the incident is carried out to reflect on how the incident could be avoided, this will involve the child and their family.

The process around how the setting manages concerns where a professional may pose a risk to learners and our response to low level concerns can be accessed in section [2.8 Allegations of abuse made against professionals](#).

1.8.3 - Whistleblowing Procedures

Staff are aware of the following whistleblowing channels for situations where they feel unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed:

- General guidance can be found at: Advice on whistleblowing www.gov.uk/whistleblowing.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available [here](#) for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The above channels are clearly accessible to all staff (in the staff handbook, code of conduct and staff notice boards).

1.9 Key Safeguarding Areas

These topics are themes that can impact on children and families, there are specific areas of safeguarding that the setting has statutory responsibilities to address which are hyperlinked:

- ❖ Children in the court system
- ❖ Children affected by parental offending/imprisonment.
- ❖ [Children missing from education](#) – including persistent absence.
- ❖ [Child Exploitation](#) (including both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation and county lines, modern day slavery and trafficking)
- ❖ Cybercrime
- ❖ [Domestic Abuse](#)
- ❖ Homelessness
- ❖ So-called Honour based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage),
- ❖ [Online Safety](#)
- ❖ [Mental health](#)
- ❖ [Child on child abuse:](#)
 - Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
 - Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
 - Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;(this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
 - Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
 - Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- ❖ [Preventing Radicalisation \(The Prevent Duty\)](#)
- ❖ [Serious Youth Violence](#)
- ❖ Substance Misuse
- ❖ [Private Fostering](#)
- ❖ [Young Carers](#)

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022; Annex B); the [NSPCC website - Types of Abuse](#); and for localised resources for education settings the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

PART 2: PROCEDURES

2.1 Reporting Concerns

All staff are clear about recording and reporting concerns online using MyConcern and verbally to the DSL/DSL deputies as soon as possible. In the case a learner is in immediate danger, staff should phone the police. In the unlikely events that a DSL/DDSL is not available, another member of staff can make this call.

All staff are aware of and follow the procedures to respond to a concern about a child detailed in [Appendix B](#). Training takes place with all new staff to use MyConcern and refresher sessions held as necessary. All concerns must also be verbally passed onto the DSL/DDSL. This includes responses to child-on-child harm and learners who present with a mental health need.

At **St John's C of E VA First School** learners can raise their concerns via their class teachers, learning support staff, through Jigsaw sessions, in a one to one conversation, and also through the School Council. and they will always be treated seriously.

2.2 Information Sharing

St John's C of E VA First School is committed to have due regard to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the Data protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations. This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Staff at the setting are aware that:

- ❖ 'Safeguarding' and 'individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data.
- ❖ Practitioners will seek consent to share data where possible in line with [Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2018](#).

There may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent such as:

- ❖ To gain consent would place the child at risk,
- ❖ by doing so will compromise a criminal investigation,
- ❖ It cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent,
- ❖ or, if by sharing information it will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

There are also times when St John's C of E VA First School will not provide pupil's personal data where the serious harm test under legislation is met, (by sharing the information the child may be at further risk). When in doubt St John's C of E VA First School will seek legal advice.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

2.3 Identifying and Monitoring the Needs of Vulnerable Learners.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will regularly review and monitor those students who have been identified as vulnerable. This can include reviewing attendance data, behaviour data, attainment data and safeguarding records. This is to ensure that:

- ❖ Proportionate and early interventions can be taken to promote the safety and welfare of the child and prevent escalation of harm.
- ❖ Information about vulnerable learners is shared with teachers and school and college leadership staff to promote educational outcomes.
- ❖ Learners who currently have, or have had, a social worker will have their academic progress and attainment reviewed and additional academic support will be provided to help them reach their full potential.
- ❖ Reasonable adjustments are made in relation to school-based interventions – for example responding to behaviour.

2.4 Multi-Agency Working

St John's C of E VA First School will work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including identifying and responding to their needs. This is in compliance with statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

Occasions that warrant a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989:

- ❖ If the child is in need under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 (including when a child is a young carer and or subject to a private fostering arrangement).
- ❖ Or if the child needs protection under s.47 of the Children Act 1989 where they are experiencing significant harm, or likely to experience significant harm.

Referrals in these cases should be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSLs) to Children's Social Care in the Local Authority in which that child resides.

Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager. If the child is a child in care, notification should also be made to Somerset's Virtual School.

St John's C of E VA First School will co-operate with any statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: this includes ensuring representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

2.4.1 Additional considerations:

- ❖ Where a learner and/or their family is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan or a multiagency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, the setting will contribute to the preparation, implementation, and review of the plan as appropriate.
- ❖ In situations where a child in care may be put on to part time timetable, the school will consult with relevant agencies and the virtual school.

- ❖ If a crime has been suspected or committed that involved the bringing of an offensive weapon on to the school site, the setting will liaise with the Police who will consider a proportionate response.
- ❖ If there is a risk of harm, the police should be called via 999. For other concerns of criminality, the non-statutory guidance '[When to Call the Police' from the NCPCC](#) can be helpful or contact the local PCSO/School Police Beat Officer/School Officer.
- ❖ In the rare event that a child death occurs, or a child is seriously harmed, St John's C of E VA First School will notify the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership as soon as is reasonably possible.

2.5 Suspensions, Expulsions, and Commissioning of Alternative Provisions

(To be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy)

When the setting is considering suspending or expelling a learner where additional vulnerability is identified it is important that the learner's welfare is a paramount consideration. The Headteacher will consider their legal duty of care when sending a learner home.

St John's C of E VA First School will exercise their legal duties in relation to their interventions. This includes:

- ❖ whether a statutory assessment should be considered in line with the principles of [Children Act 1989](#),
- ❖ that decisions are made in an anti-discriminatory manner in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#) (including having regard to the [SEND Code of Practice](#))
- ❖ and takes into consideration the learner's rights under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).
- ❖ Interventions will be consistent with statutory guidance [School suspensions and expulsions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

2.5.1 - Actions to take

- ❖ An assessment of need should be undertaken with multi-agency partners with a view to mitigate any identified risk of harm this in line with [2.3 Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable learners](#).
- ❖ If the child is subject to a child protection plan or where there is an existing child protection file, we will call a multiagency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude.
- ❖ In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, the risk assessment *must* be completed prior to convening a meeting of the governing body.

2.5.2 - Commissioning Alternative Provisions

In the event where St John's C of E VA First School commissions an Alternative Provision we will ensure clear agreement of roles and responsibilities to maintain safeguarding and daily monitoring of attendance arrangements for learners who are not taught on site.

St John's C of E VA First School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that learner and will make necessary checks on the provider to meet the needs of the learner. Written confirmation from the Alternative provider will be obtained of the checks on staff that we would otherwise perform for our own staff.

2.6 Children Missing from Education (To be read in conjunction with the Attendance Policy)

A learner missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, or maybe an indicator of need for early help support. Staff should follow procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children

that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. These should be reported to the DSL and reviewed in line with [2.3 Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable learners](#).

St John's C of E VA First School will follow the guidance detailed in [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#) and Somerset Education Safeguarding Policy for Children Missing Education

This will include notifying the local authority in which the child lives:

- ❖ of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly,
- ❖ or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

2.6.1 - Elective Home Education

St John's C of E VA First School will notify the Local Authority of every learner where a parent has exercised their right to educate their child at home. Safeguarding concerns should be shared with the Education Safeguarding Service and consideration of whether additional support from children's services should be made in line with the Children Act 1989.

2.7 Respond to Incidents of Child-on-Child Abuse / Harm.

The flow diagram in [Appendix B](#) illustrates this section.

All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers (including online). It is important that incidents of abuse and harm are treated under safeguarding policy in conjunction with the behaviour policy.

However, concerns regarding the welfare of learners requires process and records to be kept on the child's safeguarding/child protection file.

Further examples of child-on-child harm this can be found under section [1.9 Key Safeguarding Areas](#). It is recognised that peer on peer abuse can happen inside and outside of school/college or online.

At St John's C of E VA First School

- ❖ We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to abuse. Incidents are taken seriously. These will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter,' just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up.' Banter and teasing can and should be acknowledged and recognised as bullying behaviour and may require proportionate intervention.
- ❖ Even with a zero-tolerance approach, we take steps to educate and take action ensure to mitigate the risk of contributing to a culture of unacceptable behaviours or a culture that normalises abuse.
- ❖ It is understood that child on child harm may reflect equality issues in terms of those who may be targeted are more likely to have protected characteristics.
- ❖ Early identification of vulnerability to child-on-child harm is made by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.

There are clear systems in place (which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for learners to confidently report abuse knowing their concerns will be treated easily as reflected in section [2.1 Reporting a concern](#) of this policy. St John's C of E VA First School will handle initial reports of harm by:

- ❖ Securing the immediate safety of learners involved in an incident and sourcing support for other young people affected.

- ❖ Listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc.
- ❖ ensuring that victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. They will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- ❖ Ensuring the child's wishes are taken into consideration in any intervention and any action is taken to ensure safety of the target and other members of the wider peer cohort.
- ❖ Not promising confidentiality as it is highly likely that information will need to be shared with others.

2.7.1 Actions to take in Relation to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment.

Reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) guidance should be made in relation to taking protective action. St John's C of E VA First School will take the following actions when responding to incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- ❖ Incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL/ Deputy DSL who will undertake further assessment of what action should be taken proportionate to the factors that have been identified. [The Brook - Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Assessment Tool](#) should be utilised to inform assessment of risk and what actions to subsequently take. This may include seeking specialist advice and guidance from the education psychology team or Education Safeguarding Team.
- ❖ Support and undertake GIFT work as an early intervention when requested.
- ❖ DSLs/Deputies will take **proportionate** action and consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with the section [2.4 - Multi-Agency Working section](#).
- ❖ When an incident involves an act of **sexual violence** (rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault) the starting point is that this should be passed on to police **regardless** of the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old). This must be reported directly via 101 for recording purposes and accountability. A concurrent referral to social care must also be made.
- ❖ When the children involved require a statutory assessment either under s.17 or s. 47 of the Children Act 1989 a referral to social care should be undertaken.
- ❖ Where the report includes an online element, the setting will follow [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
- ❖ Risk assessments and or safety plans will be developed for individual children who have been involved in an incident. This should be reviewed regularly or every time there is an occurrence of an incident. These should involve the child and parents/carers and address contextual risks.
- ❖ It is important that schools and colleges consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

2.7.2 - Contextual Safeguarding Approach to Child-On-Child Harm:

St John's C of E VA First School will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by taking a contextual approach to safeguarding by increasing safety in the contexts of which harm can occur – this can include the school environment itself, peer groups and the neighbourhood.

Following any incidents of child-on-child harm, the DSL/Deputies will review and consider whether any practice or environmental changes can be made in relation to any lessons learned. This can include making changes to staffing and supervision, making changes to the physical environment and considering the utilisation and delivery of safeguarding topics on the curriculum.

2.8 Responding to Allegations of Abuse made against Adults working in the Setting , including Supply Teachers, Volunteers and Contractors.

Staff must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) where they may have:

- ❖ 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.

2.8.1 - Immediate Action must be taken:

- ❖ Do not speak to the individual it concerns.
- ❖ Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Head Teacher who will follow guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022, Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff).
- ❖ If the concern relates to Head Teacher it should be reported to the Chair of Governors, who will liaise with the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) and they will decide on any action required.
- ❖ If there is a conflict of interest which inhibits this process of reporting, staff can report directly to the LADO.
- ❖ If allegations are regarding a member of supply staff, the school will take the lead and progress enquiries with the LADO, whilst continuing to engage and work with the employment agency.
- ❖ Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children should be referred to the LADO on the day that the allegation is reported. The allocated social worker should also be informed on the day. The school should not undertake any investigation unless the LADO advises this.

2.8.2 - Low Level Concerns

This should be read in conjunction with the 'Staff Code of Conduct' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022,). A low-level concern is not insignificant. This process should be used in events where a concern about professional conduct does not meet the threshold set out at the beginning of this section.

The setting provides a clear procedure for sharing low level concerns. These will be shared with the Head Teacher.

- ❖ Reports should be made to the Deputy DSL if it is regarding the Headteacher. St John's C of E VA First School creates an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation.
- ❖ The DSL will address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage providing a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- ❖ Review and correct any deficits in the setting's safeguarding system.

2.9 Mental Health and Wellbeing. (A flow diagram is available in [Appendix B](#) to illustrate this section)

Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their learners. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, and or may require early help support.

St John's C of E VA First School will commit to undertake the following.

- ❖ The appointment of a senior mental health lead who can support the development of knowledge and act as a point of expertise to promote the wellbeing and mental health of learners. This colleague will have sufficient training in mental health **and** safeguarding for them to carry out their role effectively.
- ❖ Early identification of vulnerability to mental health problems by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.
- ❖ Ensure that learners can report and share concerns in line with section [2.1 Reporting a concern](#) of this policy.
- ❖ Staff will follow a safeguarding process in terms of reporting concerns outlined in [Appendix B](#) so the DSL/Deputy DSLs (and wider members of the safeguarding team such as the SENDCo) can assess whether there are any other vulnerabilities can be identified and proportionate support considered.
- ❖ Staff will ensure the immediate health and safety of a learner who is displaying acute mental health distress. This may require support from emergency services via 999 if the learner is at risk of immediate harm.
- ❖ DSLs/Deputies will consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with section [2.4 - Multi-Agency Working](#).
- ❖ The setting will communicate and work with the learner and parents/carers to ensure that interventions are in the best interests of the child.
- ❖ DSLs will liaise with staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and develop ways to support achieving positive educational outcomes.
- ❖ Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem – DSLs and the senior leadership team should be able to access specialist advice through targeted services.

2.9.1 - Contextual Safeguarding Approach to Mental Health

St John's C of E VA First School will ensure that preventative measures in terms of providing safeguarding on the curriculum will provide opportunities for learners to identify when they may need help, and to develop resilience.

The setting will take a 'whole school approach' to:

- ❖ deliver high quality teaching around mental health and wellbeing on the curriculum.

- ❖ having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- ❖ having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- ❖ making sure pupils and staff are aware of and able to access a range of mental health services;
- ❖ supporting staff wellbeing
- ❖ and being committed to pupil and parent participation

2.10 Online Safety

Online safety is an integrated and interwoven theme with other safeguarding considerations. It is essential that the DSL takes a lead on ensuring that interventions are effective. This means coordinating support and engaging with other colleagues in the setting who may have more technological expertise such as the IT manager.

St John's C of E VA First School is committed to addressing online safety issues around content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes:

- Ensuring that online safety is concerned in relevant policies and procedures.
- Online safety is interwoven in safeguarding training for staff and safeguarding on the curriculum for learners.
- Acknowledging that child on child abuse can happen via mobile and smart technology between individuals and groups. This should be approached in the same process outlined in section [2.7 Responding to incidents of child on child harm](#) **and read in conjunction** of St John's C of E VA First School's policy on the acceptable use of mobile smart technology,
- Provision of education via remote learning will comply with governmental advice [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- The effectiveness of the setting's ability to safeguarding learners in respect to filtering and monitoring, information security and access management alongside the above will be reviewed annually.
- Preparing children with information for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and where to get help.

Appendices

Appendix A – Key Guidance for Safeguarding Issues.

Other **multi-agency** guidance and policies links:

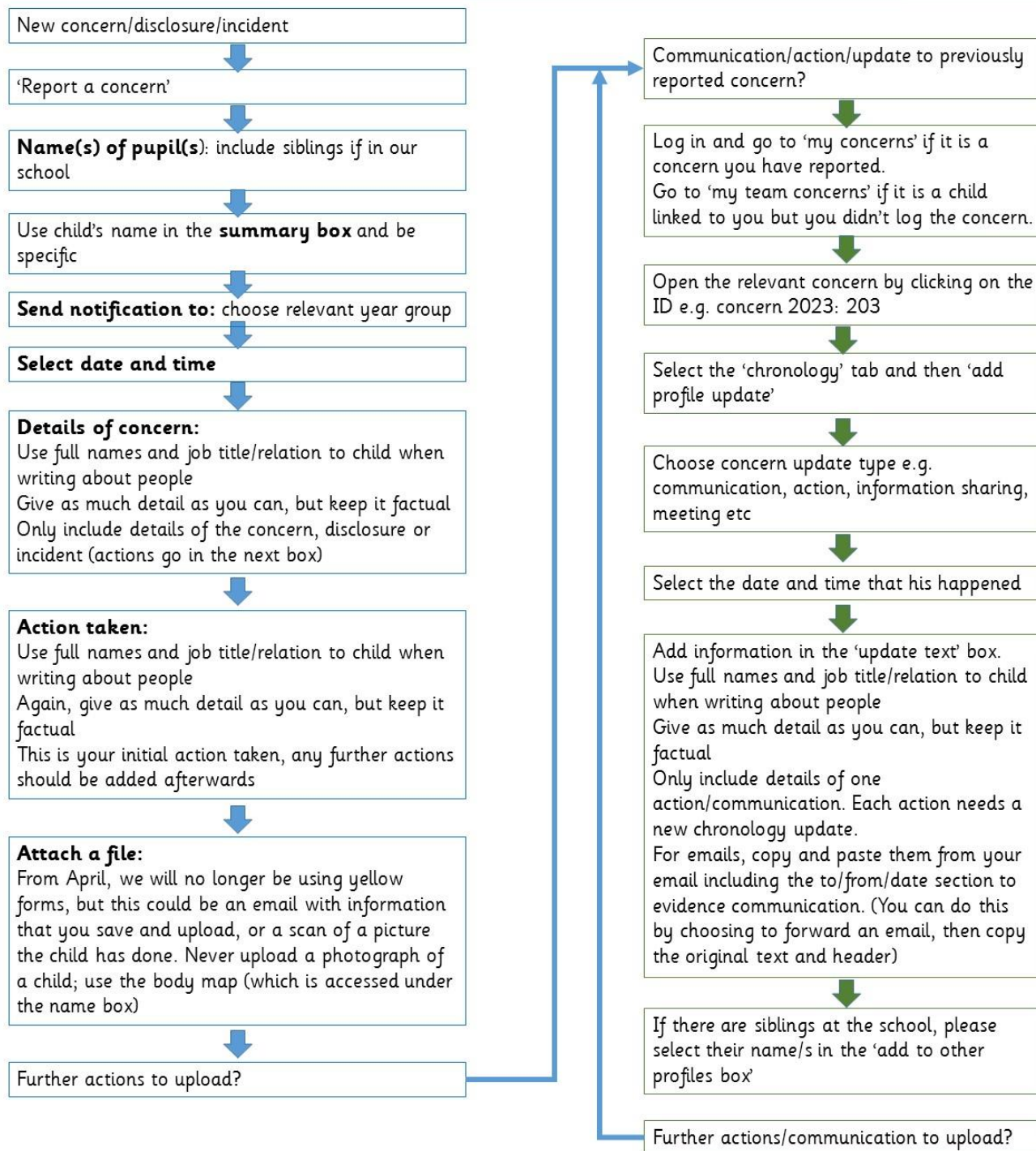
- ❖ www.somerset.gov.uk/how-the-council-works/children-and-young-peoples-plan/
- ❖ [Working Together to Safeguard Children: statutory framework](#)
- ❖ www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- ❖ sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/effectivesupport-documents/
- ❖ docs.somerset.gov.uk/wl/?id=V05rrk1OWeVpUtwgdAFgkuJ2Tmlk8VxN
- ❖ professionalchoices.org.uk/
- ❖ www.gov.uk/whistleblowings
- ❖ help@nspcc.org.uk
- ❖ [When to Call the Police' from the NCPCC](#)
- ❖ [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#)
- ❖ [The Brook - Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Assessment Tool](#)
- ❖ [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\);](#)
- ❖ [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ❖ [government website](#)
- ❖ [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ❖ [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ❖ [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ❖ [Equality Act 2010](#)
- ❖ [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- ❖ [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ❖ [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ❖ [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013](#)
- ❖ [School suspensions and expulsions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix B – Reporting Concerns

- Reporting concerns flow chart – **St John's First School – new March 2023**
- Reporting Concerns Flow Chart – **Somerset**
- Process flow chart responding to incidents of child-on-child incidents and Mental Health Problems – [Click here](#)
- Safeguarding contacts Poster – Multi-agency contacts in Somerset – [Click here](#)



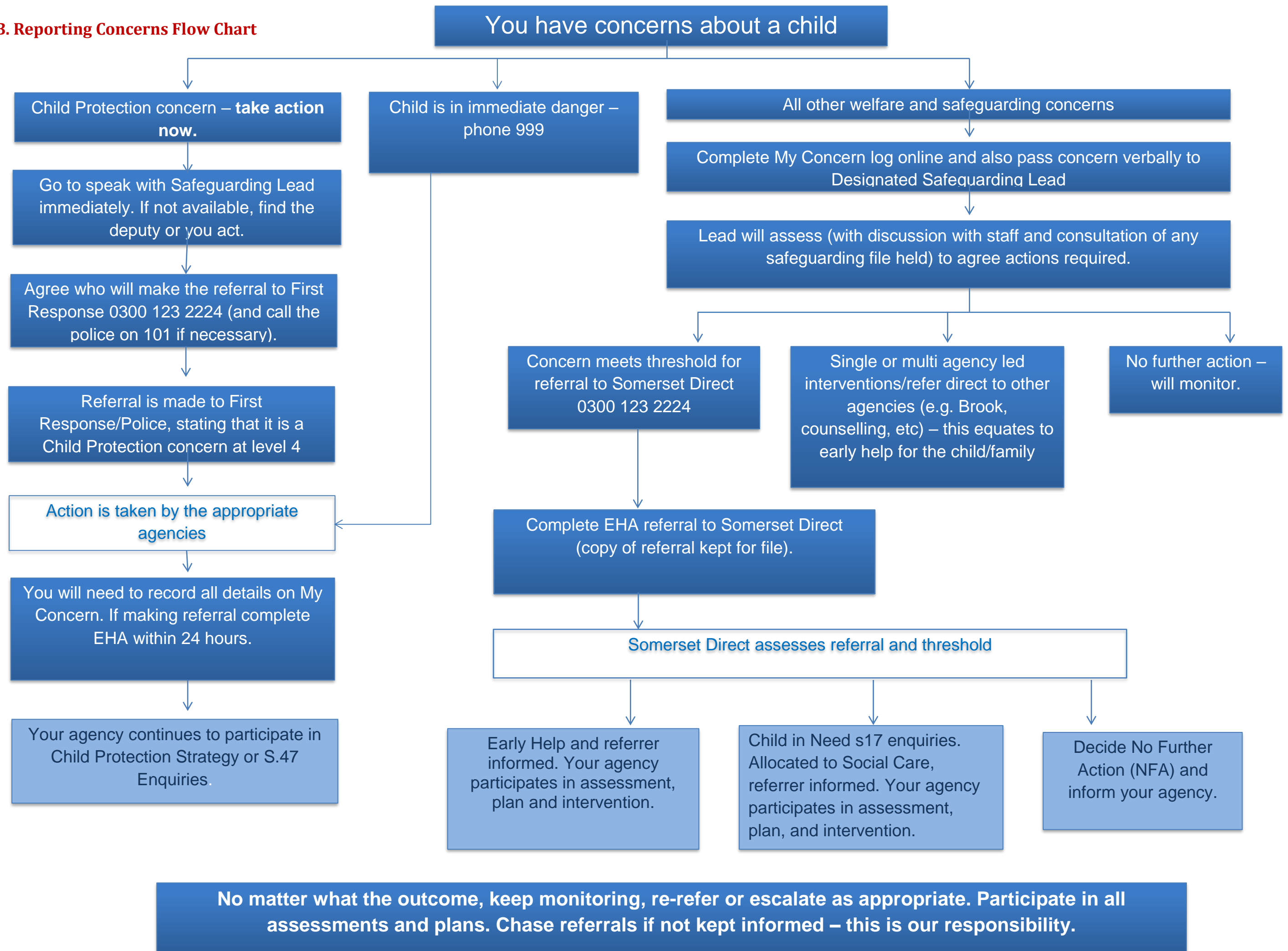
My Concern – at a glance



AFTER YOU HAVE SUBMITTED ANY CONCERN, YOU MUST ALSO PASS IT ON VERBALLY TO A DSL/DDSL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

If you're not sure about anything, ask a DSL/DDSL for support recording your concern.

B. Reporting Concerns Flow Chart





A> Multi-Agency Contacts for Safeguarding in Education.

If you have concerns about a child/young person in Somerset

If a child is at immediate risk call the POLICE	POLICE 999	
To make an URGENT referral, i.e., a child is likely to suffer or is suffering significant harm, call Somerset Direct.	Somerset Direct 0300 123 2224	
To make a NON-URGENT referral, complete an Early Help Assessment and send to	SDinputters@somerset.gov.uk	
To raise concerns and ask for advice about radicalisation (also contact Somerset Direct).	PREVENT DUTY - 01278 647466 PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk	
To liaise with the specialist Safeguarding Police unit	Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit – Avon and Somerset police 01278 649228	
DSL Consultation Line 0300 123 3078	Early Help Hub 01823 3555803	Critical Incident Support EPS SSE 01823 357000

If you have concerns about a professional working with a child...

To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to the conduct of someone who works with children	Local Authority Designated Officer - (LADO) Anthony Goble 0300 123 2224
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For information, advice, and guidance in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures.

Education Safeguarding Service ESS@somerset.gov.uk		
Service Manager Toby Jenkins	Team Manager East Jane Weatherill	Team Manager West Jane Weatherill
Child sexual exploitation & child criminal exploitation	Operation Topaz (Avon and Somerset Police) https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul	

Child Missing from Education	Somerset County Council
Children affected by Forced Marriage	Forced Marriage Unit T: (0) 20 7008 0151 E: fmu@fco.gov.uk
Online Safety Advice	Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline T: 0344 381 4772 E: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
Reporting online sexual abuse and grooming	Child Exploitation and Online Protection command https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/
FGM advice	NSPCC FGM Helpline T: 0800 028 3550 E: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
Domestic Abuse Helpline	0800 6949999
Young Carers – advice and support.	0300 123 2224 YoungCarersmailbox@somerset.gov.uk
Whistleblowing professional policy	NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline T: 0800 028 0285 E: help@nspcc.org.uk
Primary Mental Health Specialists (advice) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Cyp@somerset.org	
Advice around harmful sexualised behaviour.	DSL consultation line 0300 123 3078
	Brook Traffic Light Tool https://legacy.brook.org.uk/brook_tools/traffic/index.html?syn_partner=

Appendix C - Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

When a child tells me about abuse they have suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell them you are pleased that they are speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure them that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information. Use 'Tell Me, Explain to me, Describe to me' (TED) questioning.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that they have a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what they have told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

- The 5 'R's are helpful in understanding what professional's duties are in relation to responding to an incident.

Recognise – Respond – Reassure – Refer - Record

Appendix D - Types of Abuse and Neglect

The Department for Education's Tackle Child Abuse campaign has accessible videos to watch <https://tacklechildabuse.campaign.gov.uk/>

Abuse and neglect are defined as the maltreatment of a child or young person whereby someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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. For children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect, these include:

- ❖ assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- ❖ being more prone to peer group isolation than other children.
- ❖ the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- ❖ communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges, schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND (KCSIE, 2022).

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

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.

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 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.

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 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 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Appendix E Specific Actions to take on Topical Safeguarding Issues

General or national guidance will not be included here. A summary of specific duties are in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 Annex B](#) and Access to local guidance can be found in [Appendix A](#) of this document.

In recognition that the threshold of child protection is 'likely to suffer' significant harm, St John's C of E VA First School may need to make a referral to children's social care. Where possible, this will involve notifying the parent/carer if it does not place the learner at further risk of harm. In all other circumstances information will be shared in line with section [2.2 Information Sharing](#).

It is also important to recognise the importance of liaising with other education settings who may have siblings attending. It is likely that they may hold additional information which will support early identification of harm and in turn develop your assessment of need.

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

St John's C of E VA First School will ensure that early help intervention is provided as soon as a concern of exploitation is identified. Discussion and advice will be sought from targeted services to consider what support may be available. The learner and their families will be part of any planning and interventions.

- ❖ If the learner is at risk of CSE or there is intelligence which indicates that the learner or peer group are at risk of CSE, St John's C of E VA First School will share information with Operation Topaz (the police). This information will support proactive activity to disrupt criminal activity in relation to sexual exploitation.
- ❖ If the learner is at risk of CCE information should be shared with Somerset's Violence Reduction Unit - The VRU can advise and support settings to manage risk. Targeted support maybe available to disrupt learners from getting involved with criminality.
- ❖ Agencies will share 'Missing persons' notifications (which a learner is reported missing from home or care) with education settings with a view to support them to take proactive action and reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive

educational outcomes. These should be stored securely on the learner's Safeguarding/Child Protection file.

Domestic Abuse

Operation Encompass is a national operation where local police forces notify when the police are called to an incident to domestic abuse. Avon and Somerset have their own version of this and will notify education settings through the Education Safeguarding Service whenever they have responded to a domestic abuse incident. This will enable the education setting to take proactive action and reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes. When a setting is concerned about the amount of police notifications they receive or disclosures of domestic abuse they should consider seeking further advice and completing an Early Help Assessment or DASH to support the family.

Female Genital Mutilation

Mandatory reporting duty: [Click here for government guidance](#)

This is a legal duty for all professionals undertaking teaching work to report known cases of FGM to the police via 101. This is when they:

1. are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
2. observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on

These cases must be referred to the DSL who will support them to carry out their duty. It is also advised any referrals made to the police under the mandatory reporting duty is followed up with children's social care, so an assessment of need and support is concurrently considered.

Online Safety

- **Paragraph 132 and 139 of Keeping Children Safe in Education highlights additional actions schools should take to keep learners safe online.**
- For concerns around individual cases where a child has been harmed through online mediums, advice and guidance can be made through the **Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline**, T: 0344 381 4772, E: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
- Where there have been established cases of online abuse or grooming, the school settings should alert - **Child Exploitation and Online Protection command (CEOPS)**
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

Mental Health – [linked to section within main body of this policy](#)

Child on Child Abuse - [linked to section within main body of this policy.](#)

Serious Youth Violence

To be read in conjunction with the above section around Child Criminal Exploitation. There has been local guidance issued on the issue of [‘Offensive Weapons in Education Settings’](#).

It is important to note that should a weapon be used or there is threat of use, the police should be called immediately.

- The same day a weapon is found the school should call for a multi-disciplinary assessment of risk.
- Whilst it is acknowledged that the decision to exclude remains with the Headteacher/principal it is recommended that consultation with other agencies to ensure there is no further risks
- Alternatives to exclusions should be considered first in recognition that by doing so a learner it may be at further risk of harm out in the community.
- Police must be notified

Preventing Radicalisation - The Prevent Duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.¹¹⁰ This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare).

The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes:

- risk assessment,
- working in partnership,
- staff training, and
- IT policies.

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child:

- under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled)
- by someone other than a parent or close relative (*Close family relative is defined as a ‘grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt’ and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)
- with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Cases of private fostering arrangements must be reported to children's social care to ensure that needs are adequately made.

Statutory guidance states that this should be done at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start or as soon as you are made aware of the arrangements. Not to do so is a criminal offence.

Further support and reasonable adjustments should be made by the education setting to promote achievement of positive educational outcomes.

Young Carers

A young carer is a person under 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell or who misuses substances.

Appendix F – COVID-19 Addendum in the Event of a Lock-Down

Context

Due to the global pandemic, in March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the St John's Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during in the event of further lock-downs in the following areas:

1. ***Vulnerable children***
2. ***Attendance monitoring***
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1. Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

St John's will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be the Headteacher: Mrs Jo Greathead (<16.04.2023) Mrs Teresa Gilbert (>17.04.2023)

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and St John's will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, St John's or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

St John's will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

2. Attendance Monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

St John's and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – St John's will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. St John's will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, St John's will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, St John's will notify their social worker.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

- ❖ St John's school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and 3 Deputy DSLs.
- ❖ The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Nicole Simenton
- ❖ The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Llewellyn, Mrs Scruby and Mrs Jo Greathead. From 17th April 2023, Mrs Jo Greathead will be succeeded by Mrs Teresa Gilbert.

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or virtually - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection records and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required

liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all St John's staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

4. Reporting a Concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the School Safeguarding Policy, this includes all staff reporting via MyConcern and speaking to a DSL.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access MyConcern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern verbally to the headteacher and follow this up in writing. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mrs Claire Levene-Plumb

5. Safeguarding Training and Induction

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter St John's, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- ❖ the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- ❖ there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- ❖ there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement within the FLP, schools should seek assurance from the FLP Headteachers or HR Managers that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training. Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

6. Safer Recruitment / Volunteers and Movement of Staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, St John's will continue to follow the relevant

safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2022).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. Where St John's are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

St John's will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

7. Online Safety in Schools and Colleges

St John's will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

8. Children and Online Safety Away from School and College

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct. St John's will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things we consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- ❖ No 1:1s, groups only
- ❖ Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- ❖ Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- ❖ The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- ❖ Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- ❖ Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- ❖ Staff must only use platforms provided by agreed by St John's SLT and Governors to communicate with pupils – these are Zoom and TEAMS.
- ❖ Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

9. Supporting Children not in School

St John's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of all contact / communication will be maintained and reviewed on a daily / weekly basis, depending on the vulnerability of the family. Where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate. The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

St John's and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

St John's recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at St John's need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

10. Supporting Children in School

St John's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. St John's will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

St John's will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

St John's will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on in their Safeguarding File.

Where St John's has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – the Headteacher will discuss them immediately with the board of governors.

11. Peer on Peer Abuse

St John's recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy. The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions must be recorded on Cause for Concern forms and appropriate referrals made.