

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy – The Heath School



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1 Introduction

1.1 Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact details
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Paula Talbot Ursula Burgon	ptalbot@heathschool.org.uk uburgon@heathschool.org.uk
Senior Mental Health Lead	Helen Newcombe	Newcombeh@heathschool.org.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Andrew Chisnall	LADO@halton.gov.uk
Chair of Governors	Amanda Kennedy	amandalovellkennedy@gmail.com
Safeguarding Governor	Geoff Nuzum	geoffnuzum@gmail.com
Trust Safeguarding Strategic Lead (Director of Quality and Standards)	Paula Jones	pjones@theheathfamily.org.uk
LA Children Missing from Education (CME) Officer	Barbara Harrison	Barbara.harrison@halton.gov.uk
LA Attendance Lead	Debbie Houghton	debbie.houghton@halton.gov.uk

1.2 Policy statement

- 1.2.1 Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The Heath Family Trust is committed to safeguarding children and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. This policy sets out how The Heath School will deliver these responsibilities.
- 1.2.2 As per KCSIE, the term children includes everyone under the age of 18.
- 1.2.3 This policy must be read in conjunction with the statutory guidance documents 'Keeping children safe in education,' 'Working together to safeguard children', a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 1.2.4 Furthermore, we will follow the procedures set out by the Halton Safeguarding Children Partnership
- 1.2.5 This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, supply staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

1.3 Our principles

- 1.3.1 We enact our Trust values when working to safeguard and protect children, working with kindness, integrity and tenacity to support our children and families.
- 1.3.2 We believe that our school should provide a child-centred, caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the emotional, social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.3.3 We provide an environment within our school that will help children feel safe and respected.

- 1.3.4 We recognise the importance of enabling children to talk openly about anything that worries them and to feel confident that they will be listened to, kept safe and never be made to feel that they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- 1.3.5 We recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected and may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- 1.3.6 We recognise that children with additional needs or vulnerabilities including disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers may require additional support to enable them to tell someone they are being abused.
- 1.3.7 We ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 1.3.8 We will work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.
- 1.3.9 Safeguarding arrangements in our school are underpinned by two key principles:
 - safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all staff, governors and volunteers should play their full part in keeping children safe, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here.'
 - a child-centered and coordinated approach: a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

1.4 Legislation and statutory guidance

- 1.4.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), the [Maintained Schools Governance Guide](#) and [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 3).
- 1.4.2 This policy is also based on the following legislation:
 - Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
 - [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
 - Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
 - [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
 - [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
 - Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.

- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination.
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

1.5 Who is responsible for this policy?

- 1.5.1 This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, supply staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.
- 1.5.2 Through implementation of this policy, we will ensure that our school provides a safe environment for children to learn and develop.
- 1.5.3 The leadership of the school will promote a whole school approach to safeguarding which means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

1.6 Legal duty

- 1.6.1 This policy outlines the legal duties required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in school.
- 1.6.2 All school and college staff should read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Statutory guidance sets out what schools **must** do to comply with the law.
- 1.6.3 In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years or any child on roll at this school.
- 1.6.4 This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and the Governance Handbook. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our local safeguarding partners.
- 1.6.5 Governing bodies and proprietors have a strategic leadership responsibility for their school or college's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to this guidance, ensuring policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

1.7 Definitions

- 1.7.1 **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:
 - Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge. protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
 - preventing 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 outcomes.
- 1.7.2 **Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.
- 1.7.3 **Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.
- 1.7.4 **Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.
- 1.7.5 **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes** (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.
- 1.7.6 **1Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

1.7.7 The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA.
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

1.7.8 **Victim** is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and perpetrator(s) are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

1.8 Equality Statement

1.8.1 Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

1.8.2 We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language (EAL)
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions.
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

2 Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Expectations and legal duty

- 2.1.1 All staff, volunteers and governors working in the school are responsible for the operation of this policy and have a legal duty to report any disclosure, allegation, or suspicion of abuse, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, their Deputy. This must be done immediately following the disclosure or suspicion is made or arises.

2.2 The Trust Strategic Lead for Safeguarding (Director of Quality and Standards) will ensure that:

- 2.2.1 The Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is annually updated, consulted on, and shared.
- 2.2.2 Working closely with Principals, DSLs and Heads of School, there is a focus on compliance in terms of the Safeguarding Backbone.
- 2.2.1 Where schools need additional support to secure compliance, the Trust lead will work closely with schools to provide, support, training, guidance and follow up monitoring.
- 2.2.2 Safeguarding data and other evidence that gives an indication of safeguarding risks is regularly reviewed, and leaders are held to account through termly review meetings, ensuring clear plans for improvement are in place where required.
- 2.2.3 Safeguarding networks are delivered to facilitate sharing best practice and delivery of training.
- 2.2.4 The effectiveness of safeguarding within schools is reviewed, through a collaborative Trust review process, and supporting improvements as needed.
- 2.2.5 Advice and guidance is provided for leaders when dealing with complex safeguarding cases.

2.3 The Governing Body will ensure that:

- 2.3.1 The school has a Designated Governor responsible for safeguarding.
- 2.3.2 The policies, procedures and training for all staff, governors and volunteers are effective and comply with the law at all times, both at induction and throughout the duration of their time as a member of the school.
- 2.3.3 An appropriate senior member of staff is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be a member of the Senior Leadership team and the role will be explicit within their job description. This person will have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They will be given the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- 2.3.4 There is a designated member of staff who will ensure the academic progress, emotional wellbeing and safety of children who are looked after or have previously been looked after by the local authority.

- 2.3.5 The school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with DfE and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available on the school website.
- 2.3.6 The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance.
- 2.3.7 Safeguarding procedures consider local guidance including Halton's Levels of Need Framework.
- 2.3.8 All staff, volunteers and governors are aware of child on child abuse, have been trained in recognising the signs and indicators, and know that even if no incidents have been reported, it does not mean it is not happening in our school and that it can happen both inside and outside school and online;
- 2.3.9 Safeguarding responses are in place in cases where children go missing from education;
- 2.3.10 The school has a written Code of Staff Conduct in place;
- 2.3.11 The school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children and school Governors, e.g. DBS, Childcare disqualification etc;
- 2.3.12 That there is an accurate, up to date Single Central Record in place that is regularly checked/reviewed;
- 2.3.13 There is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training;
- 2.3.14 Staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety training which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, and applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring;
- 2.3.15 All Governors undertake appropriate governor safeguarding and CP training at induction (including online, filtering & monitoring) and this training should be regularly updated. The training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place at school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding; they remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding safeguarding child protection arrangements;
- 2.3.16 A governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal.
- 2.3.17 There are procedures in place to manage allegations against teachers, principals, volunteers, governors and other staff, including supply staff, that may meet the harm threshold;
- 2.3.18 There are procedures in place to manage low level concerns and allegations relating to adults in school, which do not meet the harm threshold;
- 2.3.19 Where services or activities are provided on or off the school premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and liaises with the school on these matters where appropriate;
- 2.3.20 The school's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are available on the school's website or by other means;
- 2.3.21 They review their policies and procedures annually and provide information to the LA about them and about how the above duties have been discharged:
- 2.3.22 Consideration is given as to how children may be taught about safeguarding;

- 2.3.23 Children are safe online by ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place (see online safety policy);
- 2.3.24 They have knowledge in relation to online safety;
- 2.3.25 Are aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.3.26 They have appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard children, staff and systems and which meet government guidelines.

2.4 The Principal will ensure that:

- 2.4.1 Any information about a child will be disclosed on a need to know basis only, to other members of staff. Guidance about sharing information can be found in the document "Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services 2018";
- 2.4.2 The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body or Trust are fully implemented and followed by all staff;
- 2.4.3 Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities effectively;
- 2.4.4 All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies;
- 2.4.5 They act as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff (including supply staff) or volunteer, where appropriate.
- 2.4.6 They make decisions regarding low-level concerns and may collaborate with the DSL.
- 2.4.7 The Single Central Record (SCR) is up to date and the safer recruitment practices set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 are followed.
- 2.4.8 The work of the school is compliant with the Trust Safeguarding backbone. Where there is work to do, the Headteacher will prioritise access to training, support and frequent monitoring to quickly move to compliance.
- 2.4.9 That priority is given to ensure frequent safeguarding training sessions / briefing sessions and that sufficient time is allocated for delivery.
- 2.4.10 All staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes clear guidance on their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities, including online safety, and procedures to follow if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- 2.4.11 The school site is safe and secure, and reviewing this regularly with the site team.
- 2.4.12 They promote a positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly, and inclusive environment.
- 2.4.13 They establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils and implementing a consistent, fair, and respectful approach to managing behaviour, in order to provide a safe and secure environment for children and adults.

- 2.4.14 There is a culture of high staff professionalism, ensuring staff understand the code of conduct and the culture allows staff to recognise and report low level concerns / allegations should they arise.
- 2.4.15 There are rigorous approaches in place to identify, manage and mitigate risk.
- 2.4.16 They forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers, the community as well as fellow professionals across other public services to provide high quality support for children.
- 2.4.17 Any trips and visits / guest speakers are added to the Evolve system, risk assessments in place as required and that these are known and signed off at the most senior level of Principal / Head of School.
- 2.4.18 At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training which is renewed every two years.
- 2.4.19 Government guidance is followed to secure children's safety, including implementing measures as described in the 'Protective security and preparedness in schools' guidance.
- 2.4.20 The school has in place a robust filtering and monitoring system, which is reviewed annually.

2.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- 2.5.1 Be fully familiar with the role of the DSL as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024's Annex C and adhere to this role;
- 2.5.2 take the **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and filtering and monitoring). This is explicit in their job description. The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and therefore leaders commit to ensuring that they are given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively;
- 2.5.3 Carry out all areas of their role effectively as outlined below.

Managing referrals

- 2.5.4 Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies, Children's Social Care, Police;
- 2.5.5 Recognise the need for early identification when children need early help and support;
- 2.5.6 Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and support staff who make referrals to Channel.
- 2.5.7 Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk / harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- 2.5.8 Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed.
- 2.5.9 Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and concerns. Ensure that these records are stored in locked cabinets / CPOMS and not accessible to staff and students;

Working with others

- 2.5.10 Act as a source of support, advice, and expertise for all staff;
- 2.5.11 Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.

- 2.5.12 Liaise with the Principal to inform him of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult.
- 2.5.13 As required, liaise with the “case manager” and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- 2.5.14 Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically.
- 2.5.15 Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- 2.5.16 Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- 2.5.17 Work with the Principal and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
- ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
 - supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children’s educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file.

- 2.5.18 Ensure that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.
- 2.5.19 Ensure that records include:
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
 - a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- 2.5.20 Ensure that safeguarding files are only accessed by those who need to see them and where the file or content within is shared, ensure this happens in line with information sharing guidance.

- 2.5.21 Ensure that where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. In addition to this, any other supporting information should be shared to support safeguarding in the new school or college.

Raising Awareness

- 2.5.22 Ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff.
- 2.5.23 Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies and the trust regarding this.
- 2.5.24 Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this.
- 2.5.25 Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements;
- 2.5.26 Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.
- 2.5.27 Ensure that safeguarding messages are displayed in reception/visitor areas and that appropriate checks are made on entry to the school;
- 2.5.28 Ensure that visitors are aware of who the DSLs and deputies are and how to share concerns should they arise;
- 2.5.29 Provide the Governing Body with an up to date analysis of safeguarding related issues and numbers of vulnerable students to enable them to scrutinize, challenge and support school as necessary;

Training, knowledge, and skills

- 2.5.30 Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years including Prevent awareness training.
- 2.5.31 Through training, develop a strong understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care.
- 2.5.32 Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- 2.5.33 Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

- 2.5.34 Understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 2.5.35 Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.
- 2.5.36 Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.
- 2.5.37 Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- 2.5.38 Understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation, those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.
- 2.5.39 Understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school.
- 2.5.40 Recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online.
- 2.5.41 Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- 2.5.42 Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them. In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

- 2.5.43 Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:
 - ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
 - support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- 2.5.44 Ensure that all staff have regular safeguarding training, including online safety, filtering and monitoring (At least every 3 years).

- 2.5.45 Ensure that all staff have regular safeguarding updates, as required, including an annual KSCIE update.
- 2.5.46 Ensure that all staff have completed PREVENT training with regular refreshers.
- 2.5.47 Ensure that all staff are made aware of their responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and the responsibility to identify children who are, or are likely to, suffer significant harm and take appropriate action.
- 2.5.48 Ensure that all staff receive training in managing and responding effectively to incidents of child on child abuse, ensuring there is a clear acknowledgement and awareness by all stakeholders that it is happening, but may not be being reported.

Understanding the views of children

- 2.5.49 Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and,
- 2.5.50 Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.
- 2.5.51 Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- 2.5.52 Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- 2.5.53 Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.

2.6 The Leadership Team will:

- 2.6.1 Fully support the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure statutory safeguarding guidance is adhered to;
- 2.6.2 Deal with any safeguarding issues in the absence of designated safeguarding staff;
- 2.6.3 Pay full regard to Safeguarding and Child Protection when developing policy and protocols within their given role;
- 2.6.4 Pay full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024' when developing policy and protocols within their given role;
- 2.6.5 Ensure that safeguarding is embedded within the curriculum.

2.7 All Staff and volunteers will:

- 2.7.1 Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually
- 2.7.2 Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- 2.7.3 Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- 2.7.4 Demonstrate an understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- 2.7.5 Fully comply with the school's policies and procedures;
- 2.7.6 Report any safeguarding concerns, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.
- 2.7.7 Ensure that concerns relating to a child remain confidential and are only shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL;
- 2.7.8 Provide a safe environment in which children can learn and will have a belief that "it could happen here";
- 2.7.9 Understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Principal matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. This includes information about themselves. Staff will ensure that they are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable;
- 2.7.10 Understand that failure to follow any of the procedures set out within this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken by the school;
- 2.7.11 Report any concerns regarding adult conduct to the Principal or other nominated person (See Managing allegations and low level concerns policy).
- 2.7.12 All staff will be aware of:
 - Our systems that support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, and the online safety policy which includes the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
 - The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
 - The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
 - What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals

- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children.

3 Responding to concerns about children

3.1 Reporting concerns

- 3.1.1 Clear procedures on the reporting of any concerns are given to all staff/volunteers in the school. This is done as part of the staff induction training and staff are given a reminder of this annually in refresher training.
- 3.1.2 All children will be reminded regularly through assemblies, tutor time and PSHE, how to report any concerns they might have about themselves or other pupils. This can be done directly with a trusted adult in school.
- 3.1.3 Regular student voice will be held to ensure all pupils feel they have a trusted adult in school.
- 3.1.4 Staff should ensure that all concerns should be reported in writing, using the school's safeguarding concern process, CPOMS. Concerns should always be completed as soon as possible, on the same day. Staff should never wait until the next day to complete a safeguarding concern report. **Concerns about a member of staff should be reported immediately.**
- 3.1.5 All child protection and/or safeguarding concerns should be reported to Helen Newcombe (Designated Safeguarding Lead). **See Appendix 2 for a flow diagram which explains how all disclosures are dealt with at the school.**
- 3.1.6 The school takes its responsibility to safeguard children seriously. **Failure to follow these reporting procedures may result in disciplinary action.**

3.2 Responding to a child's disclosure of abuse

- 3.2.1 At The Heath School we have a clear procedure for reporting concerns. If a child talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will let the child know that they have a duty to pass the information on to the safeguarding team (DSL) in order to offer the proper support that the child requires. Staff members will allow the child to speak freely and will not ask investigative questions.
- 3.2.2 Staff will be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and /or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and or sexual orientation or language barriers.
- 3.2.3 The staff member will tell the child what will happen next. It is the duty of the member of staff to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of what has been discussed. The staff member will write up details of their conversation with the child as soon as possible and certainly on the same day, on CPOMS. If CPOMS is temporarily unavailable the school 'back up' paper procedures should be followed.
- 3.2.4 Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only. Issues or concerns will not be discussed with colleagues, friends or family unless necessary for the welfare of the child.

3.3 Suspecting that a child is at risk of harm

- 3.3.1 There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a child may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (child on child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

- 3.3.2 Staff should use CPOMS to record these early concerns. Following an initial conversation with the child, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Helen Newcombe.
- 3.3.3 Staff will be aware of the harm caused by child-on-child abuse including sexual violence or harassment and recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.
- 3.3.4 Staff will use the school's Anti-Bullying Policy where necessary, which can be found on our website. However, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.
- 3.3.5 The school acknowledges that some children can be particularly vulnerable or may have an increased risk of abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children that may have increased vulnerabilities, such as children with SEND or children who are LGBTQ+.

3.4 Taking action

- 3.4.1 If at any time it is considered that a child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral should be made to iCART 0151 9078305 (9:00-5:00pm Monday to Thursday 9:00-4:30pm Friday), Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team [0345 0500148], or call 999 if you are concerned a child needs immediate protection.
- 3.4.2 If the child has an injury that requires medical attention, the child protection process will not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance.
- 3.4.3 The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. NPCC- 'When to call the police' should help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

3.5 Notifying Parents

- 3.5.1 We will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Helen Newcombe, or a member of the safeguarding team, will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.
- 3.5.2 However, if we believe that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child, exacerbate the problem or compromise the safety of a staff member, advice will first be sought from Children's Social Care.

3.6 Early Help

- 3.6.1 Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduce the chance of a problem getting worse.
- 3.6.2 All staff are expected to be familiar with the Early Help process and their role within this.
- 3.6.3 Staff should be aware that these children are more likely to require early help. The list below, is not exhaustive, but highlights some of those more vulnerable groups.
- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)
 - Children Missing From Education or Children who are frequently absent.
 - Children who have experienced multiple suspensions or are at risk of being excluded from school.
 - Children in Alternative Provision
 - Children at risk of exploitation or radicalisation.
 - Children with a parent / carer in custody or affected by parental offending.
 - Children opting for or receiving Elective Home Education (EHE)
 - Children requiring mental health support.
 - Looked after children and previously looked after children.
 - Children who are privately fostered.
 - Children at risk of FGM or forced marriage.
 - Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues
 - Children who are LGBTQ+
- 3.6.4 At The Heath School, we also liaise with a wide variety of outside agencies, many of which are able to see children weekly.
- 3.6.5 Examples of the wider agencies we liaise with include; multi-agency team/s, careers services, school nurse, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHs), Educational Welfare Officer/s (EWO's), our local Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's), the Police and other services [including MHST 01925 664120 MHST Office].
- 3.6.6 We encourage families, children, and parents to work with these partner agencies also. The provision of early help services should form part of a continuum of help and support to respond to the different levels of need of individual children and families.
- 3.6.7 Staff and volunteers working within the school should be alert to the potential need for early help for children. Staff and volunteers should be alert to children with additional vulnerabilities who may benefit from Early Help.

3.7 Referral to Children's Social Care

- 3.7.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputies, Paula Talbot or Ursula Burgon will make a referral to Children's Social Care if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.
- 3.7.2 Contacts at Halton] are icart 0151 907 8305; Emergency Duty Team – Children's Social Care 0345 050 0148; or Andrew Chisnall LADO@halton.gov.uk
- 3.7.3 The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

3.8 Reporting directly to child protection agencies

3.8.1 Staff will follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

3.8.2 However, they may also share information directly with Children's Social Care, police, or the NSPCC if:

- The situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead Helen Newcombe, their deputies Paula Talbot or Ursula Burgon, the Vice Principal/Principal are all unavailable.
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

3.9 Escalation

- 3.9.1 If any member of staff is unhappy with the response they have received in relation to a safeguarding concern they have raised, it is their responsibility to ensure they escalate their concern.
- 3.9.2 Where professional disagreement occurs and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy are unhappy with the actions or decisions of another agency, they will escalate their concern in line with Halton's Safeguarding Partnership's formal escalation policy to ensure a timely resolution.

3.10 Reporting children in private fostering

- 3.10.1 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, person with parental responsibility or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.
- 3.10.2 Comprehensive guidance on private fostering can be found here in the DfEs publication 'Children's Act 1989 Guidance on Private Fostering'.
- 3.10.3 Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.
- 3.10.4 We have a duty to notify to the local authority where we are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although academies have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.
- 3.10.5 We have a mandatory duty to notify the local authority if we are involved directly or indirectly in arranging for a child to be fostered privately. Notifications must contain the information specified in Schedule 1 of The Children (private Arrangements for Fostering Regulations 2005 and must be made in writing
- 3.10.6 School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead or deputy when they become aware of private fostering arrangements.

3.11 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- 3.11.1 Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- 3.11.2 Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
- 3.11.3 The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- 3.11.4 If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- 3.11.5 Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

3.11.6 If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children

3.11.7 The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

3.11.8 Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment – for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

4 Understanding and responding to different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation

4.1 Child abuse and types of abuse

- 4.1.1 Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
- 4.1.2 All staff must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and ensure any concern, no matter how small is reported. It could be the vital missing piece of the jigsaw that indicates a child is at risk of harm.
- 4.1.3 All staff will receive ongoing training regarding types of abuse including local and national context.
- 4.1.4 The DSL and/or deputy will respond to all concerns, following local authority procedures and where there is an immediate risk of serious harm to a child will inform the police.
- 4.1.5 There are four types of child abuse as defined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.'
- physical abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - neglect
- 4.1.6 All staff must know what these are and be alert to the signs.
- 4.1.7 All staff must know and understand about specific forms of abuse / safeguarding issues outlined in Annex B of KCSIE:
- Child abduction and community safety incidents
 - Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation
 - County Lines
 - Children and the Court System
 - Children Missing from Education
 - Children with family members in prison
 - Cybercrime
 - Domestic abuse
 - Homelessness
 - Mental Health
 - Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
 - Preventing Radicalisation
 - The Prevent Duty
 - Channel
 - Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools
 - Serious Violence
 - So called 'honour' based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

4.2 Radicalisation

- 4.2.1 Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is a key part of our safeguarding approach.

- 4.2.2 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism "the Prevent duty".
- 4.2.3 Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern. It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and refer all cases to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) who may need to make a Prevent referral.
- 4.2.4 All staff are expected to undergo Prevent Training at induction, and training for existing staff should be renewed every two years.
- 4.2.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about their responsibility within the Prevent Duty, as well as tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

4.3 Child on Child Abuse

- 4.3.1 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children at any age and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online.
- 4.3.2 All staff must know the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, know how to identify it, and respond to reports of it. This includes sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- 4.3.3 All staff must be aware that even if there are no reports it does not mean child on child abuse is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- 4.3.4 Staff must be vigilant and if they have any concerns they should speak to the DSL or deputy.
- 4.3.5 All staff must challenge inappropriate behaviours between children including, but not limited to:
 - Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudiced based and discriminatory bullying, inappropriate touching).
 - 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 which may also include an online element.
 - Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).

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

4.4 Creating a supportive environment and minimising the risk of child on child abuse

- 4.4.1 We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents. To achieve this, we will:
- 4.4.2 Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- 4.4.3 Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys.
- 4.4.4 Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- 4.4.5 Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems.
- 4.4.6 Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.
- 4.4.7 Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners.
- 4.4.8 Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed.
- 4.4.9 Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
- 4.4.10 Ensure staff are trained to understand:
- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
 - That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
 - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example, Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to; A friend may make a report; A member of staff may overhear a conversation: A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
 - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation

- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
 - The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
 - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
 - That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side
- 4.4.11 The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.
- 4.4.12 Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:
- 4.4.13 Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this.
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

4.5 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes / sexting

Staff responsibilities if responding to an incident

- 4.5.1 Any staff member made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), must report it to the DSL immediately.
- 4.5.2 Staff members must **not**:
- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if the imagery has been by accident, this must be reported to the DSL)
 - Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
 - Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
 - Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
 - Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved
- 4.5.3 Staff members should explain that they need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

- 4.5.4 Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:
- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s).
 - If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care.

- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed).
- What further information is required to decide on the best response.
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown).
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services.
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual.
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved).

4.5.5 The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN).
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

4.5.6 If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

4.5.7 If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate)

4.5.8 If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

4.5.9 The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

4.5.10 If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialing 101 or 999 in case of an emergency.

Recording incidents

4.5.11 All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

4.5.12 Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education, Learn for Life programme, PSHE and assemblies. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

4.5.13 Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

4.5.14 This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils via PSHE and assemblies as appropriate so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

4.6 Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

4.6.1 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen anywhere, Staff should be aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely that it will be perpetrated by boys.

4.6.2 All staff should be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns.

4.6.3 We recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment exists on a continuum, may overlap, and can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

4.6.4 We also recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable. All staff and volunteers will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here.'

4.6.5 We will ensure that all children are taught, in an age-appropriate way, about sex and relationships and understand that the law is in place to protect children rather than criminalise them.

4.7 Responding to reports of child on child abuse

- 4.7.1 Allegations may be made against children by other children in the academy, which are of a safeguarding nature.
- 4.7.2 Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, physical abuse, emotional abuse.
- 4.7.3 We will support and reassure the victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will ensure that victims are never given the impression that they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- 4.7.4 Abuse that occurs online or outside of the academy will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously.
- 4.7.5 The academy recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to disclosure because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation and that procedures will ensure that all children are able to report easily.
- 4.7.6 The academy has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual assault or harassment. It is never acceptable, will not be tolerated and will never be passed off as 'banter' 'just having a laugh' 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys.'
- 4.7.7 Where there has been a report of sexual violence the DSL or deputy will make an immediate written risk and needs assessment which will be kept under review and will work to engage with children's social care and specialist services as required.
- 4.7.8 Action will be taken immediately to protect the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), and other children in the academy. The academy will not wait for the outcome or even the start of any police investigation before taking action to protect the children involved.
- 4.7.9 Any relevant action under the academy behaviour policy will be considered.
- 4.7.10 Where there has been a report of sexual harassment the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.7.11 The risk and needs assessment will consider:
 - The victim, especially their protection and support.
 - Whether there may have been other victims.
 - The alleged perpetrator(s).
 - All the other children (and, if appropriate adults and staff) at the academy, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s) or from future harms.

4.8 Action following a report of sexual violence / sexual assault / sexual harassment

- 4.8.1 The DSL will follow the guidance as set out on page 116 of KCSIE for 'responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.'
- 4.8.2 When a report has been received the DSL or deputy will liaise with the parents unless this would put the victim at greater risk.
- 4.8.3 If a child is at risk of harm, in immediate danger or has been harmed then a referral should be made to the local authority children's social care.

- 4.8.4 Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police.
- 4.8.5 Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children involved or impacted.
- 4.8.6 The DSL will work through the stages depending on the severity of the abuse:
- Manage the report internally.
 - Provide support through the local Early Help process.
 - Make a referral to Children's Social Care
 - Report to the police.
- 4.8.7 All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded on CPOMS.
- 4.8.8 The academy will ensure that if a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence the risk assessment will be updated to ensure relevant protections are in place and needs are being met.
- 4.8.9 If a report is assessed as being unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been by someone else and that this is a cry for help. In such circumstances the DSL may make a referral to children's social care. An Early Help process may be initiated.
- 4.8.10 If a report is deliberately invented or malicious, the academy will consider what disciplinary action is appropriate as outlined in the behaviour policy.

4.9 Ongoing response – safeguarding and supporting the victim

- 4.9.1 The following principles will help shape and decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim:
- The needs and wishes of the victim will be paramount.
 - Consideration of the age and development stage of the victim, nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse.
 - The victim will never be made to feel they are the problem or made to feel ashamed.
 - Proportionality of response. Support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis.
 - A holistic approach with an awareness of health needs associated with sexual assault including physical, mental and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy.

4.10 Notifying parents / carers

- 4.10.1 Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.
- 4.10.2 If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

- 4.10.3 In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.
- 4.10.4 The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):
- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
 - Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

4.11 The Safeguarding Curriculum

- 4.11.1 In order to ensure that children are able to themselves recognise the signs of neglect, abuse and exploitation and know how to keep themselves safe, and make safe choices in the future, the governing body will ensure that the school has a robust safeguarding curriculum which is regularly reviewed.
- 4.11.2 The Heath commits to ensuring that our safeguarding curriculum is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 4.11.3 We will ensure that we cover relevant topics within Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education; in teaching these subjects we commit to adhering to the government's statutory guidance.
- 4.11.4 Schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.
- 4.11.5 Our Trust values of Kindness Integrity and Tenacity are upheld within our curriculum, underpinned by our pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based PSHE / RSHE delivered through assemblies / regularly timetabled lessons / and our Learn for Life programme and reinforced throughout the whole wider curriculum. This curriculum offer is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and disabilities and other vulnerabilities).
- 4.11.6 Issues of online safety are also covered through assemblies / regularly timetabled lessons / and our Learn for Life programme so that children can make safe choices.

4.11.7 Our PSHE programme will tackle, at an age-appropriate stage, issues such as:

- ✓ healthy and respectful relationships
- ✓ boundaries and consent
- ✓ stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- ✓ body confidence and self-esteem
- ✓ how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- ✓ the concepts of and laws relating to - sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called 'honour'-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support, and
- ✓ what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

5 Children who are more at risk of harm

5.1 Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues.

5.1.1 We recognise that pupils with SEND, or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

5.1.2 We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils in order to safeguard them. This includes Pastoral Support Leads who are non-teaching members of staff; non teaching Assistant Progress Co-Ordinator (Yr 11); LSA support in form time as appropriate.

5.1.3 Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO.

5.2 Pupils with a social worker

5.2.1 Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

5.2.2 The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

5.2.3 Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

5.3 Looked after and previously looked after children

- 5.3.1 We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:
- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
 - The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- 5.3.2 We have appointed a designated teacher, Helen Newcombe, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.
- 5.3.3 The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.
- 5.3.4 As part of their role, the designated teacher will:
- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
 - Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

5.4 Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

The section of KCSIE 2024 on gender questioning children remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

- 5.4.1 We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on gender or sexuality.
- 5.4.2 We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL, DDSLs, student welfare team, pastoral lead for the student year or school counsellor.
- 5.4.3 When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.
- 5.4.4 When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- 5.4.5 We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

- 5.4.6 Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

5.5 Pupils who have mental health issues

- 5.5.1 All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 5.5.2 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 5.5.3 Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. We will ensure that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- 5.5.4 We will ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- 5.5.5 We seek to embed positive mental health and mental health awareness through our academy to create a culture where children can self-identify, signpost peers and seek support themselves. We undertake staff training and promote mental health awareness through our PHSE schemes, Learn for Life Programme, Mental Health First Aid Champions, school counsellors, weekly mental health drop ins for KS3 & KS4 and the school has enrolled in 'THRIVE – whole school mental health approach September 24'.
- 5.5.6 If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the referral mechanisms listed within this policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

5.6 Pupils who are frequently absent from school

- 5.6.1 Lack of, or erratic attendance, persistent or severe absence is a safeguarding issue and must act as a warning sign to a range of concerns including neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual and child criminal exploitation particularly county lines. It may also be an indication of child-on-child abuse including bullying and sexual harassment or significant mental ill health concerns. It must not be seen as an isolated concern.
- 5.6.2 Absence from education may increase known safeguarding risks.
- 5.6.3 We have a separate attendance policy (which includes protocols for children missing education and elective home education) in place which references both Working together to improve school attendance and Children Missing Education
- 5.6.4 We have a named senior leader with strategic responsibility for attendance, Richard Dance.

- 5.6.5 Academy attendance operational leads, in addition to the general safeguarding training that all staff receive are given access to role specific safeguarding training and ensure they understand the safeguarding implications behind poor or non-attendance.
- 5.6.6 Academy leaders and governors ensure that attendance data, particularly for identified vulnerable groups is closely and regularly monitored identifying trends or patterns which may indicate safeguarding concerns.
- 5.6.7 Where appropriate, social workers will be involved, informed and updated about attendance issues.

6 Online safety and the use of mobile technology

6.1 Online safety aims

6.1.1 We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

6.1.2 To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

6.2 Online safety categories of risk

6.2.1 Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

6.2.2 To achieve our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum considering areas such as the safe use of social media, the internet and technology; Keeping personal information private; How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online; and how to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.

- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras.
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Provide regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively.
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.

6.3 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- 6.3.1 Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.
- 6.3.2 The Heath School recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.
- 6.3.3 The Heath School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our anti-bullying/behaviour policy.
- 6.3.4 Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

7 Working in Partnership

7.1 Partnership with Parents / carers

- 7.1.1 The Trust shares a purpose with parents/carers to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. Parents can report concerns to an appropriate member of school staff or directly to a member of the safeguarding team.
- 7.1.2 We are committed to working positively, open and honestly with parents/carers. We ensure that all parents/carers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- 7.1.3 We respect parents/carers' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so to protect a child.
- 7.1.4 We will share with parents/carers any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place the child at risk of harm.
- 7.1.5 As a school we follow Halton Safeguarding Partnership's procedures when dealing with any matters of a child protection nature.
- 7.1.6 We will endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents/carers about their child/ren. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when we will discuss concerns with Social Care and/or the Police without parental knowledge (in accordance with Safeguarding Partnership's Child Protection Procedures). We will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents/carers.
- 7.1.7 We will seek ways to communicate with parents and carers to make them aware of the risks children face online, and how they can safeguard their children online at home.

7.2 Partnerships with Others

- 7.2.1 Our school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies who are partners in the Local Children and young People Safeguarding Partnership. The three safeguarding partners are the Local Authority, A clinical commissioning group and the police. They have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There is a joint responsibility for all agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children.
- 7.2.2 No single professional 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.
- 7.2.3 Although multi agency working and information sharing are vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, it is clear they are especially important to identify and prevent child sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- 7.2.4 We recognise that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies. These include the Local Authority, Social Care, Barnardo's, Police, Health, Childline, NSPCC, Surestart etc.
- 7.2.5 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.

- 7.2.6 At The Heath School we have a safeguarding inbox which is monitored by members of the safeguarding team, this enables secure effective information sharing with Police, Health and Children's Care so that timely safeguarding and holistic support can be provided for the child/children whom we have concerns about. The email address is: Safeguarding@heathschool.org.uk

7.3 The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership

- 7.3.1 The Heath School works closely within the Halton Local Authority Safeguarding Partnership, which is made up of the borough council, the police and the NHS. All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements in the local area.
- 7.3.2 The Heath School will commit to the relevant staff attending LA safeguarding networks and working closely with the LA to better improve safeguarding for children within Halton.
- 7.3.3 The Heath School will commit to information sharing as appropriate, working closely with the partnership to ensure that children's needs are met and emerging issues are responded to.

8 Ensuring our staff meet our safeguarding expectations

8.1 Safer Recruitment and Selection

8.1.1 The school pays full regard to current DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2024). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by children as a safe and trustworthy adult including e.g. volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks and any further checks as appropriate to gain all the relevant information to enable checks on suitability to work with children, including an online search for shortlisted candidates.

8.1.2 In line with statutory guidance, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

- a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure with barred list information is obtained for **all** new appointments to our school's workforce through staffing, personnel and payroll. This includes volunteers, school Governors and Trust Members.
- all new teaching appointments to our school workforce will be subject to an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching
- school will verify professional qualifications, as appropriate
- school will verify right to work in the UK
- school is committed to keep an up-to-date single central record - REGISTER detailing a range of checks carried out on our staff, volunteers, school Governors and Members of the Trust
- School will take all steps to ensure that staff working in specified early years or later years are not disqualified under the childcare act 2006.
- all new appointments to our school workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate
- our school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy
- identity checks must be carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the LA, where appropriate
- school will check that candidates taking up a management position at our school are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state. This 128 check will also extend to all governors and the trust trustees.
- school will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete
- school will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.
- evidence of staff member's identity (including a birth certificate where possible), required qualifications and the right to work in the UK will be kept in individual personnel files, along with appropriate evidence of all relevant checks being completed.

- we will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.
- 8.1.3 As a minimum, Key Governors, the Principal, Heads of School, SCR Admins, Admin recruitment staff and other relevant members of SLT have undertaken Safer Recruitment training.
- 8.1.4 One of the named people will be involved in all staff and volunteer appointments and arrangements (including, where appropriate, contracted services).

8.2 Staff training including induction

- 8.2.1 **The Principal** will complete level 3 advanced training at least once every three years. They will undertake other appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection effectively, which is kept up to date by good quality refresher training at 3 yearly intervals, which is deemed to be good practice.
- 8.2.2 The school's **Designated Safeguarding Lead and nominated deputies** undertake the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding and Child Protection training commensurate with their level of responsibility and complete refresher training at 2 yearly intervals.
- 8.2.3 **All other school staff, including non-teaching staff**, will undertake other appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection effectively, which is kept up to date by good quality refresher training at 3 yearly intervals, which is deemed to be good practice.
- 8.2.4 **New staff including all Early Career Teachers** receive full Safeguarding and Child Protection training as a part of their induction. This will include:
- Child protection, student behaviour and Staff Code of Conduct policies and protocols
 - Safeguarding responses to children who are or may be suffering harm including children who go missing from education
 - Role and Identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any nominated deputies
 - Local Authority safeguarding procedures
- 8.2.5 Trainee teachers receive basic Safeguarding and Child Protection training as part of their induction. This will include:
- Child protection, student behaviour and Staff code of Conduct policies
 - Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
 - Role and Identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any nominated deputies
- 8.2.6 All Governors undertake appropriate Governor Safeguarding and Child Protection training, including online safety and filtering & monitoring, which ensures they are well placed to check policy and protocol as well as make appropriate professional challenges. Nominated Governors will undertake Local authority training for their role as Lead Governors for Safeguarding (or other appropriate training).

- 8.2.7 **Our staff induction** process will cover:
- The Safeguarding & Child Protection policy
 - The Online Safety Policy
 - The student Behaviour Policy
 - The Staff Code of Conduct
 - The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
 - The role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies)
 - Whistleblowing Policy
- 8.2.8 Copies of all these policies, a copy of part one of KCSIE and Annex B are provided to staff at induction and updates are circulated to staff.
- 8.2.9 We recognise the importance of practice oversight and multiple perspectives in safeguarding and child protection work. We will support staff by providing opportunities for reflective practice including opportunity to talk through all aspects of safeguarding work within education with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

8.3 Allegations against staff

- 8.3.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everybody's responsibility. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. The Managing allegations (incl. low-level concerns) Policy covers all employees at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, employees, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees (collectively referred to as employees in the policy). The policy also applies to supply staff and volunteers.
- 8.3.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education states that, as part of a Trust-wide approach to safeguarding, a Trust and its schools should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the Trust (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- 8.3.3 Allegations and/or concerns against any person who works with children must be taken seriously. The purpose of the Managing allegations (incl. low-level concerns) Policy is to provide guidance to follow in the event that an allegation has been made or a concern has been raised against a staff member. The policy aims to follow the guidance contained in the Department for Education's Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021 and as amended) and HM Government's guidance from Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018 and as amended).
- 8.3.4 The Managing allegations (incl. low-level concerns) Policy should be consulted when considering how to manage both allegations that may indicate that the person subject of the allegations would pose a risk of harm (in line with the harm test outlined on the Disclosure and Barring service website) if they continue to work closely with children, as well as how to act in relation to low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

- 8.3.5 Concerns/Allegations that may meet the harm threshold ('Allegation') include when a member of staff has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates the individual may pose a risk of harm to children; or
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children.
- 8.3.6 School may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, school will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.
- 8.3.7 If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.
- 8.3.8 Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.
- 8.3.9 If any allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.
- 8.3.10 If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

8.4 Low Level Concerns

- 8.4.1 The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adult's behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out above. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:
- is inconsistent with an organisation's staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
 - does not meet the allegation harm threshold above or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO – but may merit consulting with and seeking advice from the LADO.
- 8.4.2 Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
- being over friendly with children;
 - having favourites;
 - taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
 - engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
 - humiliating children.

- 8.4.3 Employees do not need to be able to determine in each case whether their concern is a low-level concern, or if it is not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO, or whether it meets the threshold of an allegation. Once employees have shared what they believe to be a low-level concern, that determination should be made by the Principal and responded in line with the policy.
- 8.4.4 Creating a culture in which all concerns about employees (including allegations that do not meet the harm threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately, is crucial. This encourages an open and transparent culture; enables the Trust and the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimises the risk of abuse; and ensures that adults working in or on behalf of the Trust are clear about professional boundaries and act within them. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school will ensure that there is an environment where employees are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer.
- 8.4.5 Such a culture/environment also ensures that the Trust's ethos, values and expected behaviour as set out in the Code of Conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. In doing so, this also helps to protect all groups within our school community, as set out in the document 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings.'
- 8.4.6 Behaviour which is not consistent with the ethos and values of the Trust or school, and which does not meet the Trust's expectations as set out within the Code of Conduct, needs to be addressed. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum – from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

8.5 Whistleblowing

- 8.5.1 The School recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 8.5.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. The Whistleblowing Policy is there to support and aid them in these circumstances.
- 8.5.3 Whistleblowing regarding the Principal should be made to the leader's line manager, David Donnelly CEO, or the Chair of the Governing Body, whose contact details are readily available to staff.
- 8.5.4 Should the situation arise where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, advice can be sought via NSPCC helpline or through OFSTED's Whistleblowing helpline.
- 8.5.5 The contact details are :

NSPCC - Telephone number - 0800 028 0285.
- Email - help@nspcc.org.uk

OFSTED - Telephone number - 0300 1233155
- Email – whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Contact Details

Halton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership

2nd Floor Rutland House
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 2GW

Telephone: 0151 511 7313

www.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk

Halton Children’s Social Care contact details are as follows:

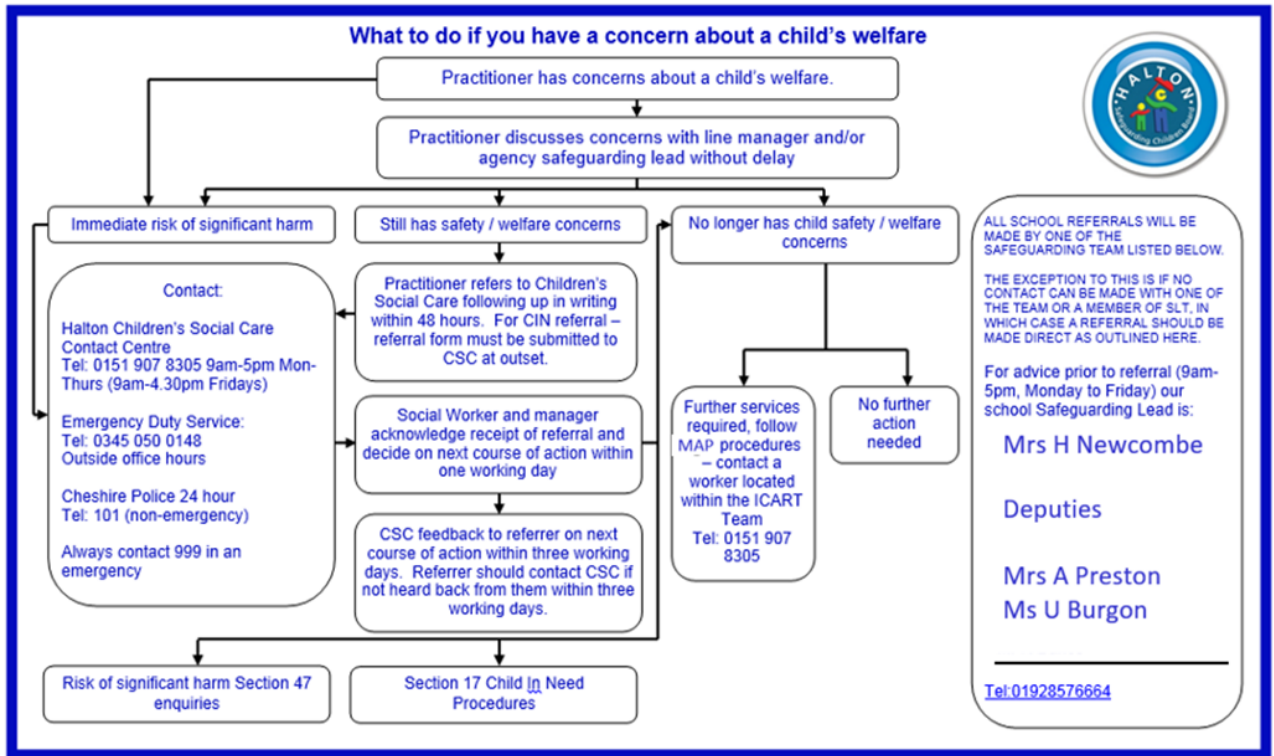
- iCART, 9am-5pm Mon-Thursday, 9am-4.30pm Friday: 0151 907 8305
- <https://hcypsp.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/>
- Out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT): 0345 050 0148

Local Authority Designated Officer: Andrew Chisnall

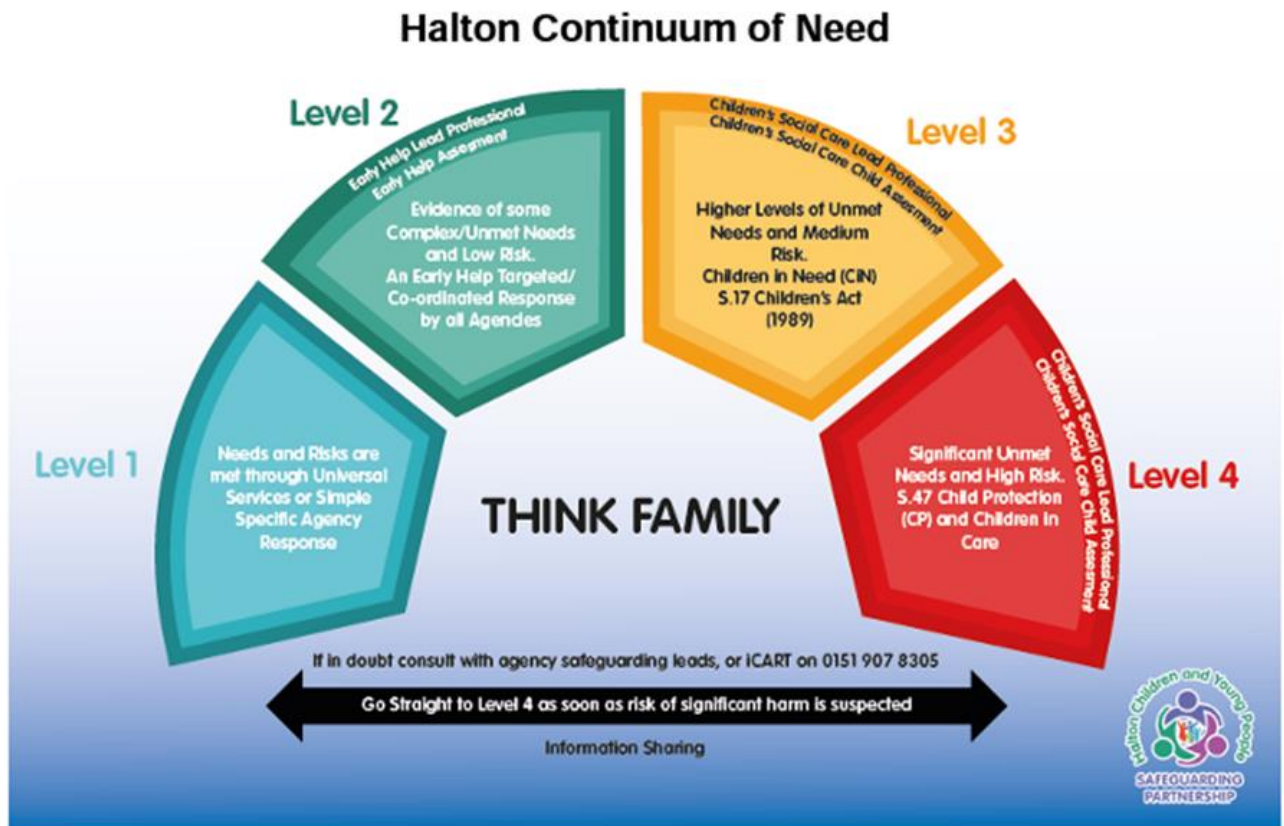
Call 0151 907 8305 and speak with the Duty LADO.

Appendix 2 – Halton Referral Flow Chart

REFERRAL FLOWCHART



Appendix 3 – Halton Continuum of Need



Appendix 4 – Professional Curiosity

