



## Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

*"Safeguarding children is everybody's business" (Lord Laming)*

Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Helen Ball
Head Master	Alastair Tighe
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Arthur Mayhew
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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Statement of intent

Wells Cathedral School recognises that the safety and welfare of children is paramount and that we have a responsibility to protect children in all of our activities. We take all reasonable steps to ensure, through appropriate procedures and training, that all children, irrespective of sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual identity or social status, are protected from abuse.

**This policy is to be read by all staff annually and signed to the effect that they have read and understood it. The Policy will also be accessible to all visitors to the school, parents, and carers through the school's website.**

## 1.2 Safeguarding legislation and guidance

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

- DfE guidance: [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018](#). (KCSIE18)
- DfE guidance: *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018* (WTSC18).
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (February 2015)
- Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (March 2018)
- Advice from Somerset Support Service for Education (SSE).
- Advice from Somerset Children's Safeguarding Board. (SSCB)

Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

The statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018* covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.

The statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018* is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to

safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All staff must read Part One of this guidance and staff can find a copy by following this [link](#).

### **1.3 To whom and where does this policy apply?**

This Safeguarding Policy relates to all school employees or staff working within Wells Cathedral School and is in addition to the *Working Together 2018 & Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018* guidance. This policy document is produced in order to inform and assist our staff and contractual partners in meeting their responsibilities in terms of child protection, whether working directly or indirectly for Wells Cathedral School.

### **1.4 Aims of the policy**

This policy aims to ensure that Wells Cathedral School is a safe and welcoming environment where 'children can have a sense of belonging and be contented, balanced and confident individuals who have the necessary tools to be able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.' (Care Manifesto)

This document seeks to raise awareness of the types of abuse and specific safeguarding concerns relating to children. It then sets out guidance as to the roles and responsibilities of staff and the correct practices and procedures that must be followed in order to manage such concerns.

Key elements of these aims are ensuring that:

- Staff recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work directly with children
- Staff are alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns and follow the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) procedures for identifying, recording, reporting and monitoring such cases
- Staff keep child protection issues at the forefront of their work and know who the the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), deputies and other members of the safeguarding team are
- Staff respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse
- Staff treat all children with respect regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity
- The school establishes positive, supportive, secure working practices that put children first
- The school practises safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- The school has a DSL and at least one Deputy who have received appropriate training and support for their role
- Either the DSL or one of the deputies will be on call whenever activities involving children take place on site

- The school keeps written, dated and signed records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. This includes the use of any screening tool that aids identification of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), on-line use or other such issues and that such records are securely placed.
- The school cooperates with relevant persons and agencies when dealing with child protection matters; sharing information, attending case conferences if necessary and involving parents and children as appropriate
- All events, both on and off site, are risk assessed and managed to the highest possible safety standards
- Through the school's education system we equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe and support those who have been abused in accordance with agreed plans
- The school constantly reviews ways of working to incorporate best practice. Including this policy being regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current best practice and Government expectations

## 2 Safeguarding overview

### 2.1 What is safeguarding?

**Safeguarding** is defined by *Working Together* (2018) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's 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 the school, 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.

**Abuse** is anything that harms another person.

## **2.2 Types of abuse**

All staff members must be alert to the possible signs of abuse of a child or young person. Forms of abuse are:

### **2.2.1 Physical**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **2.2.2 Emotional**

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

### **2.2.3 Sexual**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

#### **2.2.4 Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **2.3 Specific safeguarding issues**

#### **2.3.1 Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse may take many forms. Witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent may cause considerable distress to children and both the physical assaults and psychological abuse suffered by adult victims who experience domestic abuse can have a negative impact on their ability to look after their children. Children can still suffer the effects of domestic abuse, even if they do not witness the incidents directly. However in up to 90% of incidents involving domestic violence where children reside in the home, the children are in the same or the next room. Children's exposure to parental conflict, even where violence is not present, can lead to serious anxiety and distress among children. Children can see provision as a safe retreat from problems at home or alternatively not attend provision through a perceived need to be at home to protect abused parents or siblings.

Domestic abuse can therefore have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being and development. The potential scale of the impact on children is not always easy to assess but may manifest itself as behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, including poor self-esteem, withdrawal, absenteeism, adult-child conflict. Children sometimes disclose what is happening or may be reluctant to do so hoping that someone will realise something is wrong.

#### **2.3.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual

activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and noncontact sexual activity
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media)
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults.

The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

While professional judgement may lead you to refer this matter to Somerset Direct a screening tool has been developed that may help an employee in their judgement.

There are fuller details around this subject including access to the screening tool at <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

### **2.3.3 Radicalisation**

Radicalisation is defined by the UK Government within this context as 'the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with

terrorist groups.’ If you become concerned that this may raise a professional concern about a young person you work with or know then the external contacts given at the end of this document will help you raise this with appropriate persons.

The UK Government since the 2011 Prevent review defines extremism as: ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs’. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous.

Staff Members receive ‘Prevent’ training annually to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

#### **2.3.4 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Comprises all procedures of partial or total removal of the female genitalia or other injury to other female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and a form of child abuse with long lasting, harmful consequences. There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM and if staff are concerned they should immediately contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl aged under 18 there is a statutory duty for that member of staff to report it to the police.

#### **2.3.5 Forced Marriage**

The UK Government describe this as taking someone, usually overseas, to force them to marry (whether or not the **forced marriage** takes place) or marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage. Forms of coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

The choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. Children may be married at a very young age and well below the age of consent in England. Staff members should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

#### **2.3.6 Peer on Peer Abuse**

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. Abuse is abuse and should never be passed off as banter, or as a natural part of

growing up. Forms of peer on peer abuse are 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 and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can take many forms (outlined in the [anti-bullying](#) policy) and cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people. Bullying will not just be passed off as banter. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed in accordance with our [anti-bullying](#) policy and procedures.

The school takes measures to reduce peer on peer abuse by promoting a culture of awareness, responsibility, kindness and respect through our day to day interactions with students, our policies, PSHE and co-curricular programmes. All students must abide by the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [School Rules](#).

Any instances of child on child sexual violence or harassment should be dealt with in line with government guidance found [here](#).

### **2.3.7 Online**

Mobile phones, laptops, tablets and other networked devices are integrated into all our lives. However, there are associated risks which include the following: exposure to inappropriate material, physical danger, cyber-bullying, legal and commercial issues, addictive behaviour, radicalisation, CSE and sexting. These issues are addressed by teaching pupils about digital citizenship through PSHE, managed in accordance with the school's [eSafety](#) policy and reinforced through filtering and monitoring systems. The school recognises that these controls are easily bypassed using 3/4G connections and hence emphasises the need for discussions between parents, pupils and staff about digital citizenship issues. Wells Cathedral School has a designated e-safety officer to whom all online concerns should be referred and also the DSL if appropriate.

### **2.3.8 Children missing from education**

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The school will monitor absence and take appropriate action including

notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

All staff should be aware of the school's [Missing Child](#) and [Absence](#) policies

### **2.3.9 Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

## **2.4 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can be more vulnerable to and face additional safeguarding challenges particularly when it comes to recognising abuse and neglect. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- The potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

## **2.5 Boarding**

As a boarding school there are additional factors to consider with regards to safeguarding set out in the National Minimum Standards. Staff are alert to inappropriate pupil relationships, initiation type behaviours and the potential for peer to peer abuse. Boarding staff receive additional induction and safeguarding training appropriate to their additional duties.

## **2.6 Music**

As a choir school and also a specialist music school we are very alert to the additional safeguarding challenges that can arise with specialist musicians and choristers. Specific guidance relating to our safeguarding policies and procedures for specialist musicians and choristers can be found in the document [Visiting Music Staff Information Handbook](#)

## **2.7 Abuse of position of trust**

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and

represents a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

## 3 Management of safeguarding

### 3.1 Roles and responsibilities

#### 3.1.1 All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and maintain an attitude that 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. Child abuse issues should never be trivialised.
- Be familiar with and understand the contents of this policy particularly the types of sign of abuse and safeguarding issues (outlined in section 2) so that they are able to identify children who are in need of help or protection. **It is essential that staff act on and refer at the early signs of abuse and neglect.**
- Be aware of the specific systems within the school to support safeguarding. Particularly the specific guidance found in the documents: [Staff Code of Conduct](#), [Visiting Music Staff Information Handbook](#) and [Whistle-Blowing Policy](#)
- Attend safeguarding and child protection induction and regular training appropriate to the level of their duties (see section 3.5)
- Know the names of the Head Master, DSL and Deputies and who to refer concerns of abuse to in line with the procedures outlined in section 4..
- Read and understand Part 1 of the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DFE, 2018\)](#) **annually** and Annex A. if they work directly with children. This is provided as part of the induction process and is available on the staff intranet
- Be aware of their legal responsibility to report to the police any instances of FGM
- Be able to manage a report of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Respect children at all times regardless of their sex, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation and promote an ethos where children and young people feel secure and are encouraged to use their preferred means of communication. Inclusive communication skills and strategies should be used at all times. (See European Convention on Human Rights and Health and Social Care Act 2012).

- Ensure that children and young people know which adults they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- Commit to providing education which equips children and young people with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse
- Ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.
- Use social network appropriately, this includes only using official work accounts to promote work and never referring to individual children. Further guidance can be found on the [IT Acceptable Use Policy \(Staff\)](#).
- Staff must never allow or engage in inappropriate verbal or physical contact of any description.
- Staff should not allow children or adults to engage in abusive activities, ridiculing, bullying etc electronically or face to face.
- Managers must develop an ethos that allows staff to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out any inappropriate attitudes or behaviour to each other.
- All staff should ensure that when working individually with a child or young person, they should be mindful of safe working practices, (e.g. where possible doors are left open), other staff are aware they are working on a one to one basis, and immediate help is available if needed. Inviting pupils to a staff members private home or driving them in a car alone should not take place unless there is a clear and relevant reason and absolute transparency around the event. **In any one-to-one situation that is not a clear and proper part of your work, you put yourself at risk of false allegations.** More detailed information can be found in the [Staff Code of Conduct](#).

### 3.1.2 The Governing Body

Ensures that the school:

- Appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- Ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- Has a child protection policy and procedures, including a staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and acceptable use of technology, that are consistent with LSCB and statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means
- Has a procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff and allegations against other children
- Follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations
- Develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Head Master, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection

training, which is regularly updated in line with any requirements of the SSCB. The DSL receives refresher training at two-yearly intervals

- Ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the provision's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy
- Ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- Ensures that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The chair of governors is responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Head Master.

An annual report will be submitted through *Virtual College*, as required, to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

#### **The Head Master:**

- Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- Allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputies to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- Ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- Ensures that leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- Liaises with the designated officer or team in the local authority where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- Ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service and TRA as appropriate.

#### **3.1.3 Leadership team**

Wells Cathedral School and our Leadership Team recognise their responsibilities with regard to Child Protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Wells Cathedral School has within the Leadership Team a Designated Safeguarding Lead, Arthur Mayhew (Assistant Head Pastoral and Co-curricular). In addition to this we have a number of deputy safeguarding leads whose contact details can be found at the back of this document. Staff should take all daily case concerns to their line manager as first point of contact.

The Leadership team will:

- Comply with section 11 of The Children Act (2004), by determining and monitoring the level of training staff and contractors should receive appropriate to their level of work and have refresher training as required.
- Liaise with Somerset Direct, Local Children's Social Care and other agencies, as appropriate. Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of any referrals and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover.
- Act as a source of advice and expertise and keep provision colleagues informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence.
- Manage and deliver staff child protection training and review the operation of the Child Protection Policy annually to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice. The DSL will report to the Provision's Leadership Team quarterly on any issues with regard to the implementation of this policy.

### **3.1.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Arthur Mayhew Assistant Head (Pastoral & Co-curricular) is the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). He is supported by a team of deputies all of whom have received inter-agency training. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is involved in regular training, including inter-agency working, in accordance with the recommendations of Somerset Direct, the Local Safeguarding Children Board and other agencies at regular two yearly intervals. The nominated governor for Child Protection is Helen Ball. The Governors undertake an annual review of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the procedures in place at the school for safeguarding children and the efficiency and effectiveness with which the related duties have been discharged. This enables the Governing body to monitor compliance with the The Children Act (1989), the 2004 (updated) Children Act, guidance from the DfE, the local authority and locally agreed inter agency procedures, to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection are remedied as soon as they have been identified.

The DSL undertakes his own appropriate training, every two years to enable him to continue to develop his own understanding and skill base. In particular he seeks to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention
- Have a working knowledge of how the local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, to enable him to attend

and effectively contribute when required.

- Be able to ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with SEND, and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture amongst all staff of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures the school puts in place to protect them.

The DSL is responsible for raising awareness, and ensuring appropriate use of the school's policies and procedures related to safeguarding. In particular he will:

- Ensure the Child Protection & Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, working with the Governing Body in this regard. He will also ensure the procedures and implementation is reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the Child Protection & Safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the role that the school plays in referrals about suspected abuse or neglect that may be made.
- Link with the Local Safeguarding Children Board to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Where children leave the school, ensure that their child protection file is copied for any new school or college as soon as possible, but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

The School maintains good working relations with relevant agencies including Somerset Direct (LSCB) and the Avon and Somerset Public Protection Unit, and will always seek advice from these agencies.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the person responsible for contacting LSCB/Social Services/OFSTED to register concerns about a child's welfare and implementing procedures relating to child protection at the Senior School, Junior School and Pre-Prep which includes EYFS. He is fully conversant with LSCB procedures, and will ensure representations/reports to Child Protection Conferences. He will inform OFSTED of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on the school premises (whether the allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on or off the school site); or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the school site, and of the resulting action taken in respect to these allegations. During his absence one of the deputies will perform this role.

As a senior member of staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead has the authority to commit resources and where appropriate support and direct other staff as well as being able to call a full Senior Team meeting should need arise.

The DSL will provide for a report to be sent promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service, if the school dispenses with a person's services because of unsuitability to work with children, or would have done so had the person not resigned.

The DSL will give consideration to making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, because of 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute', or a 'conviction at any time for a relevant offence'.

The DSL is responsible for liaising with the Head to inform him of issues especially ongoing inquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, and police investigations.

The DSL acts as a source of support, advice and expertise to all staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

### **3.1.5 Deputy Designated Lead(s)**

Is/are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

### **3.1.6 Welfare team**

The Welfare Team consists of the Assistant Head (Pastoral & Co-curriculum), DSL, School Counsellor, Medical Staff, and Head of Pastoral Care in the Junior School. It meets weekly to discuss pastoral and welfare issues and all referrals and pastoral concerns which are passed to it. The Welfare Team adopts a 'team around the child' approach to develop individual welfare plans which take into account the school's duties to both children in need and those at risk of harm. The Welfare Team will liaise with outside bodies, contributing to inter-agency working.

### **3.1.7 eSafety officer**

Simon Balderson, Assistant Head (Digital Strategy) and Deputy Safeguarding Lead is the school's eSafety officer and is responsible for coordinating the delivery of the Digital Citizenship programme, as well as supporting the other members of the Child Protection team in matters relating to eSafety.

### **3.1.8 Local Safeguarding Children Board**

The Director of Children's Services, within the Local Authority has the overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in the area. They have a number of statutory functions under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 which make this clear. This policy is to add detail to expectations of staff to expect specific duties to happen in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are or who takes any further action.

The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services in local

authorities are the key points of professional and political accountability, with responsibility for the effective delivery of these functions. (Working together to Safeguard Children 2018)

*“Children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.” (Working together to Safeguard Children 2018)*

### **3.2 Safer recruitment**

The school will take all possible steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children through its recruitment processes, DBS checks, referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service, Disqualification by Association checks, and induction procedures. Assurances are obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to other staff employed by another organisation and working with the school’s pupils on another site.

The school will notify the DfE, the Disclosure and Barring Service and any other designated authority within one month when the services of a person are discontinued because he or she was considered unsuitable to work with children. The school will undertake to notify OFSTED within 14 days of any allegations against people living or working at

All staff members have a standard statement in their job description which places a responsibility on staff to safeguard children and young people.

Further details can be found in the school’s [Recruitment & Selection Policy](#).

### **3.3 Visitors on site and supervision of contractors**

#### **3.3.1 Regulated Activity**

Schools are ‘specified places’ which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\)](#).

#### **3.3.2 Volunteers**

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

#### **3.3.3 Supervised volunteers**

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school’s risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

#### **3.3.4 Contractors**

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks

and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

### **3.3.5 Site security**

All staff employed by the school are given a personal ID badge with a blue lanyard that they are expected to wear at all times. Governors and regular volunteers are given a badge with a green lanyard. Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge with a red lanyard, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The DSL will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

### **3.4 Extended school and off-site arrangements**

Specific guidance relating to the management extended and off-site activities can be found in the [Educational Visits and Events Policy](#). All activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

### **3.5 Staff Induction and Training**

The Head Master, all (permanent and temporary) staff and volunteers are given an appropriate level of child protection training by the Designated Safeguarding Lead the e-safety officer and online via HR as part of their induction programme. This includes Prevent training, online safety, managing a report of peer on peer abuse (including child-on-child sexual violence or harassment), the school safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, and the identity and function of the DSL as well as a copy of [Part 1 of KCSIE](#) and Annex A. Staff are given a quick reference card which provides clear guidance on what to do when receiving a disclosure and emphasises the sensitivity needed. The Head Master and all staff have basic awareness child protection training on a 3 year cycle with refresher training annually.

The school pupil leaders (prefects) and peer mentors receive guidance from the DSL as part of their induction training.

All staff have received an electronic copy of part one of *Keeping children safe in education (2018)* and to sign electronically that they have read it.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is also involved in running training for staff outside of the school as part of our commitment to sharing best practice.

### **3.6 Use of Mobile phones and cameras**

#### **3.6.1 Cameras and Photography**

Specific guidance around the use of cameras and smartphones can be found in the [Pupil Images Policy](#). Our staff are aware at no times should their own personal cameras/smart phones are to be used in recording children or young people in Wells Cathedral School.

In the EYFS photographs form a key part of daily record keeping. Staff are provided with school cameras and mobile devices such as iPads. These remain the property of the school at all times. The staff have access to colour printing facilities and digital storage on the school network. Staff must not use personally owned devices (such as cameras or mobile phones) to record, or store images of school children at any time. On joining the school parents are asked to give their permission to have their child's photo taken for a variety of purposes (outlined in the consent form).

#### **3.6.2 Staff use of Mobile Phones**

Staff are permitted to bring their mobile phone to work. They should not be used during contact time with the children and personal numbers should not be given out to students or parents. Staff have access to the internal telephone system and are encouraged to give the school number to relatives as an emergency contact number for themselves.

### **3.7 Equipping children with skills needed**

Children's awareness about themselves, safeguarding, and Digital Citizenship, will be raised through the school's PSHE programme and a trusting climate is developed in tutor times and house times. Children are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings. The school seeks to promote a positive, supportive and secure environment and give pupils a sense of being valued.

The PSHE programme explores the role of sexual relationships and the potential for abuse from peers, which are possible within a school community. The programme also seeks to educate pupils about child sexual exploitation (CSE), female genital mutilation (FGM) and radicalisation.

## **4 Child protection procedures**

### **4.1 Concerns about a child**

The School recognises that there may also be children who, whilst not suffering harm or at immediate risk, require additional support from external agencies. Any such concerns about a child should be passed to your line manager and/or the DSL.

The DSL will refer all allegations or suspicions of abuse or cases where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, to Somerset Direct within 24 hours. Borderline cases will be discussed with Somerset Direct without identifying individuals in the first instance and, following discussions, Somerset Direct will judge whether or not an allegation or concern meet the relevant threshold. Somerset Direct will decide in the circumstances what further steps should be taken. This could involve calling the police.

Where the outcome of a referral is not reported to the referring member of staff or DSL and/or where a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the School will follow this up with the children's social care and push for reconsideration where appropriate.

Any member of staff who has concerns that a child's situation does not appear to be improving should press for re-consideration. The School will not do anything that may jeopardise any external investigation. Once the matter has been referred, all further responsibility for gathering information and deciding what happens next will rest with social services and the police.

Where appropriate, the School may consult with the child concerned and their parents regarding a referral to external agencies (such as children's social care). This may lead to a written plan to support a child in need being drawn up or an early help assessment, such as the Common Assessment Framework, being carried out. In either case, the School will liaise and take advice from external agencies as appropriate.

Where the suspicion or complaint is in relation to terrorism or extremism ideas involving a pupil, staff must firstly raise this with the Head of the senior/junior school or DSL without delay. The Head Master or DSL will consult with external agencies, as appropriate in accordance with this policy.

#### **4.2 Neutral Notification**

There may be occasions where something occurs which is out of the ordinary or which causes a member of staff to have doubts about the behaviour of another adult towards a pupil or another child. It is important that any concerns, or incidents which might give rise to concerns about the conduct of staff, are reported to the Head Master/Head of the Senior School, however, minor. In the vast majority of cases, there will be a perfectly innocent explanation for what has occurred, and staff should not feel that making a report, or being the subject of a report, will cause them to suffer any detriment or stigma where this is the case. Reporting of these types of concerns is a neutral act, and the Head Master/Head of

the Senior School and Safeguarding Lead will, on receipt of a report, determine how to best approach the issue.

The process for reporting a concern of this nature about safeguarding is called 'Neutral Notification'. This is a procedure for self-reporting or reporting about the behaviour and action of others. Neutral Notification **must** be used by staff to record all events and/or situations which have the potential to be misconstrued or misinterpreted by others; or where they are at all concerned about the behaviour of an adult, not just where it is clear that a role or professional boundary has been broken. The purpose of neutral reporting is to protect both pupils and the staff working with them and allows a system for a simple record to be kept in case events are later referred to or any patterns emerge.

Further details about Neutral Notifications can be found in the [Code of Conduct](#).

The Notification form can be reached using the following link: [Neutral Notifications](#)

#### **4.3 Child at risk of suffering**

The School treats the safeguarding of the pupils in its care as the highest priority and recognises the important role it has to play in the recognition and referral of children who may be at risk. All our school staff are made aware of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the School's care. Staff members are alerted to the particular potential vulnerabilities of looked after children.

Where it is believed that a child or young person is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Staff members follow the procedures set out in the South West Child Protection Procedures ([www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)) and the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) documents which can be found at <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

These procedures clearly confirm that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance and takes precedence over sensitivities about relations with partners, parents, or the likely reaction of others in the community, and any wish a child might have for complete confidentiality (which cannot be guaranteed).

**Any staff member** can make a direct referral to children's social care or other external services such as early help services. Members of staff not following procedures could put themselves at risk of disciplinary action and the child concerned at risk. As long as the procedures are adhered to, members of staff will receive the full support and provision of the Local Authority. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL that a referral has been made as soon as possible. Staff must share information with children's social care and/or the police where there are any concerns that a child may be at

risk of harm or neglect. If staff members are unsure about whether or not a referral should be made, they should speak to the DSL.

In relation to our nursery/EYFS setting, the School will inform Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, in any event within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

When an employee feels that, in their professional judgement or after discussion with their manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), they believe a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer, then a referral should be made to Somerset Direct using the Common Request for Involvement Form or phoning **0300 123 2224**. <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/childrens-services/safeguarding-children/report-a-child-at-risk/>

In many cases the concerns do not reach the threshold for a Child Protection Referral but that of a Child in Need of an earlier intervention.

This is the function of the Early Help Assessment (EHA) and Team around the Child and/or family meeting. This will identify a lead professional who will bring appropriate professionals together to empower the family to address concerns raised. Details of this process are available at:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/strategies/common-assessment-framework-caf/>

When completing the Common Request for Involvement Form (CRIF) please refer to the Somerset Threshold document Effective support for Children and Families in Somerset. (SSCB). This prompt sheet will also help you bring together all necessary information. Designated Safeguarding leads can also use the SSCB Consultation Line to discuss cases they have concern about.

Before making a referral through the locally agreed procedures, the following information should be available:

#### **Child's details**

- Name, including any middle names and, if the child is known by more than one name; list all names known.
- Date of birth.
- Address and telephone number.
- Health issues that may be relevant.
- Any known disabilities that may affect communication.

### **Family details**

- Names of parents and/or carers.
- Names and ages of any other children in family.
- Ethnicity and cultural background and where appropriate information about the need for interpreters.
- Any legal or custody documents known to exist.
- Name of the family's GP.

### **Provision history**

- How long has the child attended Wells Cathedral School?
- Attendance record – check if there has been a problem with attendance, look out for any patterns that emerge from attendance records, i.e. some children have been reported to miss every Monday because there have been problems at the weekend.
- Behaviour – how does the child present? Check for any repeated patterns of behaviour, or sudden changes of behaviour. Do these relate to a change in circumstances at home?
- Relationships with parents, provision, other agencies: good, non-existent, volatile?

### **Child protection history**

- Have you had previous concerns and have you made previous referrals? It is important to revisit previous concerns to get a wider picture. Child protection services are reliant on other agencies to help them build up a clearer picture of what has been happening. The relationship between each event may be more significant than each individual event.
- If you have referred in the past, what was the outcome? Never let the fact that no action was taken last time affect your way of managing new concerns. If you have a concern, always pass it on.

### **Informing the parent**

In most cases it is agreed that it is better to tell the parent that you intend to refer to Children's Social Care or the Police, but think it through. If you think telling may put the child or young person at more risk, take advice first. If in doubt, ring Somerset Direct (0845 3459122) and discuss with the Duty Social Worker or the consultation Line.

### **Making the referral**

Once there is all the necessary information available a child protection referral can be made with confidence, following the South West Child Protection Procedures ([www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)). Record all your actions and responses from other agencies.

## **4.4 Disclosure of an allegation of abuse**

If a child chooses to disclose an allegation of abuse you must:

- **Receive** what is said by listening to what they want to tell you without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock.
- **Observe** carefully the demeanour of behaviour of the child or young person
- **Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations:** rather, encourage the child or young person to say what he wants using open questions until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.
- **It is important NOT to ask leading questions.** Remember you are only clarifying with the young person if something concerning did happen or could have happened from the information they give you.

Types of Questions you can ask:

- Tell me (tell me what happened)
- Explain (explain what you meant by)
- Where did this happen/where were you?
- When did this happen?
- **Reassure** the child that they are right to disclose the matter; that their wellbeing is what is most important and that they will be consulted at each step of the process.
- **Do not promise confidentiality**
- **Respond** to the child with clarity and sensitivity and explain what will happen next ie the matter will be referred to the DSL within 24 hours
- **Record** in detail what has been seen and heard, noting times and dates, and ensuring only facts are recorded not opinions.
- **Report** to the DSL or, in the case of an allegation against a member of staff, the Head Master

Staff **MUST NOT:**

- Investigate suspected/alleged abuse themselves;
- Evaluate the grounds for concern;
- Seek or wait for proof;
- Discuss the matter with anyone other than their line manager, Somerset Direct, One of the school's designated safeguarding leads and, as appropriate the Head of the Senior School/Head Master.

Children's Social Care & the Police are the only agencies that can investigate allegations of abuse.

#### **4.5 Disclosure of an allegation of peer on peer abuse**

Follow the procedure outlined above and then refer to the child's house parent and/or the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Co-curricular) who will then refer to Somerset Direct.

Any instances of child on child sexual violence or harassment should be dealt with in line with government guidance found [here](#).

In the case where Somerset Direct or statutory child protection authority decides not to investigate further, the matter will be dealt with according to standard school policies and procedures such as the [anti-bullying policy](#).

A student against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation. In the case of students whose parents are living abroad, the student's educational guardian will be requested to provide support to the student and to accommodate him or her if it is necessary to suspend them during the investigation.

The School will take advice from children's social care on the investigation of serious allegations, and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all students involved, including the student or students accused of abuse.

If it is necessary for a student to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse; the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of children's social care and the police, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the student is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

Where an allegation has been made against a student both the victim and the perpetrator will be treated as being at risk of significant harm. It is recognised that those with special educational needs are at particular risk of peer abuse and teachers are alert to this.

A bullying concern will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm which may warrant referral to an external agency. The School's anti-bullying policy gives extensive guidance to staff and students, and details how students who have been bullied will be supported.

#### **4.6 Disclosure of an allegation against a member of staff**

If you receive a disclosure, about an adult colleague, it is important to follow the guidance given above about how to receive a disclosure and, in particular, reassure the child that what they say will be taken very seriously and everything possible done to help. If you are in the room when a child or young person begins to disclose concerns to another person, you should stay unobtrusively in the background. You may be able to support/witness what has been said if required.

All allegations should be dealt with according to guidance set out by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board and in line with the procedures set out in Part 4 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2018](#).

The School has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations.

These procedures are based on [Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2018](#) These procedures will be used where the member of staff or volunteer has been alleged to have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if he or she worked regularly or closely with children.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff it should be reported to the Head Master who, in general, is the 'Case Manager' who oversees such allegations. The Head Master will then inform the DSL and HR Bursar. If appropriate, the Head Master may appoint a substitute Case Manager to act in his stead in matters of the allegation and keep him, the DSL, and the HR Bursar informed.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against the DSL, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head Master, or in his absence the Chair of Governors.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Head Master, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of the Governing Body, or in his absence the Deputy Chair, without first notifying the Head Master.

If an allegation is made against the Chair of the Governing Body, the allegation should be reported to the Head Master. Where appropriate, the Head Master will consult with the DSL, or his deputy/ies.

All allegations that come to the School's attention, including those discussed directly with the police, will be discussed with the LADO immediately where possible and certainly within one working day. It will be more usual practice to discuss any course of action, including referral to the police, with the LADO prior to embarking on any course of action. Somerset Safeguarding Board's website offers helpful guidance – the website address may be found at: <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

Allegations against a member of staff who is no longer employed by the school will be referred to the police along with allegations that may amount to a criminal offence

No member of staff may investigate an allegation of abuse made against themselves. The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern. In this situation the decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the case manager and the designated officer(s), and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The case manager should then consider with the designated officer (s) what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

The Case Manager will usually inform the accused person of the allegation as soon as possible after the LADO has been consulted; unless it would place a child at further risk of significant harm or jeopardise a police investigation. The DSL and HR Bursar, where possible, will be present for this or informed. The parents or carers of the student(s) involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm; a strategy discussion should be convened by Social Care in accordance with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Where the LADO advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or the police or the local authority's social care services need to be involved; the Case Manager should not inform the accused or the parents or carers until these agencies have been consulted and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed.

#### **4.6.1 Support for Staff**

The School has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. The procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless external agencies object to this. The case manager, HR Bursar and DSL will be present, where possible, when the individual is informed. A representative will be appointed by the Case Manager to keep him or her informed of the progress of the case and to consider what other support is available for the individual, as appropriate. Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

#### **4.6.2 Action against the accused**

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

**Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

**Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive

**False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

**Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either to prove or disprove the allegation.

This term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

Where an investigation by the police or the local authority children's social care services is unnecessary, the LADO will discuss the steps to be taken with the Case Manager. The appropriate action will depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and will range from taking no further action to summary dismissal, or a decision not to use the person's services in the future. It may be necessary to undertake a further investigation to determine the appropriate action. If so, the LADO will discuss with the DSL, Head Master or Chair of Governors as appropriate, as to how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The appropriate person will usually be a senior member of staff, but in some

instances it may be appropriate to appoint an independent investigator as advised by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board.

If an allegation is made against a member of resident staff, consideration will be given as to whether the member of staff should be asked to move off site, the cost of this may need to be funded by the staff member concerned depending on the circumstances of the case.

### **Suspension**

Suspension must not be an automatic response to an allegation and all options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. The professional reputational damage that can arise from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious must be considered. Suspension will therefore only be considered in a case where:

- There is cause to suspect student(s) at the School is, or are at risk of significant harm
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

It may be that the result that would be achieved by suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements, for example, redeployment. If there is no reasonable alternative to suspension and suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification for this will be recorded and the individual notified of the reasons.

Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be dispatched within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. The person will be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with his/her contact details, (s)he will be regularly updated as to the progress of the investigation unless it would prejudice the investigation process, and any work related issues. Options for additional support will be discussed.

### **Sharing information with parents**

Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the Case Manager should not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers. Parents or carers should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome in confidence.

Parents and carers should also be made aware of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers in section 141F of the Education Act 2002, as amended (see

below). If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they will be told to seek legal advice.

### **Criminal proceedings**

The School will consult with the LADO following the conclusion of a criminal investigation or prosecution as to whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and if so, how to proceed. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case, including the result of the police investigation or trial and the standards of proof applicable.

### **Return to work**

If it is decided that the person who has been suspended should return to work, the School should consider how to facilitate this. For example, a phased return may be appropriate and/or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance in the short term. The School should also consider how to manage their contact with the student(s) who made the allegation.

### **Ceasing to use staff**

If the School ceases to use the services of a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) because they are unsuitable to work with children, there will be a prompt and detailed report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) in the case of teaching staff considered unsuitable to work with children (in cases of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a relevant offence).

The School has a legal duty to refer promptly to the DBS any person (including a student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child, or if there is reason to believe a member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and/or if they have been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in Regulated Activity, or would have been removed had they not left. A compromise agreement will not be used to prevent a referral to the DBS nor can an individual's lack of co-operation. The School will also notify the police promptly if a crime has been committed or is suspected.

The School will notify the training agency in the case of trainee teachers or other personnel undertaking training at the School.

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team of Wells Cathedral School recognise the requirement to report any serious incidents such as, suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse of vulnerable beneficiaries to the Charities Commission. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governing Body without delay

### **Resignation**

If a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide his or her services, any child protection allegations will still be followed up by the School. Resignation will not prevent a prompt and detailed report being made to the DBS and TRA in appropriate circumstances. Compromise agreements will not be used in such circumstances, and the providing references policy will be adhered to.

#### **4.6.3 Timescales**

All allegations must be dealt with as a priority to avoid any delay. Where it is immediately clear that the allegation is unfounded or malicious, the case should be resolved within one week. It is expected that most cases of allegations of abuse against staff will be resolved within one month with exceptional cases being completed within 12 months. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Head Master should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation it should be held, where possible, within 15 working days in term time.

#### **Confidentiality**

The School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Reporting restrictions under the 2011 amendment to the 2002 Education Act will be paramount and remain in place until such time as:

- The accused person is charged with a criminal offence
- The National College for Teaching and Leadership, under the direction of the Secretary of State, publishes information about the case
- A judge lifts the reporting restrictions
- The individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives his/her right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their written consent for another to do so.

The Case Manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services to agree the following:

- Who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared;
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- What, if any information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if and when it should arise.

#### **Existing staff**

If the School has concerns about an existing staff member's suitability to work with children, all relevant checks may be made as if the person were a new member of staff. Similarly, if a person working at the School moves from a post that was not Regulated Activity, into work which is Regulated Activity, the relevant checks for the Regulated

Activity must be carried out. This also applies if a staff member moves into an area where the Disqualification from Children Act would apply.

All staff are required to notify the School immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children - this will include notification of convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare "by association" i.e. they live or employed in the same household as someone who has unspent cautions or convictions for a relevant offence or who has been disqualified from working with children under the Childcare Act 2006. Those who are disqualified either in their own right or by association may apply to Ofsted for a waiver, but cannot work in the relevant settings until this has been determined.

The School's HR department will ask relevant staff members annually if there has been a change to the circumstances which would mean that they may be disqualified from working with children under this provision.

### **Malicious allegations**

Where an allegation by a student is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Head Master will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with the School's [Sanctions Policy](#).

Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation the Head Master will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the School on the basis that they have treated the School or a member of staff unreasonably.

Whether or not the person making the allegation is a student or a parent (or other member of the public), the School reserves the right to contact the police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

Allegations that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious will not be referred to in employer references.

### **Support for a student making an allegation**

In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care services, or the police as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.

### **Record keeping**

Details of allegations that are found to have been false or malicious should be removed from personnel records, but will be retained as part of a separate safeguarding record. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to

enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 60 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

#### **4.7 Child's Wishes**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the school will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account as much as possible when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes operate with the best interests of children at their heart.

#### **4.8 CME, Missing lost and uncollected children**

Staff should follow the school's procedure for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeated occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future. All pupils must be on the Admissions Register and Attendance Registers. The School will inform the LADO of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without a school permission for a period of 10 school days or more.

##### **4.8.1 EHE- Elective Home Education**

When appropriate we will advise the Local Authority of when children leave the school to be electively home educated at the earliest moment.

##### **4.8.2 Reduced Timetables**

Should a reduced timetable be instigated or be necessary, guidance will be reviewed with the aim the child returns to school full time at the earliest moment or other provision sought to ensure the child/ young person has their full entitlement.

##### **4.8.3 School Admissions**

In following good practice, should a child be successful in obtaining a place at Wells Cathedral School but then for some reason not be able to attend at the last minute we will alert the Local Authority School Admissions at the earliest moment.

#### **4.9 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. No adult must ever guarantee confidentiality to any child or young person. Staff should make children and young people aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken.

Personal information will only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child or young person, e.g., where safety and welfare of that child or young person necessitates that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

#### **4.10 Records and monitoring**

Well-kept records are *essential* to good child protection practice. We are clear about the need to record any concerns held about children or young people, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

In our work with children, young people and families, and others in an advisory and support role, we will promote:

- Keeping clear detailed written records of concerns about children and young people.
- Ensuring all records are kept secure and in a locked location.
- Ensuring records are passed on to the receiving institution if a child or young person transfers.

We will keep written notes/records of any child protection issues regarding individual children and young people will be kept securely and separately electronically. Where necessary we ensure that child protection information has been passed on to Somerset Direct appropriately.

#### **4.11 Working with other agencies**

At Wells Cathedral School we recognise we do not operate in isolation. The welfare of children and young people is not just the responsibility of the Local Authority but a partnership with other public agencies, the voluntary sector and service users and carers.

Child Protection is the responsibility of all adults, especially those working with children and young people. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the SSCB.

If a child or young person becomes the subject in a Child Protection Conference relevant staff may be asked to share information about the child or young person and his/her family. Usually this will be in the form of a written report, the contents of which will be shared with parents/carers prior to the meeting.

Occasionally, there may be information which is confidential and which will be shared in a closed meeting prior to the conference. If this is necessary, the chair of the conference will discuss the matter with parents/carers beforehand.

When any child or young person becomes the subject of a conference, local procedures require all other children in the family are considered. It may well be that staff will be required to provide information on children with whom there appear to be no direct concerns.

Staff may contribute to the process of risk assessment and the decision about the child being in receipt of a child protection plan.

## 5 Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the school in conjunction with DSL and is signed off by the Chair of Governors within one of the annual full Governors Meetings.

The school regularly reviews its practice and procedures relating to safeguarding issues, endeavouring to develop best practice and taking into account the nature, age range, and other significant features of the school such as the specialist music programme and choristers, and of the specific issues related to operating in historic buildings. .

## 6 Appendices

### 6.1 Appendix 1: Related policies and documents

Anti-Bullying Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Recruitment and Selection Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
Educational Visits and Events Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy  
Behaviour Management Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy  
Visitors Policy  
Physical Restraints Policy  
Pupil Images Policy  
Equal Opportunities Policy  
First Aid Policy  
Administration of Medicines Policy  
Adults Staying with Boarding House Staff Policy

Visiting Music Staff Handbook

## **6.2 Appendix 2: Key Contacts and websites**

### **Wells Cathedral School**

Address: 15 the Liberty, Wells, Somerset, BA5 2ST

Phone number: 01749 834200

### **Head Master: Alastair Tighe**

Phone number: 01749 834212

Email address: a.tighe@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead: Arthur Mayhew**

(Also the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, Prevent Lead, Child Sexual Exploitation Lead)

Phone number: 01749834222

Email address: a.mayhew@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Junior School): Julie Barrow**

Phone number: 01749 834410

Email address: j.barrow@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Nursery and Pre-Prep): Rebecca Allen**

Phone number: 01749 834429

Email address: r.allen@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Digital Citizenship): Simon Balderson**

Phone number: 01749 834223

Email address: s.balderson@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Boarding Pupils): Martin Ashton**

Phone number: 01749 834300

Email address: m.ashton@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Junior School): Jill Edmonds**

Phone number: 01749 834426

Email address: j.edmonds@wells-cathedral-school.com

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Senior School Musicians): Jayne Obradovich**

Phone number: 01749 834467

Email address: j.obradovich@wells-cathedral-school.com

**Safeguarding Governance Lead: Helen Ball**

Phone number: 01749 834200

Email address: [hball@wells-cathedral-school.com](mailto:hball@wells-cathedral-school.com)

**Chair of Governors: John Davies**

Phone number: 01749 674483

Email address: [thedeanofwells@googlemail.com](mailto:thedeanofwells@googlemail.com)

**Somerset Direct (Somerset Safeguarding Children Board)**

Phone number: 0300 123 2224

Website: [www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk)

**Somerset Emergency Duty Team (evenings, weekends and bank holidays)**

Phone number: 0300 123 2327

**Professional Choices (Consultation line for DSLs)**

Phone number: 0300 123 3078

**Early Help Advice Hub**

Phone number: 01823 355 803

**Anthony Goble, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Phone number: 0300 123 3078

**Jane Weatherill, Education Safeguarding Advisor, (Support Services for Education)**

Phone number: 01823 355014

**Early Years Safeguarding Advisor (Support Services for Education)**

Phone number: 01823 355492

**Police Safeguarding Coordination Unit**

Phone number: 01823 349037

Website: [safeguardingcoordinationunitsouthern@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:safeguardingcoordinationunitsouthern@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

**OFSTED Safeguarding Children (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm)**

Phone number: 08456 404046

Website: [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)

**The Disclosure and Barring Service**

Phone number: 01325 953795

Address: PO Box 81, Darlington, DL1 9FA

**Regional Police Prevent Team**

**DI Dickon Turner**

Phone number: 01179 455536

Mobile number: 07823 361635

Email: [richard.turner@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:richard.turner@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

**DS Mandy Pilling**

Phone number: 01934 638470

Mobile number: 07585 307109

Email: [mandy.pilling@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:mandy.pilling@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

**PC Mike Perry**

Phone number: 01179 455536

**Somerset County Council Prevent Team**

**Lynsay Birkett (Prevent Project Officer)**

Phone number: 01823 359879

Mobile number: 07909 995644

Email: [lbirktt@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lbirktt@somerset.gov.uk)

**Lucy Macready (Chair of the Somerset Prevent Board)**

Phone number: 01823 359146

Mobile number: 07887 955440

Email: [richard.turner@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:richard.turner@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

**Anti-terrorist Hotline**

Phone number: 0800 789321

**Non-emergency DfE advice**

Phone number: 02073 407264

Email: [counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line**

Phone number: 0800 0280285

**National College for Teaching and Leadership**  
Phone number: 0345 609 0009

### **6.3 Forms**

Safeguarding Interview Record Sheet



**Safeguarding  
Interview Record Sheet**

<b>Date</b>	
<b>Present at interview</b>	
<b>Allegation concerning</b>	
<b>Source(s)</b>	
<b>Concern:</b>	
<b>Interview notes:</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	
<b>Outcome:</b>	

Assistant Head (Pastoral Care and Co-curriculum)  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

Neutral Notification Form:



**Confidential: Neutral  
Notification Form**

<b>School name</b>	
<b>Name of person completing form</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Form handed to (name and role)</b>	

<b>Please circle</b>	Self-report	Report about other
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**Notification:** Include relevant background (continue on separate sheet and number each page)