



CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Last Review: October 2019
Committee: Learning
Date Ratified: 23 February 2020
Next Review: October 2020

Rationale

Sir William Romney's School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

The main elements to our policy:

- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or **suspected cases, of abuse by referring to the Children's Helpdesk.**
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in line with Government guidance by using at least one NCSL accredited recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures.

Other relevant policies and procedures:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safer Working Protocols.

This policy has been developed in accordance with **the principles established by the Children's Acts** 1989 and 2004; section 175 of the Education Act 2002, and in line with government publications: **'Working Together to Safeguard Children'** (2018), **'Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 - Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families'** (2000), **'What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused – Advice for practitioners'** (2015). **The guidance reflects, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'** (2019) and should also be considered alongside the guidance provided by Gloucestershire's Children's Safeguarding Board (GCSB).

This policy also links to the following policies and procedures:

Attendance, Behaviour, Curriculum, Trips and Visits, Anti-bullying, Health and Safety, Lettings, Recruitment, Conduct & Procedures guidance, Whistleblowing, Medical, E-Safety, Drugs and Alcohol, Complaints, Confidentiality, Healthy Living, Sex and Relationships, Single Equality Scheme.

Aims

The overall aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care. Our policy includes the whole school community; all staff, governors, parents and volunteers working in the school. In situations where child abuse is suspected, our paramount responsibility is to the child.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- **Promote the key principle that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Recognise the important role schools play in safeguarding children and providing early help as soon as a concern arises.
- Include opportunities in the Personal Development curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Demonstrate a commitment to staff training so that staff are aware of the procedures to be followed and know how to report abuse if it is suspected and what to do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices.

We will follow the procedures set out by GCSB and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to:

- Ensure we have a member of the Leadership Team who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead who has received appropriate training, which is refreshed every 2 years, and support for this role.
- Ensure that any cases of children missing from education are investigated immediately
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection who reports to the Full Governing Body once a year or if there is a significant issue which needs to be brought to the attention of Governors.
- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and the designated governor completes refresher training every 3 years and knows who the designated person responsible for child protection is and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters.
- Ensure that staff can be released to attend child protection case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately and ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Ensure that record keeping procedures on staff and volunteers are in place.
- Ensure that referrals are completed in writing and submitted to the Social Care Duty Officer within 24 hours of the initial phone call.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safer recruitment and selection practices are followed.
- Identity and qualifications checks should be carried out, together with an enhanced DBS with barring list information check and, for teachers, a check that the teacher is not subject to a prohibition order by using the Employer Access Online service.
- **Ensure that all staff have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.**

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Annual safeguarding audit.
- Governing Body visits to the school.
- Scrutiny of attendance, behaviour and incident logs.
- Surveys of students, staff and parents.
- Risk assessments.

For any further guidance and information, please refer to the Safeguarding Children Handbook: www.gscb.org.uk/handbook and the Supplementary Information in Appendix 3.

Safeguarding is what we do for all children (Part B); Child Protection (Part A) is what we do for children who have been harmed or are at significant risk of being harmed.

Part A - Child Protection

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- the content of the curriculum.
- the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- the school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- ensuring that, where a pupil who has a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. Any child protection concerns will also be passed on to the new school by the DSL.

Designated Safeguarding Team

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on the Senior Leadership Team is the Headteacher. He has lead responsibility and management oversight for child protection and safeguarding. He is also the Prevent Single Point of Contact for the school. In his absence all issues should be referred to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Fran Phillips. Mrs Laura Blake is also safeguarding trained and is a member of the Safeguarding team.

Students subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan will have an allocated Key Worker who will attend case monitoring meetings and will be the main point of contact in school for this child.

The Nominated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection at the school is Mr Stephen Bishop. The Nominated Governor is responsible for liaising with the DSL over all matters regarding child protection and safeguarding issues. This is a strategic role and they will not be involved in concerns about individual students.

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Manage referrals

The DSL is expected to:

- ensure that all staff know that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible (and in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) for Child Protection issues;
- refer promptly all cases of suspected child abuse to the local Social Care Department or the Police Child Protection Team. If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived then it must be remembered that we have no right to prevent the removal of the child. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the Police should be called;
- refer cases to the Channel programme when there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or has left due to having posed risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required;
- support staff who **make referrals to either the Local Authority Children's Social Care or Channel programme.**
- Liaise with Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) to ensure that there is always a member of the safeguarding team available in school at all times.

Work with others

The DSL is expected to:

- liaise with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service;
- liaise with safeguarding partners that include the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group and the police.
- Organise regular training on Child Protection within the school;

- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- pass on records and inform the key worker when a child who is on the Child Protection register leaves the school. The custodian of the register must also be informed;
- facilitate and support the development of a whole school policy on Child Protection;
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

Training

The DSL (and any deputies) should 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.

The DSL should undertake Prevent awareness training. 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, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- keep up to date with current practice by participating in training opportunities wherever possible.
- 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;
- **ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;**
- are alert to the specific needs of Children in Need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure and confidential written records of concerns and **referrals and to disseminate information about the child only on a 'need to know basis';**
- understand and support the school 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;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Raise awareness

The DSL should:

- **ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;**
- 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 the governing body regarding this;**
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this;
- **link with the local safeguarding children's board (LSCB) to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding**

Monitoring and Record Keeping

It is essential that accurate records be kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. These records should then be kept in secure, confidential files, which are separate from the **child's** school records. It is important to recognise that current regulations do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of any written information relating to Child Protection. However parents must sign the Single Consent Form prior to any referral being made. There are circumstances when such consent would not be sought. For example, if it would place the child (or a family member, yourself or third party) at increased risk of significant harm; or would prejudice prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime; or would lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult.

Indicators of issues which may indicate that a child is at risk include:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;

- has special education plans (whether or not they have a EHCP);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care of from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug or alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- is returned from home to their family from care;
- is a privately fostered child;
- poor attendance and punctuality;
- concerns about appearance and dress;
- changed or unusual behaviour;
- concerns about health and emotional well being;
- deterioration in educational progress;
- discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child;
- concerns about home conditions or situations;
- concerns about pupil on pupil abuse (including serious bullying).

When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made, as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. Use of previous records (if available) may prove to be particularly useful in this respect.

Reports may be needed for Child Protection Case conferences or the criminal/civil courts. Consequently records and reports should be:

- factual (no opinions)
- non-judgemental (no assumptions)
- clear
- accurate
- relevant

The designated person is responsible for collating all appropriate information on individual children, including a confidential record of all pupils who have a Child Protection Plan and making sure that records are passed on when a child transfers school/setting in any circumstances. Since May 2000, when a child transfers schools/settings, the Headteacher must send to the new school/setting (maintained or independent):

- The completed statutory transfer form.
- All educational records relating to the child, including copies of the pupil reports and any information regarding child protection concerns.

If the school/setting is unclear where a pupil is moving, the Headteacher should follow the Missing Children Protocol (via the School Welfare Service) and should upload records onto the National database as advised. Equally the school should also check the Missing Children database for pupils arriving with no records from previous schools/settings or where the previous school/setting is not known. The designated person should monitor attendance patterns and refer to the School Welfare Officer for the school where appropriate, collate the appropriate information for reports to be presented at Child Protection Conferences, maintain records and manage the education contribution to the Child Protection Plan recommended at the Child Protection Conference.

He should also maintain up to date written records of visits from other agencies.

Following recommendation from several Serious Case Reviews undertaken by the Safeguarding Board, all records should be typed (where possible), dated and signed and should follow in a clear chronological order. Care should be taken when storing records in both paper and electronic form. Child Protection records will contain personal data and their use must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. This gives responsibilities to keep information accurate, relevant and secure and to ensure that there is a justification for holding the information.

Procedure where abuse is suspected/alleged

Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere and staff should be alert to any concerns being raised in the school. **Any member of staff who by virtue of a child's behaviour or appearance becomes suspicious of abuse, or is told that abuse has taken place, should immediately inform the designated person. All staff may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care Services. In the event of doing so the school's DSL should be informed.**

Under no circumstances should it be assumed that someone else is taking action and sharing information that might safeguard a child. The DSL or DDSL should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns.

If a child begins to talk about an abusive incident, s/he should be allowed to speak, and be listened to carefully. Time should be taken to gain an understanding of what the child is trying to say. No promise of confidentiality should be made.

The designated person (or trained member of staff) should accurately and legibly record the concern **and the child's comments in writing, using the child's words wherever possible.**

The designated person should contact the Local Authority Children's Helpdesk Tel: 01452 426565

Procedures for investigating allegations of child abuse against a professional

Anyone hearing an allegation by any pupil of inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff which might be construed as child abuse, or who receives a similar complaint from a parent or guardian, or otherwise becoming aware of any incident that might suggest possible abuse of a child or children by a member of staff, must report the matter immediately to the Headteacher, the designated person or Chair of Governors.

A contemporaneous log of events and telephone calls must be maintained from this initial report onwards.

In all cases the designated person or nominated governor must immediately brief the Headteacher, who must in turn contact the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO). Where necessary, a Strategy Meeting will be urgently convened to plan any further appropriate action.

If the complaint has been made against the Headteacher, responsibility for following the Allegations Management procedures will fall to Deputy Safeguarding Lead who should contact the Governor with Child Protection responsibilities or the Chair of Governors who in turn should immediately contact the LADO on 01452 426994.

Care should be taken to ensure that other staff and governors are only informed if necessary as it is important to ensure enough governors are able to participate in a disciplinary process should this be required.

Making a child protection referral

Any suspicions of abuse should be discussed with the DSL who, where appropriate, will pass on the information to the Local Authority. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of the referral. However, the welfare of the child is paramount, and the referral will only be discussed where the child is not placed at risk of harm. Where the DSL decides not to make a referral, an offer of Early Help should be put in place to support the child. Other agencies may be contacted as part of an integrated support plan.

Involving parents and carers

In general, child protection concerns will be raised with parents/carers before approaching other agencies, and signed consent will be sought to make a referral to another agency. There may be occasions when the school will not inform parents/carers before making a referral if by contacting them this may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

Confidentiality

Child protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels that their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and/or family. Communication between staff on Child Protection issues should be undertaken in a confidential manner.

Training and updates on Child Protection

All teaching and non-teaching staff at Sir William Romney's School (including visiting student teachers) receive training in awareness and recognition of child abuse, together with reporting and recording procedures on their appointment to the school, and regular (at least annual) updates are offered to the whole staff. The designated safeguarding lead will also check with the Senior Professional Tutor for PGCE that the school has had confirmation that DBS checks have been completed by the relevant university for training teachers; and ensured that this information is recorded in the centrally held Single Register. The designated safeguarding lead will be happy to provide additional training sessions for individuals or groups of staff as required. Any staff required to attend case conferences, strategy meetings or core group meetings will be given adequate preparation and subsequent debriefing and support. Staff (including exam invigilation staff) will be expected to confirm that they have read and understand the latest guidance on safeguarding in schools.

Guidelines for staff

We should remember that research shows that children rarely make up stories - if you have reason to suspect that a child has been abused, or if a child discloses abuse to you, you should listen and ask only the minimum of necessary questions. It is the role of all of us to clarify issues but it is the role of the police and social care to investigate.

We must take care not to ask leading questions which are not relevant to our role and responsibility for the child. Such questions could prejudice any action the police or others might wish to take about any offence which may have been committed.

Follow these guidelines:

1. **LISTEN** carefully, (but avoid leading questions).
 - Use minimal 'TED' (Tell, Explain, Describe) questions to gain clarification if necessary
2. **REASSURE** them that they were right to tell and that you take them seriously.
3. **TELL THEM:**
 - You will need to talk with and get advice from someone else
 - Do not promise to keep the secret. It is rarely in the best interests of the child to do so.
 - Prepare them gently for the involvement of the designated safeguarding lead and outside agencies.
 - That you will try to get help for them and their family.
4. **MAKE A WRITTEN NOTE** of details as soon as possible
 - Use the child's words. This will help ensure accuracy in recalling events later.
 - Sign and date the record.

Do not delay in talking to the designated safeguarding lead about concerns. Do not end your working day without passing information on. It can be upsetting for staff when children disclose information and you can be reassured that the child will be helped if you share information straight away. Do not use email to communicate safeguarding issues. Messages may not be read immediately and this may delay getting help for the child. Early referral gives others more time to make arrangements to ensure the safety of the child.

Disclosures during a School Trip or Visit

Since the designated safeguarding lead is unlikely to be with you, you should then do the following:

1. **SHARE** your concerns with the Trip Leader or Senior Member of staff, whilst respecting as far as possible, the child's right to confidentiality.
2. **TELEPHONE** the school and inform the designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding lead of the situation as soon as you are able.
3. **MAKE A WRITTEN NOTE** of details as soon as possible. Use the child's words. This will help ensure accuracy in recalling events later. Sign and date the record.

The designated safeguarding lead / deputy designated safeguarding lead will take advice and either:

- Contact the police
- Make appropriate arrangements to receive the child upon their return to school or, if the situation is sufficiently serious:
- Travel to the camp/residential site to collect the child, possibly accompanied by a Social Worker.

Residential stays present unfamiliar environments to many children, and can often heighten emotions. It is not unknown for an abused child, who has found temporary haven on a residential stay, to exhibit alarm and distress as the time to return home to the abuser draws near. It is in the last few days of a residential that disclosures are most likely to be made. If you do find yourself in this situation remain calm and follow the procedures above.

Leaders of all school trips should remind themselves of these procedures as part of their pre-trip planning. If you will be away overnight or for longer, you should take the home telephone number of the designated safeguarding lead and other members of the SLT as emergency contacts.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Pastoral staff and the DSL are vigilant for the signs of specific safeguarding issues that are potential risks to children at **Sir William Romney's School**. Although some of these issues may be rare or not common within the cultural life of the local community, it is important that staff are aware of the **signs and symptoms and adopt the mentality that 'it could happen here'**.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including: mental health problems; difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother; and/or death.

It is illegal in the U.K. Teachers are required by law to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

Mandatory reporting of FGM* applies to regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales. It requires these professionals to make a report to the police if, in the course of their professional duties, they:

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her;
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl **under 18 and have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.**

*introduced in Section 5B of the FGM Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Staff at Sir William Romney's School receive regular training on CSE and are therefore well placed to identify children who may be at risk. Concerns about potential CSE should be handled in the same way as other safeguarding concerns. Additional consideration should be given to the questions staff ask a child following a disclosure so as not to interfere with any future potential police investigations.

Radicalisation

We have considered the context of the Prevent Agenda in response to and in line with government **guidance and forms part of the government's counter terrorism strategy which seeks to:**

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat faced from those who promote these views.

- Provide practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
- Work with a wide range of sectors where there are risks of radicalisation which need to be addressed, including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, the internet and health.

All schools are required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

We work to:

- Raise awareness.
- Provide information.
- Enable learners to make a positive contribution.
- Safeguard young people.

Students participate in a curriculum that promotes active learning and develops critical personal thinking skills.

We have considered this agenda in this school's context. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has attended the Home Office training. In this community, it is unlikely that radicalisation through religion will occur. We understand, however, that vulnerable children, no matter what their background, are susceptible to radicalisation through an exposure to social media. We know that the majority of our students use various forms of social media and access the internet, sometimes with little control on the level of access. Our responsibility is to identify these vulnerable students who may be at risk of radicalisation and refer to the designated safeguarding lead.

Prevent Duty

Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

Tutor time, assemblies and PSHE lessons are used to promote British values and teach children about the risks of radicalisation. Staff who have concerns over **a child's vulnerability to radicalisation must** share these in person with the designated safeguarding lead who will seek advice from the local Prevent officer or make a referral to the Channel programme.

Children Missing Education

At Sir William Romney's School, our **School Welfare Officer, performs a vital safeguarding role in** identifying patterns of attendance and absence that sometimes identify children that are at risk. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

When a child is missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, our School Welfare Officer will make a referral to the local authority. In doing so, we perform a crucial role in helping identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

SWR offer of Early Help

Students often require early help and intervention. Examples of **the school's offer of early help** are included in Appendix 2 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Part B – Safeguarding

Sir William Romney's has developed a code of practice that staff understand and agree to. The code of practice offers guidance to staff on the professional standards expected when working with children.

Recruitment and training of staff

- We follow all guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018.
- We ensure that at least one member of each recruitment panel has undertaken all appropriate recruitment training as required by the DfE.
- Our selection and recruitment practices include all appropriate checks on staff and suitability including Disclosure and Baring Service checks. Recruitment of volunteers are equally rigorous.
- Electronic references will be checked for their provenance and validity.
- Our Safer Recruitment Policy includes guidance on the whole recruitment process from the decision to recruit through to appointment and induction.
- We ensure the overall process and procedures for Safeguarding, including the Single Central Register (SCR) for all staff and regular volunteers are in accordance with government guidance. The SCR is maintained in accordance with current DfE and OFSTED guidance.
- References will be expected for internal applicants and received from someone with authority and not a colleague.
- The governing body and the Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safer recruitment processes, ensuring the Headteacher, other staff responsible for recruitment and one member of the governing body completes safer recruitment training.

Governors and Volunteers

Enhanced DBS checks are in place for Governors and volunteers.

Allegations against members of staff, designated safeguarding lead or Headteacher

At Sir William Romney's School we recognise that it is possible that staff and volunteers may behave in a manner that causes harm to children; the school takes any allegation made against members of staff or volunteers very seriously.

Staff are encouraged, to adopt the mentality of 'it could happen here' and are made aware of whistle blowing procedures through staff training.

Any concerns regarding any member of staff other than the Headteacher should be referred to the Headteacher. Any concerns regarding the Headteacher should be referred to the Chair of Governors. It is their role to investigate the allegation as appropriate and pass on any information to the Police or other bodies if required.

Malicious Allegations against staff or volunteers

If an allegation is made against a teacher or volunteer the quick resolution of that allegation should be a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned. At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated.

Any cases the Headteacher deems appropriate will be reported to an Independent Safeguarding Authority as provided by The Appeals Panel Legal and Democratic Service Dept.

In response to an allegation staff suspension should not be the default option. An individual should only be suspended if there is no reasonable alternative. If suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification should be recorded by the school and the individual notified of the reasons. The reasons are:

- 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

The framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children is **set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018)**; this will be the basis of dealing with allegations. In all cases where the above criteria have been met, the Headteacher shall inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); where the allegation can be discussed.

Allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records and any that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious should not be referred to in employer references.

Students that are found to have made malicious allegations have breached the school rules. The school will therefore consider whether to apply an appropriate sanction, which could include temporary or permanent exclusion. If the school deems it appropriate the matter might be passed onto the Police if there are grounds for believing a criminal offence may have been committed.

Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing). A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.

Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty should be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child, their parents/carers and the organisation must be negotiated, agreed and recorded. In addition, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special educational needs, regardless of age and ability must be actively sought in regular reviews of these arrangements.

Physical contact

There are occasions when it is essential for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role (e.g. when teaching gymnastics, music tuition, giving first aid etc.)

Students who have suffered violence, abuse or neglect are likely to react to physical contact unpredictably, and since information is only shared on a need to know basis, staff should assume that it is in the best interest of themselves and the child not to make physical contact. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff must use their professional judgement at all times.

On the infrequent occasions when it is necessary to make physical contact, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact in schools may occur most often with younger students.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible in the school's incident book and, **appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.**

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual child or young person, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to students with SEN or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open school policy and subject to review. Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible – use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. It is recognised that many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively by helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with children for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a child seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise their professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or email address to children. Staff should only use their school email address to communicate with children and their families and school email systems should only be used in accordance with school policy.

Staff should not accept friend requests or similar from children on their personal social media accounts and should be mindful of the impact of the online presence on their professional reputation. Detailed guidance for staff can be sought from The Safer Internet Centre.

Transporting Children

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, and if possible with one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. However there are occasions when private transportation is thought necessary. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Access to the School Premises

As the school operates from an open site, there are many points of entry. To ensure the protection of staff and pupils on-site (both during and after the school day) there must be no unaccompanied public access to any of the school buildings other than the reception area before 6.00pm. To ensure this:

- Signage will be in place to inform visitors that they must not enter any of the buildings and should take an outside route to reception when they first arrive at school in order to sign in.
- **When visitors sign in, they are given a visitor's badge with a clearly identifiable lanyard and a copy of the 'Information for Visitors' or 'Information for Contractors' pamphlet as appropriate** which provides information about safeguarding.
- CCTV will be monitored at the various access points.
- Staff and Governors have identity badges with clearly identifiable lanyards which must be worn when at school
- Staff will challenge anyone in a building (or on the grounds) who is not a member of staff or a student.
- When visitors/contractors are on the school site where the school does not hold a copy of, or have evidence of, their DBS clearance, then the visitor/contractor must be escorted at all times.

Staff, Governors and adult visitors to the school must only use staff lavatories.

All incidents of concern must be reported to the DSL or the Headteacher

The use of school premises by other organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

E-Safety

All students should be made aware of the potential risks with regard to social media, such as the internet and smart **phones**. **Students are made aware of these dangers through the school's PSHE programme, and assemblies.** (See anti bullying policy).

Appendix

1. Definitions and Indicators of Abuse.
2. SWR offer of Early Help.
3. Supplementary Information.
4. Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1): **N.B: all staff need to sign to confirm they have read this.** This is a separate document to this policy. (Safeguarding folder in teachersshared).
5. Safer Working Protocols: **N.B: all staff need to sign to confirm they have read this.** This is a separate document to this policy. (Safeguarding folder in teachersshared).
6. Safeguarding Record Log: to be completed for all concerns and passed to DSL. This is separate document to this policy. (Safeguarding folder in teachersshared).

APPENDIX 1

Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised as follows:

1. Physical Abuse.
2. Sexual Abuse.
3. Emotional Abuse.
4. Physical Neglect.
5. Grave Concern/at risk - this is not a distinct category but is dealt with separately. A child can be at risk from any combination of the four categories.

These different types of abuse require different approaches. A child suffering from physical abuse may be in immediate and serious danger. Action should, therefore, be taken immediately. With other forms of abuse there is a need to ensure that adequate information is gathered. There is also a need to make sure that grounds for suspicion have been adequately investigated and recorded. The need to collate information must be balanced against the need for urgent action. If there are reasonable grounds for suspicion then a decision to monitor the situation should only be taken after consultation. A situation that should cause particular concern is that of a child who fails to thrive without any obvious reason. In such a situation a medical investigation will be required to consider the causes. Each of the five categories will now be explored in more detail.

1) Physical Abuse

This involves physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

- bruises and abrasions - especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-**accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.**
- slap marks – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
- twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks - can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking.
- bruising on both sides of the ear – this is often caused by grabbing a child that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- grip marks on arms or trunk - gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.
- black eyes – are mostly commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. NB. A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- damage to the mouth – e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- bite marks
- fractures
- poisoning or other misuse of drugs – e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- burns and/or scalds – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. Some types of scalds known as **'dipping scalds' are always cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately 'dipped' in a hot bath will not have splash marks.**

2) Sexual Abuse

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- a detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child;
- behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults;
- attempts to inform by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.

- a fear of medical examinations;
- a fear of being alone – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters, etc;
- a sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa;
- excessive masturbation is especially worrying when it takes place in public;
- promiscuity;
- sexual approaches or assaults - on other children or adults;
- urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted disease (STD) are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified;
- bruising to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place;
- discomfort or pain particularly in the genital or anal areas;
- the drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

3) Emotional Abuse

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment - this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways;
- Overreaction to mistakes;
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- Neurotic behaviour;
- Fear of parents/ carers being contacted;
- Running away;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Appetite disorders;
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse.

4) Physical Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including **cold and starvation**) which results in **serious impairment of the child's health or development**, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent stomach aches, feeling unwell, and apparent anorexia can be associated with Physical neglect. However, typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

- Underweight - a child may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- Inadequately clad - a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Physical Neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be **appropriate to invoke child protection procedure in the case of neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.**

5) Grave Concern/at risk

This is not a separate category of child abuse as such but covers a number of situations where a child may be at risk. Children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of abuse. Grave concern may be felt where a child shows symptoms of stress and distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:

- there is a known child abuser in the family;
- another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- the parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree;
- there is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour;

- the child is exposed to potential risk or exploitation via the Internet e.g. pornographic material or chat rooms.

6) Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- **upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, for sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm**
- sexting
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

7) Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in serious violent crime. These may include:

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions – these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

8) The Symptoms of Stress and Distress

When a child is suffering from any one or more of the previous five '**categories of abuse**', or if the child is '**at risk**', he/she will nearly always suffer from/display signs of stress and distress.

An abused child is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:

- a lack of concentration and a fall-off in school performance;
- aggressive or hostile behaviour;
- moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences;
- difficulties in relationships with peers;
- regression to more immature forms of behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking;
- self harming or suicidal behaviour;
- low self esteem;
- wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy - children who persistently run away from home may be escaping from sexual physical abuse;
- disturbed sleep;
- general personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention seeking behaviour;
- a sudden change in school performance.

9) Parental Signs of Child Abuse

Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:

- implausible explanations of injuries;
- unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries;
- injured child kept away from school until injuries have healed without adequate reason;
- a high level of expressed hostility to the child;
- grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development;
- general dislike of child-like behaviour;
- **inappropriate labelling of child's behaviour as bad or naughty;**

- leaving children unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.

Appendix 2

SWR offer of early Help

The SWR offer of early help addresses the early identification of risk and the prevention of harm to our students. Outlined below are some of the strategies, systems and procedures we have in place to safeguard our students around some specific aspects of safeguarding.

Included within our early support:

- Drugs screening and liaison with the Gloucestershire Drugs Agency staff.
- Referring students to specialist support for bereavement.
- Referral to the School Nurse.
- Social and emotional wellbeing support from the Phoenix Room.
- Liaison with local GPs to support referrals to CYPS.
- Full time Education Welfare Officer.
- Liaison with family support services.
- Liaison with police where welfare enquiries are required.
- Police mentoring support for those presenting anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- Use of the CSE screening tool.
- **Support from the school's** Inclusion Support Workers.
- Multi-agency meetings.
- PSHE lessons covering mental health and substance abuse delivered by specialists who offer follow up support as needed.
- Distribution of Gloucestershire suicide prevention stickers.
- Access to Gloucestershire Graduated Pathway – Early Help & Support
- Anti-bullying team work throughout the year.
- Signposting parents and students to agencies.
- Designated Children in Care member of staff.
- **Chelsea's Choice theatre and other workshops to deliver interactive sessions about CSE and sexting.**
- Police sessions for students and parents about sexting and safe use of the internet.
- Use of the Gloucestershire Healthy Living survey to identify patterns and coordinate intervention linked to demand.

Appendix 3

Supplementary Information

Further guidance about specific safeguarding issues is available from a range of sources, for example the NSPCC website, www.nspcc.org.uk. Government guidance is also available via the hyperlinks below.

Child Sexual Exploitation: (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can **take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.** What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Bullying including cyberbullying

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Drugs Advice

Fabricated or Induced Illness

Abuse linked to faith or belief: abuse linked to belief, including belief in witchcraft or possession, is a horrific crime which is condemned by people of all cultures, communities and faiths.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) multi-agency practice guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Forced Marriage

Gangs and Youth Violence: are the product of the high levels of social breakdown and disadvantage found in the communities in which they thrive, but they are also a key driver of that breakdown. Gangs create a culture of violence and criminality that prevents the very things that can help transform those communities; community mobilisation and economic enterprise

Gender based Violence : is violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender. It constitutes a breach of the fundamental right to life, liberty, security, dignity, equality between women and men, non-discrimination and physical and mental integrity. Gender-based violence reflects and reinforces inequalities between men and women.

Mental Health: problems range from the worries we all experience as part of everyday life to serious long-term conditions. The majority of people who experience mental health problems can get over them or learn to live with them, especially if they get help early on.

Private Fostering : is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity).

Radicalisation: is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that (1) reject or undermine the status quo or (2) reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.