



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

### Named Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Designated Safeguarding Leads       | <b>Julie Plumley, Director Future Roots</b><br><a href="mailto:julie@futereroots.net">julie@futereroots.net</a><br><br><b>Darren Morgan, Manager</b><br><a href="mailto:Darrenmorgan@futereroots.net">Darrenmorgan@futereroots.net</a> |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | <b>Darren Rowe, Senior Learning Mentor</b><br><a href="mailto:darren@futereroots.net">darren@futereroots.net</a>                                                                                                                       |
| Nominated Safeguarding Board Member | <b>Nicki Edwards</b><br><a href="mailto:Nicki@futereroots.net">Nicki@futereroots.net</a>                                                                                                                                               |
| Chair of Board                      | <b>Graham Webb</b><br><a href="mailto:graham@futereroots.net">graham@futereroots.net</a>                                                                                                                                               |

### Personnel with designated responsibility in relation to allegations against staff

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Designated Senior Manager           | <b>Julie Plumley, Director Future Roots</b><br><a href="mailto:julie@futereroots.net">julie@futereroots.net</a><br><br><b>Darren Morgan, Manager</b><br><a href="mailto:Darrenmorgan@futereroots.net">Darrenmorgan@futereroots.net</a> |
| Deputy Designated Senior Manager    | <b>Darren Rowe, Senior Learning Mentor</b><br><a href="mailto:darren@futereroots.net">darren@futereroots.net</a>                                                                                                                       |
| Chair of Board                      | <b>Graham Webb</b><br><a href="mailto:graham@futereroots.net">graham@futereroots.net</a>                                                                                                                                               |
| Nominated Safeguarding Board Member | <b>Nicki Edwards</b><br><a href="mailto:Nicki@futereroots.net">Nicki@futereroots.net</a>                                                                                                                                               |

### Children's Social Care

Dorset's Family Support and Advice Line (Integrated Front Door): 01305 228558

Children's Social Care Out of Hours Service: 01305 228558

Safeguarding in Education Service: Laura Tulk (part time) and Annabel Mitchell (full time), 01305 221122, [safeguardingandstandardsadvisors@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingandstandardsadvisors@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

LADO: Martha Sharp (full time), Lynne Bowman (full time) and Laura Tulk (part time), 01305 221122, [lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

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### Multi-Agency Contacts for Somerset Education.

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

|                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| If a child is at immediate risk call the POLICE                                           | <b>POLICE</b> 999                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                      |
| To make an URGENT referral to Children's Social Care                                      | i.e., a child is likely to suffer or is suffering significant harm, call Somerset Direct.<br><b>Somerset Direct 0300 122 2224</b>                                                                                                                     |                                                      |
| To make a NON-URGENT referral to Children's Social Care.                                  | Complete an Early Help Assessment and send to<br><b>SD Inputters</b><br><b>SDinputters@somerset.gov.uk</b>                                                                                                                                            |                                                      |
| To raise concerns and ask for advice about radicalisation (also contact Somerset Direct). | <b>Police Prevent Team</b> - 01278 647466<br><a href="mailto:PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk">PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk</a><br><b>Local Authority Prevent Lead</b> <a href="mailto:prevent@somerset.gov.uk">prevent@somerset.gov.uk</a> |                                                      |
| To liaise with the specialist Safeguarding Police Unit                                    | <b>Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit – Avon and Somerset Police</b><br><b>01278 649228</b>                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                      |
| <b>DSL Consultation Line</b><br>0300 123 3078                                             | <b>Inclusion Advice Line</b><br>0300 123 2224                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Critical Incident Support</b><br>EPS 01823 357000 |

**If you have concerns about a professional working with a child:**

|                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to the conduct of someone who works with children. | <b>Local Authority Designated Officer - (LADO)</b><br>Anthony Goble/Stacey Davis<br><a href="#">Allegations Management - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership</a> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**For information, advice, and guidance in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures:**

**Education Safeguarding Leads** [Educationsafeguardinglead@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Educationsafeguardinglead@somerset.gov.uk)

Katherine Hollinghurst (East) [Katherine.hollinghurst@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Katherine.hollinghurst@somerset.gov.uk)

Beth Ollive (West) [Beth.ollive@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Beth.ollive@somerset.gov.uk)

**For advice and support in relation to attendance, provision and inclusion:**

**Education Engagement Service** [Educationengagementservice@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Educationengagementservice@somerset.gov.uk)

[www.somerset.gov.uk/ees/resources](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/ees/resources)

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child sexual exploitation & child criminal exploitation | <b>Operation Topaz (Avon and Somerset Police)</b><br><a href="https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul">https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul</a>                                       |
| Child Missing from Education                            | <a href="#">Notify us of a Child Missing from Education (CME) - Somerset Council</a>                                                                                                                     |
| Children affected by Forced Marriage                    | <b>Forced Marriage Unit</b><br>020 7008 0151 <a href="mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk">fmu@fco.gov.uk</a>                                                                                                          |
| Online Safety Advice                                    | <b>Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline</b><br>T: 0344 381 4772<br>E: <a href="mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk">helpline@saferinternet.org.uk</a>                                              |
| Reporting online sexual abuse and grooming              | <b>Child Exploitation and Online Protection command</b><br><a href="https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/">https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/</a>                                           |
| FGM advice                                              | <b>NSPCC FGM Helpline</b><br>0800 028 3550 <a href="mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk">fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk</a>                                                                                                |
| Domestic Abuse Helpline                                 | 0808 2000 247                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Young Carers – advice and support.                      | 0300 123 2224 <a href="mailto:YoungCarersmailbox@somerset.gov.uk">YoungCarersmailbox@somerset.gov.uk</a>                                                                                                 |
| CAMHS                                                   | <b>Single Point of Access</b> <a href="#">CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) - CAMHS (somersetft.nhs.uk)</a><br>0300 1245 012 <a href="mailto:camhsspa@somersetft.nhs.uk">camhsspa@somersetft.nhs.uk</a> |
| Whistleblowing professional policy                      | <b>NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline</b><br>0800 028 0285 <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>                                                                                            |
| Advice around harmful sexualised behaviour.             | DSL consultation line 0300 123 3078<br><b>Brook Traffic Light Tool</b><br><a href="#">Sexual Health &amp; Wellbeing - Brook – Fighting for healthy lives</a>                                             |

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# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

## 1. Terminology

### Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- 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.

### Child protection

Refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

### Staff

Refers to all those working for or on behalf of Future Roots, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

### Child

Includes everyone under the age of 18.

### Parent

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

## 2. Introduction and Purpose

This policy sets out how Future Roots is carrying out its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Safeguard children together 2023.

Future Roots fully recognises our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people. This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is one of a range of documents that set out the safeguarding responsibilities of the organisation. We wish to create a safe, welcoming and vigilant environment for children and young people where they feel valued and are respected.

Safeguarding information is published throughout the organisation and all children and young people know who they can talk to at Future Roots and how they can make an anonymous disclosure.

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

We recognise that Future Roots may provide the only stability in the lives of children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering harm.

We are aware that the behaviour of a child/young person may be impacted by their lived experiences and can range from showing angry to feeling sad and withdrawn.

We are able to play a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children and young people by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Wherever the word “staff” is used, it covers all staff on site, including volunteers and Future Roots Board members. It seeks to set out the principles and procedures we operate to protect children and young people from harm. This policy provides information regarding our safeguarding responsibilities and details how these responsibilities should be carried out.

This policy will be updated as and when required and annually as a minimum. This may require our policy to be published ‘pending the Future Roots Board ratification’.

### 3. Key Personnel



## Safeguarding



*Are you feeling worried about something, scared about something, upset, sad or being hurt?*

*If it's here, at home, or at school, please talk to us as we will always listen and always try and help you. No problem is too big or small we will always listen and help.*



**Julie Plumley**  
Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



**Darren Morgan**  
Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



**Darren Rowe**  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Julie Plumley [julie@futereroots.net](mailto:julie@futereroots.net)

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Darren Morgan [Darrenmorgan@futereroots.net](mailto:Darrenmorgan@futereroots.net)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead(s) (DDSL) Darren Rowe [darren@futereroots.net](mailto:darren@futereroots.net)

Chair of Governors: Graham Webb [graham@futereroots.net](mailto:graham@futereroots.net)

Designated Governor for Safeguarding: Nicki Edwards [nicki@futereroots.net](mailto:nicki@futereroots.net)



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### **4. Policy Principles and Aims**

This policy aims to demonstrate to staff, Future Roots Board Members, children and young people, parents, stakeholders and other partners, Future Roots' commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

The welfare of our children and young people is paramount. All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.

We recognise that all adults in our organisation have a full and active part to play in protecting our children and young people from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Future Roots is committed to developing a culture of safeguarding by providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected and which promotes their social, physical and moral development. Children and young people at Future Roots feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.

This policy is used in conjunction with staff training and continued professional development and supervision to strengthen our whole organisational approach to safeguarding.

Future Roots' ethos is to enable development and growth giving stability and direction that enhances life opportunities. Our organisation addresses language and behaviour that is likely to be detrimental to others or the individual. We offer a restorative approach to incidents of concern; and a commitment to make reasonable adjustments to encourage young people to remain in education and to feel included at Future Roots.

There is no tolerance of discriminatory language or abuse towards children or young people.

### **5. Statutory Framework, Key Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance**

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, Future Roots will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

[Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)

[Education Inspection Framework](#)

[Teachers' Standards](#)

[What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused](#)

[Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)

[Information Sharing](#)



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[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021](#)

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)

[ID checking guidelines for Standard/Enhanced DBS check applications from 22 April 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

We take seriously our responsibility to ensure that we have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which we believe that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Our procedures also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse, including low level concerns.

We will take steps to ensure that any groups or individuals who hire and/or use our building or grounds inside or outside of operational hours, follow the local child protection guidelines and are aware of their safeguarding duties and this policy.

We will ensure that all staff read and understand our:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Professional Code of Conduct Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

All staff will read:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) [Part One] and all Senior leaders will read the full document along with the Future Roots Board.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of:

- The Dorset Continuum of Need [Appendix 2 - Continuum of Need.pdf](#)
- The safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The identity of Future Roots' Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy DSL
- The additional vulnerabilities of children who are looked after/previously looked after, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and children who are young carers

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

### **6.1 The Future Roots Board**

Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda for every meeting of the full board.

The Future Roots Board understands and fulfils its responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- They liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Leads over safeguarding matters. (This is a strategic role rather than operational, they will not be involved in concerns regarding individual children or young people.)
- There is a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy that reflects the whole organisation approach to child-on-child abuse.

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

- Future Roots has a Professional Code of Conduct Policy.
- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the Professional Code of Conduct Policy, are consistent with statutory requirements. They are reviewed when needed (annually as a minimum)
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is publicly available on the Future Roots website and is also within the electronic quality assurance pack sent to all commissioners including schools that commission services from us.
- All staff and volunteers sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within Future Roots' Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and staff handbook within their induction.
- All staff sign to say they have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) part 1 and Annex B and that mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance within the first year
- All Future Roots' Board members sign to say they have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy within the first year
- Future Roots operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and ensure that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training within the last five years
- Future Roots has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Director of Future Roots), volunteers and against other children and young people that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned
- The Future Roots Board has at least one nominated member responsible for safeguarding who has undertaken appropriate training for the role. The chair of the Board is responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Director of Future Roots.
- An annual audit of Future Roots' safeguarding policies, procedures and practices is undertaken with designated safeguarding leads (DSL) and that this is reported to the Local Authority as part of the contract review meetings.
- Future Roots acknowledges and addresses relevant legislation and local guidance change, which has been agreed through the local safeguarding partnership arrangements
- There are clear lines of accountability for safeguarding within the organisations leadership
- Director of Future Roots and Manager are appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Leads and they will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection; the role is explicit in the role holder's job description.
- DSLs update their training every 2 years and their deputy(ies) undertake multi-agency (Level 3) safeguarding training which is updated every 3 years.
- .
- There is a safeguard lead on the board who receives safeguarding training.
- At least one member of the Board has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years.

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

- Safeguarding (including online safety, Conspiracies, Misinformation and Disinformation) is discussed with our children and young children routinely.
- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children and young people who are absent from Future Roots, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future
- Mobile phone use onsite, from our children and young people is not allowed. We do make provision to ensure that this doesn't happen by asking our young people to either not bring their phone, hand them into the office or put them away in their own bag. Reminders will be given where needed.
- Ensure the Senior Leadership Team and all relevant staff understand the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring (including awareness of mobile network access) and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

### 6.2 The Director

The Director will ensure that:

- The safeguarding and child protection policy and related policies and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- Sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively
- Systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback, which operate with the best interests of the child at heart
- All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing/managing allegations against staff procedures
- Children and young people are provided with opportunities throughout their time at Future Roots to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe.
- They liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours before taking any action, and then on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff or a volunteer

### 6.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSLs will;

- Hold lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Future Roots, this responsibility will not be delegated
- Acts as a source of support and expertise for the whole organisation's community in regards to our safeguarding duties
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- Regularly Undertake multi-agency safeguarding training at the appropriate level and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, but at least annually
- Undertake Prevent awareness training within the probation period

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- Refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse to Dorsets Integrated Front Door Service (Family Support and Advice Line) and/or the local authority where the child resides and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns
- Keep accurate records, either written or using appropriate online software, of all concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral
- Ensure that all such records are kept confidential, stored securely and are separate from the young person's general referral.
- Ensure that all safeguarding and child protection concerns are passed to the relevant responsible agency
- Liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance
- Have a working knowledge of the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and Dorset Children's Social Care processes and procedures
- staff members may attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings when possible, contribute to assessments and provide a report, which has been shared with the parents and child (depending on age and understanding)
- Notify Children's Social Care if a child subject to a child protection plan is absent from Future Roots without explanation ([Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#))
- ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within Future Roots' safeguarding and child protection policy, Professional Code of Conduct Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Part 1 and Annex A (or Part One,) and ensure that the policies are used appropriately
- Organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences
- Undertake, with the Board, an annual audit of Future Roots' safeguarding policies, procedures and practices and ensure that this is submitted to the Local Authority
- Have an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention and will support members of staff where Early Help is appropriate
- Recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation, conspiracies, disinformation and misinformation
- Help to promote outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers or leadership staff
- Ensure that the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are clearly advertised onsite at Future Roots and on the website.
- Make every effort to ensure that they, or a deputy, are available during all operational hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Make every effort to ensure that there are adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours or out of term activities.

This list is not exhaustive: please see Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

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## Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DDSL)

A DDSL will;

- Be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

## All Future Roots staff and volunteers

All Future Roots staff and volunteers will;

- Understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action
- Undertake safeguarding and health and safety training appropriate to their role and are familiar with the suite of safeguarding policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Professional Code of Conduct Policy
- Consider at all times what is in the best interests of the child/young person
- Know how to respond to a child or young person who discloses abuse
- Refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary, where the child is at immediate risk, to the police or the Front Door for Dorset Children's Social Care (Family Support and Advice Line) or if a child lives out of borough, to the relevant Local Authority
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn

## **7. Safe Organisation, Safe Staff**

At Future Roots, we will ensure that;

- At least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last five years
- Safer recruitment practices are adhered to, including appropriate DBS checks, reference checks and any additional checks relevant to the role undertaken. Future Roots has a Safer Recruitment Policy, which is available as a separate document
- All staff are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with staff, pupils and parents and adhere to Future Roots' Professional Code of Conduct Policy
- Our policies will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children and young people at Future Roots at any time
- Risk assessments are in place for the range of activities and farming and enrichment opportunities we offer.
- Any disciplinary proceedings against staff related to child protection matters are concluded in full in accordance with Government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership, LADO and HR policy, procedures and guidance
- Staff have the confidence, and are fully aware of how to report misconduct, including low level concerns

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- All staff receive information about Future Roots' safeguarding arrangements, safeguarding statement, Professional Code of Conduct Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the role and names of the DSLs and their deputy, and Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 and Annex A (or Part One, as determined by the organisation for non-direct staff) on induction, as well as other relevant procedures such as health and safety and online safety
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which is regularly updated. In addition, they receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and tea, meetings and in supervision) as required, but at least annually
- All members of staff are trained in and receive updates in reporting concerns
- All staff and Board members have regular safeguarding awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- The safeguarding and child protection policy is made available via Future Roots' website. They are also shared as part of our electronic quality assurance pack that is sent to all commissioners, including schools who directly commission services from us.
- Parents, carers and our young people are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy.
- All parents and carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the safeguarding and child protection policy and are able to access this on our website or in the policy folder in the main office.
- The names of the DSLs and deputy DSL are clearly advertised onsite with a statement explaining the organisations role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse
- All staff will be given access to Part 1 and Annex A (or Part One, as determined for non-direct staff) of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and will sign to say they have read and understood it, the DSL's are required to read the whole document

### 7.1 Extended Hours and Off-Site Arrangements

- If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place.
- When our young people attend off-site activities eg work experience, we will ensure that effective child protection arrangements are in place, meaning policies such as the organisations Safeguarding Policy are accessed by offsite activities.
- Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child/young person from Future Roots the commissioning body will be informed virtual school or school

### 7.2 Alternative Provision

- In accordance with KCSIE 2025, if a child or young person who is on role at a school attends Future Roots' Alternative Provision, the school will also need to continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child or young person and ensure that they are satisfied that our provision is meeting the needs of the child/young person.
- We insist that before any child or young person attends at Future Roots' that they come for an initial farm visit. We are able to risk assess the child/young person in the

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farm environment and plan appropriate for them. The referring agency, who wishes to commission a place, must also complete a Future Root's referral form. We will provide all agencies who commission services from us an electronic quality assurance pack that contains written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform in respect of their own staff. It also contains all our policies and risk assessments. Future Roots will remind the referrer of their duty to notify us of any changes or risks to the young person they have referred to us.

- We understand that good practice highlights the importance of a member of school staff visiting the setting before the placement is confirmed, to meet us, carry out visual checks and complete an Individual Placement Agreement / SLA.
- Future Roots, offers termly quality assurance visits, or half-termly if requested, to the referring agency i.e. schools. Quality assurance visits should be undertaken by a suitable member of school staff to see that child / young person to ensure the safety and suitability of the provision.
- Future Roots will report any safeguarding concerns to the referring agency.

### 7.3 Media recordings, audio, image and video (including digital files)

- The vast majority of people who take or view images or videos of children and young people do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children and young people through taking or using images. So we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place, to protect them, we will seek their consent and parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).

## **8. Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff**

Future Roots has a whole organisational approach to safeguarding and we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the organisation (including volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Despite all efforts to recruit safely, there may be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are reported to have been committed by staff and volunteers, who work at Future Roots.

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff or Volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, or may have harmed a child/ young person;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person;
- Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children/young people;

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- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or young people (this includes behaviour that may have happened outside an organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children/young people, this is known as transferable risk)

We understand that a child or young person may make an allegation against a member of staff or staff may have concerns about another staff member. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children or young people, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Director/DSL. The Director who is also the DSL on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the local authority designated officer (LADO) within 24 hours and before taking any further action.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Director of Future Roots, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the chair of the Board who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying the Director first. If the Chair of the Board is unavailable then it should be reported to the nominated Safeguarding Board member, who will also consult the LADO as above, without notifying the Director first.

Future Roots has a policy for managing allegations that takes account of the guidance detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 for managing allegations against staff.

### 8.1. Low level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child/young person 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 organisation may have acted in a way that;

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO, examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to;
- having children as friends outside of work
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone without consent
- engaging with a child behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

The culture of our organisation is such that staff are encouraged to pass on low level concerns to the Director/DSL. These concerns will be recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working in or on behalf of the school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings. If there is a low-level concern about the Director, the staff member should refer to the Chair of the Board.

### 8.2. Whistleblowing

Future Roots has a Whistleblowing Policy which is available as a separate document. We recognise that children and young people cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

Future Roots works hard to encourage a culture of mutual respect and learning. We welcome comments and feedback and provide staff, pupils and parents with a safe mechanism to raise any concerns.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.

In the first instance this should be raised with the Director/ DSL then the chair of Board. If it becomes necessary to consult outside Future Roots they should speak to the LADO for further guidance and support.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 800 5000 or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### 9. Training

All staff members and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including induction, which is regularly updated. This includes training on how to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to any concerns. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, supervision and team meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The nominated safeguarding Board member undergoes safeguarding training

The DSL attends the multi-agency local safeguarding partnership training within 12 weeks of taking up their responsibilities.

Future Roots encourages its DSL to attend the Designated Safeguarding Lead training and forums to keep abreast of child protection learning and developments, at least biannually.

### 10. Teaching and Learning

Future Roots is dedicated to ensuring that children and young people are taught about safeguarding. We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children and young people, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced approach.

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## **11. Child Protection Overview and Specific Safeguarding Concerns**

### **11.1 Recognising Abuse**

To ensure that our young people are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children or young people of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children and young people may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child/young person or children/ young people (KCSIE 2025.)

There are four categories of abuse.

#### **Physical Abuse**

- Physical abuse is a form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child/young person.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

#### **Emotional abuse**

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's/ young person's emotional development.
- It may involve conveying to a child/young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child/young person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children/young people.
- These may include interactions that are beyond a child's/young person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child/young person participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, such as in situations of domestic abuse.
- It may involve serious bullying (including online bullying), causing children/young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children/young people.

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- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child/young person, although it may occur alone.

### Sexual abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child/young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children/young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child/young person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children/young people.
- We encourage all young people to speak out either in person or to report concerns using our reporting systems.

### Neglect

- neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's/young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's/young person's health or development.
- neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child/young person from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, it may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's/young person's basic emotional needs
- Definitions taken from [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: statutory guidance.](#)
- Neglect can occur in affluent families, [Engaging Neglectful Parents from Affluent Backgrounds](#)

### 11.2 Indicators of Abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child/young person has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children/young people may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For those reasons it is vital that staff

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are also aware of the range of [behavioural indicators of abuse](#) and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns on appropriate form. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child/young person has been abused. It is very important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child/young person is at risk.

### 11.3 Impact of abuse

The sustained abuse or neglect of children/young people physically, emotionally or sexually can have long term effects on the child's/young person's health, development and wellbeing. It can impact significantly on a child's/young person's self-esteem, self-image and on their perception of self and of others. The effects can extend into adult life and lead to difficulties in forming and sustaining positive and close relationships. In some situations, it can affect parenting ability.

## 12. Key Safeguarding Areas

These topics are themes that can impact on children/young people and families, there are specific areas of safeguarding that the setting has statutory responsibilities to address (which are hyperlinked.)

### 12.1 Child-on-Child Abuse

In accordance with [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#), all staff at Future Roots are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of the organisation and online.

All staff understand that even if there are no reports at Future Roots it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they speak to their designated safeguarding leads (or a deputy).

All staff at Future Roots will challenge inappropriate behaviours between children young people that are abusive in nature.

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children/young people (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

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- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Future Roots will seek to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by taking a contextual approach to safeguarding by increasing safety in the contexts of which harm can occur – this can include the environment itself, peer groups and the neighbourhood.

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

### 12.2 Mental Health

Mental health issues affect at least 1 in 10 children and young people and includes depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, disordered eating, panic attacks, sleep problems and many other conditions and behaviours. They are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives.

Future Roots recognises that mental health issues can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation and is aware that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff are however well placed to observe children/young people day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health issue or be at risk of developing one.

Useful links: [Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), [NSPCC](#), [Mind](#) and [Kooth](#)

### 12.3 Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children/young people, as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- economic
- emotional
- controlling or coercive behaviour

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All children/young people can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs.

Future Roots recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and young people. In some cases, a child/young person may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Future Roots acknowledges that domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

[Domestic Abuse Toolkit - BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

### 12.4 Extra-Familial Harm and Contextual Safeguarding

#### **Definition:**

Extra-familial harm refers to risks to a child's welfare that occur outside the family home. Such harm may arise within the community, educational settings, peer groups, or online environments.

#### **Examples of Extra-Familial Harm:**

- Child sexual exploitation: Abuse or exploitation occurring beyond the family context.
- Child criminal exploitation: Grooming and coercion of children into criminal activities, such as drug trafficking through "county lines."
- Serious youth violence: Incidents of violence taking place in public spaces.
- Radicalization: Exposure to and influence by extremist ideologies.
- Bullying and social isolation: Harassment, exclusion, and marginalization within peer groups.
- Teenage abusive relationships: Experiences of abuse within romantic relationships formed outside the family.

#### **Key Characteristics:**

- Location: Extra-familial harm typically occurs in peer groups, schools, public spaces (e.g., parks, shopping centres), or online platforms.
- Perpetrators: Both adults and other children may be responsible for such harm.
- Contributing factors: Children experiencing instability within the home may be more vulnerable, as they are likely to spend increased time in external environments.

#### **Contextual Safeguarding:**

This approach acknowledges that many forms of harm are socially situated and occur within specific environments or peer networks. Effective safeguarding therefore requires interventions that address not only the child and their family, but also the broader social contexts in which risks emerge.

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12.5 Child Exploitation (including Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking)

All staff at Future Roots have a knowledge and understanding of the exploitation that children and young people are at risk of within the local community, county wide, nationally and online.

Staff receive appropriate training to enable them to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of exploitation and the different signs that a child or young person may be being exploited.

[Dorset Child Exploitation Toolkit - BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Criminal Exploitation and County Lines - BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Child Sexual Exploitation - BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

12.6 Homelessness

Future Roots recognises that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's/young person's welfare. The DSL will contact the social worker involved and commissioning agency if they are aware

12.7 Children with family members in prison

Future Roots recognises that children and young people who have a family member in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Future Roots will work with agencies and resources such as [NICCO](#) to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

12.8 So Called Honor based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

Staff at Future Roots, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 they must report this to the police via 101, [This is a mandatory reporting duty](#) working in our organisation to report it to the DSL who will report it

[Female Genital Mutilation - Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership \(pdscp.co.uk\)](#)

[Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

12.9 Online Safety

Future Roots does not use IT / computers as part of its provision but we will escalate any concerns where appropriate.

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Children and young people commonly use electronic equipment including mobile phones, although this is actively discouraged at Future Roots on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, TikTok, X (Formerly Twitter), MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat, Instagram and gaming platforms. Unfortunately, however, some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm children.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

**Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

**Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: 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:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, 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,

**Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your children, young people, or staff are at risk - Public Health England: has now been replaced by the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), which is part of the Department of Health and Social Care, and by the UK Health Security Agency, however branding remains unchanged. If at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)

Children and young people may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour, criminal activity, Conspiracy Theories, Misinformation and Disinformation.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and children and young people are not allowed to access those sites at Future Roots. Many children and young people own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children/young person safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

### 12.10 Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative, cares for a child/young person for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child/young person's parents. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts. It applies to children/young person under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child/young person is disabled.

Children/young people looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

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Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children/young people may be privately fostered at any age. Future Roots recognises that most privately fostered children/young people remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child/young person has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When Future Roots becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a child/young person that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, we will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care themselves in the first instance, but also alert them to our mandatory duty to inform the local authority of children/young people in such arrangements.

### [Looking after someone else's child.](#)

#### 12.11 Radicalisation and Extremism

Protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism is part of Future Roots' wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children and young people from other forms of harm and abuse.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services ('specified authorities') to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Future Roots takes seriously our responsibility to ensure that children and young people are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

When any member of staff has concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they will speak with the DSL/ Director/DSL will discuss any concerns about possible radicalisation identified with a young person's parents and carers as with any other safeguarding or child protection issue unless there is reason to believe that doing so would place the child/young person at risk. They will also support parents and carers who raise concerns about their children/ young people being vulnerable to radicalisation.

We will then follow normal safeguarding procedures, which may involve contacting the Single Point of Access for consultation and further advice. Supporting the lead agency to make appropriate referrals to the police PREVENT team and Channel programme for any pupil whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are vulnerable to being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

The Department for Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and Board members to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

### **13 Taking Action**

Any child/young person in any family in any organisation could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here'.

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Key points for staff to remember when taking action are:

- in an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child or young person, for example call 999
- report your concern to the DSL as quickly as possible – immediately when there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern and seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief
- If any member of staff is concerned about a child or young person, he or she must inform the DSL.

The DSL will decide whether the concerns should be raised to Children's Social Care. If a referral to Children's Social Care is required, the DSL will discuss the referral with the parents, unless to do so would place the child or young person at further risk of harm or a criminal offence has been committed.

Whilst it is the DSL's role to make referrals to Children's Social Care, any staff member can make a referral to Children's Social Care and / or the police if a child or young person is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (e.g. concern that a family might have plans to carry out FGM, Forced Marriage etc) and the DSL / Deputy DSL is unavailable (the DSL / Deputy DSL should be informed of the referral(s) made as soon as possible.)

### **14. What to do if staff are concerned about a child's welfare**

If staff have any concerns about a child's or young person's welfare, they must act on them immediately. Any concerns regarding indicators of abuse or neglect or signs that a child or young person may be experiencing a safeguarding issue should be recorded on a concern form, which can be found in the small filing cabinet, bottom draw in the safeguarding concern file and passed to the DSLs or Deputy DSL. For physical signs of abuse, a body map can also be used. Concerns can also be discussed in person with the DSL but the details of the concern should be recorded in writing.

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a child or young person may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The child's/young person's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.

Future Roots recognises that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child or young person is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.

In these circumstances staff will exercise professional curiosity and will try to give the child or young person the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the child/young person if they are OK or if they can help in any way. Staff should record these early concerns on a concern form. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns about the child/young person the DSL and

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put them in writing. If the child/young person does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a child/young person making a disclosure.

### **15. What to do if a pupil discloses to a member of staff**

Remember the seven Rs: Receive; Reassure; Respond; Report; Record; Remember; Review (see appendix 5 for more details).

We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child/young person to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

A child/young person who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

For some extra help: [NSPCC Responding to a child's disclosure of abuse](#)

During their conversation with the child/young person staff will:

- Listen to what the child/young person has to say and allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and not overact or act shocked or disgusted – the child/young person may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener
- Reassure the child/young person that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- Do not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the child/young person and allow them time to talk
- Take what the child/young person is disclosing seriously
- Ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions
- Avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations
- Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child/young person who is being abused
- Avoid admonishing the child/young person for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive, but may be interpreted by the child/young person to mean they have done something wrong. There are multiple reasons why children/young people delay disclosing
- Tell the child/young person what will happen next

If a child/young person talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child/young person know that they will have to pass the information on. Staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible on a concern form, in the child's/ /young person's own words. Staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should be signed and dated, the member of staff's name should be printed and it



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should also detail where the disclosure was made and who else was present. For physical signs of abuse, a body map can also be used. The record should be handed to the DSL.

### **16. Notifying Parents**

Future Roots will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child /young person with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if Future Roots believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child/young person or exacerbate the problem or if a criminal offence has been (or potentially been) committed, advice will first be sought from children's services front door service.

Where there are concerns about forced marriage, honour-based abuse or any harmful practice, parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child/young person at a significantly increased risk.

### **17. Making a referral to Children's Social Care**

Concerns about a child/young person or a disclosure should be discussed with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to the Children's Social Care (in Dorset this is the Family Support and Advice Line) is appropriate. If a referral is needed, then the DSL should make it. However, anyone, including children or young people, can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can and should consider making a referral themselves.

The child/young person (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 /young person or if a criminal offence has been (or may have been) committed.

If you have not had any feedback from Children's Social Care within 72 hours of making the referral you should follow up when possible,. If after a referral the child's/young person's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or whoever made the referral) should raise further concerns and most importantly the child/young person's situation improves. If necessary the Dorset Multi-Agency Procedure for Resolution of Professional Differences should be followed [dorset-multi-agency-resolution-and-escalation-procedure-v2-15042024.pdf](https://www.dorsetcsc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/dorset-multi-agency-resolution-and-escalation-procedure-v2-15042024.pdf)

If a child or young person is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

## **Appendices**

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## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

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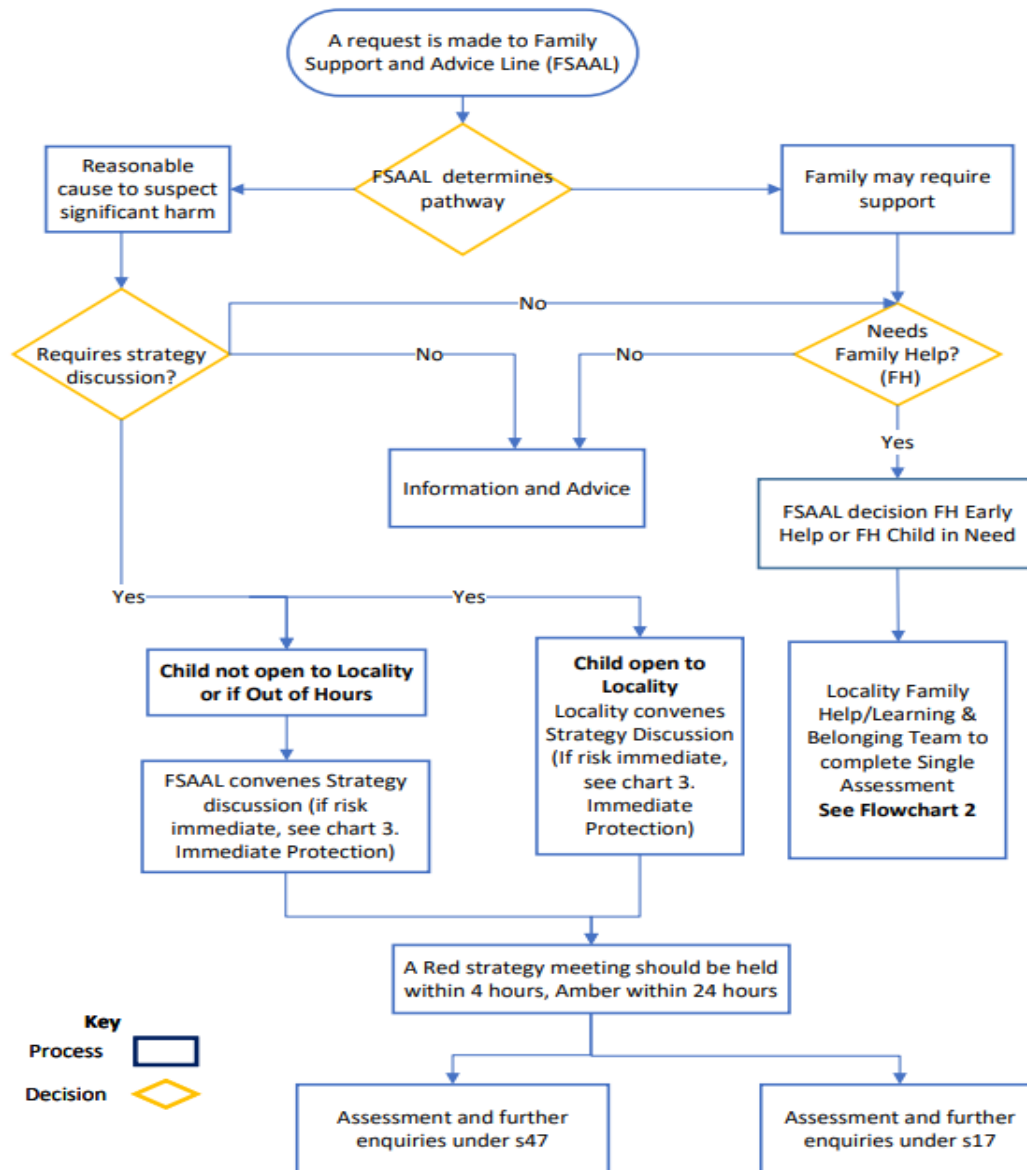
### Appendix 1.

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

## Action taken when a child/young person is referred to Dorset Children's Services



### How we do things in Dorset 1. When a request for support is made to Dorset Council



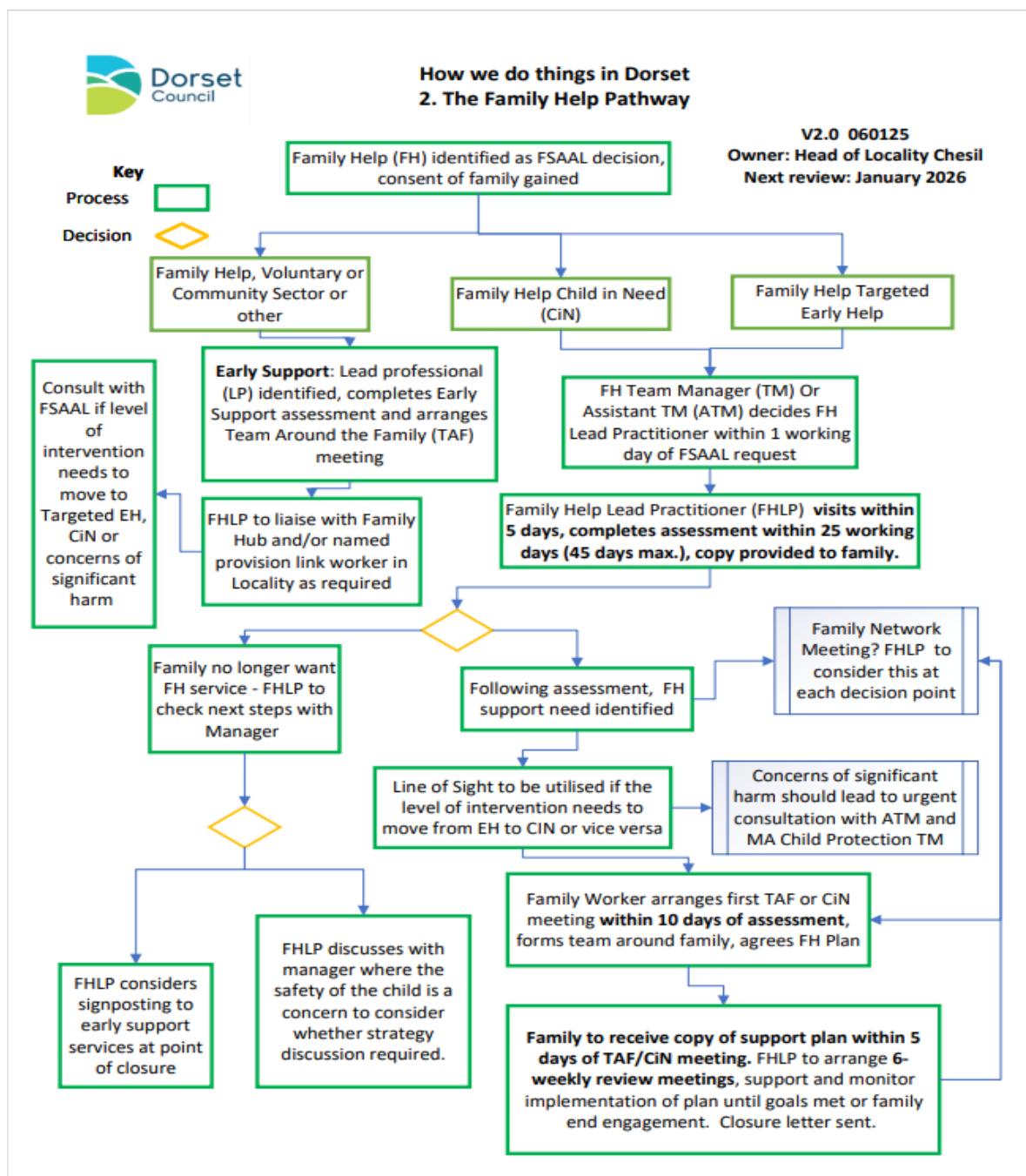
V5.0 190525

Owner: Family Support and Advice Line Manager

Next review: May 2027

## Appendix 2.

## Appendix 2. Family Help Pathway



## Appendix 3.

### The Seven R's

#### Receive

Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is said and take it seriously. Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable.

#### Reassure

Reassure the child/young person, but only as far as is honest and reliable. Do not make promises you may not be able to keep, e.g.: "I'll stay with you", or "everything will be alright now" or "I'll keep this confidential". Do reassure, e.g. you could say "I believe you", "I am glad you came to me", "I am sorry this has happened", "we are going to do something together to get help".

#### Respond

Respond to the child/young person only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details. Do not ask 'leading' questions, i.e. "did he touch your private parts?" or "did she hurt you?". Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's/young person's) in any later court proceedings.

Instead, make use of open-ended questions which offers the child/young person the opportunity to provide more information about an event in a way that is not leading, suggestive or putting them under pressure. Open questions may use: How? When? Who? Where?

Questions beginning with the phrases "tell me", "describe" or "explain" are useful:

- Tell me what happened, tell me who was there....
- Explain what you mean when you say....
- Describe the place to me....
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator (noting that some may also be vulnerable); the child/young person may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the child/young person to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the young person that it will be the designated lead for safeguarding/Director.

#### Report

Share concerns with the DSL as soon as possible. If you are unable to contact your DSL, deputy DSL, or most senior member of staff, if the child is at risk of immediate harm, you MUST contact Achieving for Children SPA service or Police.

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the DSL or children's social work, you should ask for the decision to be reconsidered, giving your reasons for this.



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

A formal referral or any urgent medical treatment must not be delayed by the unavailability of designated staff.

### Record

If possible, make some very brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible. Keep your original notes on file.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make a written record as soon as practical, recording the disclosure using the child's/young person's own words, what was said or seen and the location both of the abuse and the disclosure.

Record the date, time, place, person's present and noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child/young person. If the child/young person uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into proper words.

A record of a concern, suspicion or allegation should be made at the time of or as soon as possible after the event. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made.

Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'.

A record should be made of any visible marks, bruising or injuries to a child/young person that give cause for concern. This may be completed on a body map. The child/young person should not be examined intimately, or pictures taken of any injuries / marks.

All records must be signed and dated clearly with the name of the signatory clearly printed. Children/Young People MUST NOT be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records. All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) are passed to the DSL.

### Remember

Support the child/young person: listen, reassure, and be available. Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues.

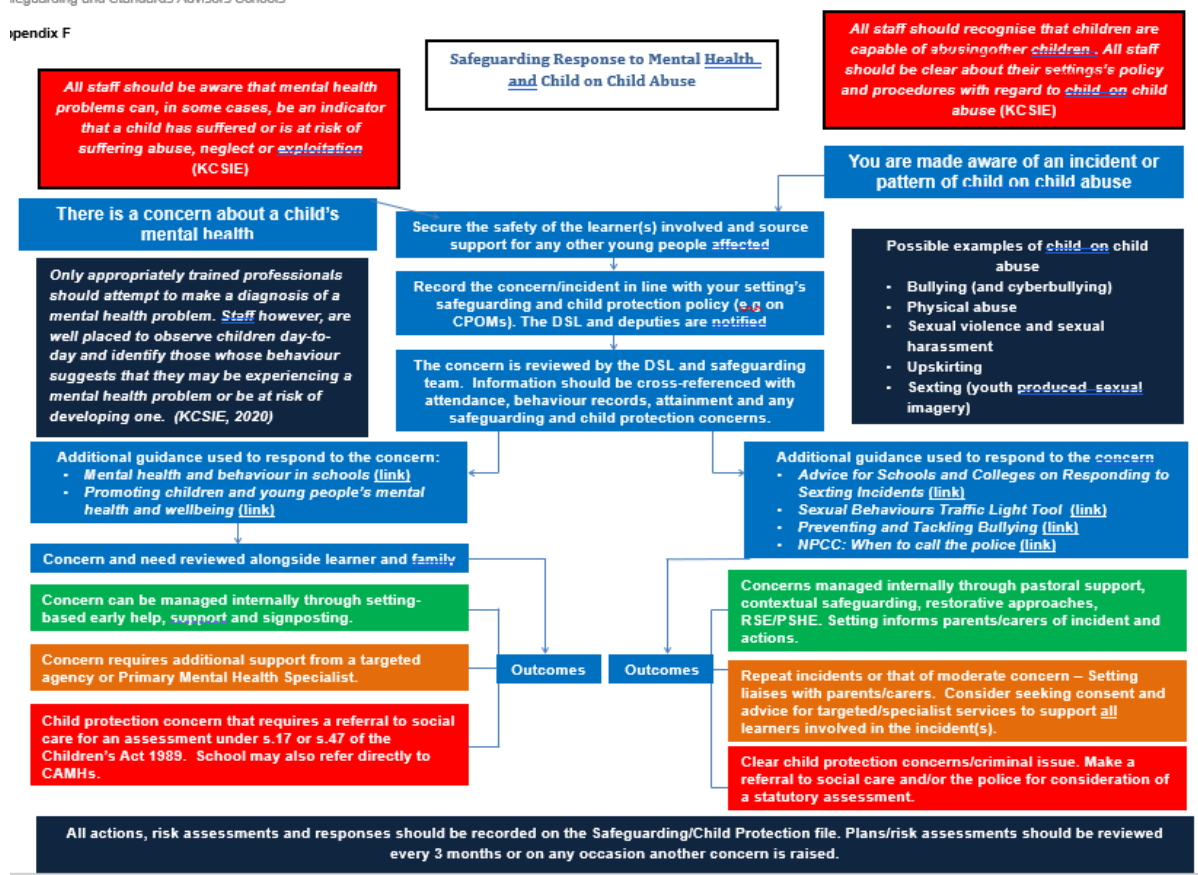
Try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

### Review

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure?
- Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

## Appendix 5

Appendix F



## Appendix 6.

### Additional Useful Links

[Dorset - BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[PDSCP Resources](#)

[Dorset Council – Worried About a Child](#)

[Continuum-of-Need-Final-07.05.2025.pdf](#)

[Allegations Against Staff](#)

### Mental Health

[Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#)

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/>

Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

Kooth: <https://www.kooth.com/>

Papyrus: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/suicide-prevention/>

### Child on Child Abuse

[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges \(DfE September 2021\)](#)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident](#)

[Home - Shore](#)

[Resources for education settings | CSA Centre](#)

### Domestic Abuse

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

### Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding

[Beyond Referrals | Contextual Safeguarding](#)

[Stop it Now](#)

[Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and Guide](#)

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)

CEOP's Thinkuknow website [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

[Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#)

[Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation | The Children's Society.](#)

### FGM / Modern Slavery / Prevent / Forced Marriage

[New Definition of Extremism](#)

[Female Genital Mutilation Statutory Guidance](#)

[Guidance Forced Marriage](#)

[Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty](#)

[Educate Against Hate: Educate against hate](#)



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

### Online Safety

[National Cyber Security Centre: National Cyber Security Centre](#)

The UK safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk))

[Plan technology for your school - GOV.UK](#)

[Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK](#)

[Artificial Intelligence - DfE Guidance](#)

### Legislation

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

### Statutory Guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

[What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused](#)

[Guidance for safer working practice 2023](#)

[Use of reasonable force](#)

[Statutory guidance for alternative provision](#)

[Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#)

[Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

[RCPCH updated guidance on fabricated or induced illness](#)

[Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

[Positive environments where children can flourish](#)

[Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills](#)

[Teachers' Standards](#)

[Information Sharing](#)

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025 - 2026

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)

### External Contact Details

Childline 0800 11 11 <https://www.childline.org.uk>

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

Foreign and Commonwealth Office 0207 008 0151 (

Kidscape Bullying Helpline 0845 1205 204

NSPCC (NSPCC website) 0800 800 5000

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: 0800 0280285 Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Professional organisations who provide guidance and practical support TES, MindEd, NSPCC

RU Safe? (Barnardo's - Child Sexual Exploitation Service) 01494 461112

Samaritans 0845 790 9090