



Villa Real School
together we achieve

Child Protection Policy

2024

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jill Bowe, Headteacher
Named Governor with lead responsibility: Suzanne Bailey

Signed and Adopted by the Governing Body:

Safeguarding Governor

Date: 02.10.24

Date to be reviewed: September 2025

(Or earlier in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance.)

Purpose and Aim

Villa Real's whole-school Child Protection Policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child welfare concerns. This policy also aims to make explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe in our school. This policy recognises that all forms of harm/abuse including extra familial harm can occur in all communities and contexts (home, school, online and local area) and that all staff have a responsibility and the opportunity to support children, in sharing concerns and worries in school to feel safe. The whole school culture of vigilance in Villa real creates a safe space where children are supported, listened and responded to effectively, as well as valued in what they choose to share and that ALL staff act immediately with the necessary level of intervention to create the most effective outcome for every individual child.

The purpose of this policy is, therefore, to ensure that our children's welfare is of paramount importance, early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and where child protection concerns are identified referrals are handled confidentially, sensitively and professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's well-being.

The Governing Body is committed within Villa Real to keeping children safe by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our care through all our policies, procedures and practices. We expect all our pupils', parents and visitors to share this commitment and understanding.

Introduction

Villa Real fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the pupils in its care. There are four main elements to Villa Real's Child Protection Policy:

- 1. Prevention** (positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models and the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and recognising and reducing risks to children including, but not limited to, harassment, bullying/cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, victimisation, sexual abuse (including sexual harassment/violence and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation (extremism and terrorism)

and issues such as 'Honour' - Based Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage).

2. **Protection** (following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training and updates at least annually and are supported to refer their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or the First Contact Service (03000 267 979) directly IF NECESSARY. In certain specific cases such as Female Genital Mutilation (mandatory reporting of FGM from October 2015), radicalisation or Forced Marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted).
3. **Reconsideration** (following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child's circumstances).
4. **Support** (for pupils and school staff and for children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances or extra-familial harm and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes).

All staff have the added responsibility of recognising that there may be children with additional vulnerability who remain at higher risk of harm or abuse because of their existing vulnerability. All school staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

- has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'Honour'-Based Abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

(KCSIE 2024)

All staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect, exploitation and child-on-child abuse in its many forms by exercising professional curiosity at all times. This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and a safe educational environment for all children. All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Additional guidance on how our school supports the following areas of additional need or harm are provided in the hyperlinked documents in Appendix 1 of this Child Protection Policy and includes the full list taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. **Where the school has created an additional school policy because of any specific area of need, this is to be read in conjunction with this Child Protection Policy.**

Broadly the areas taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024 Annex B, include

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Children in the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Cybercrime
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness

- Mental Health
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Preventing Radicalisation
- The Prevent Duty
- Channel
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Serious Violence
- So called 'Honour' - Based Abuse inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage.
- FGM
- FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers
- Forced Marriage
- Additional advice and support

(KCSIE 2024)

AS STATED, THE FULL LIST OF ADDITIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORTIVE HYPERLINKS CAN BE FOUND IN APPENDIX 1 OF THIS POLICY

In the event of any of the above issues being recognised, information should be shared directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) which will result in the situation being recorded, evaluated and support offered in school or the pupil/s being referred to specific services.

This policy applies to Villa Real's whole workforce.

Framework and Legislation

No school operates in isolation. Keeping children safe from significant harm is the responsibility of all adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership, which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with children and families across the City.

Villa Real is committed to keeping children safe and safeguarding all children in accordance with Child Protection: Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://durham-scp.org.uk/> and partner agencies in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm.

Significant Harm is defined in The Children's Act 1989 as the ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and physical abuse) or the impairment of health (physical or mental) or development (physical,

intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural) as compared to a similar child.

Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person.

(Adoption and Children Act 2002)

Local Authorities have a duty to investigate (under S47 of the Children Act 1989). Where a Local Authority is informed that there is a child who is living, or is found, in their area and they have reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm they must make such enquiries as necessary to promote or safeguard the child's welfare. The First Contact Service undertakes this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority once a referral has been made.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024 contains information on what schools and colleges should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges must comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 which applies to all schools, including maintained Nursery Schools. The Children Act 1989 sets out the legal framework.

Roles and Responsibilities For All Staff

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge and protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes; (including in addition to the four categories of harm, issues such as sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines and serious youth violence, 'Honour' - Based Abuse (HBA) inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage, radicalisation, (extremism, radicalisation and terrorism), harassment, bullying including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and victimization, preventing impairment of children's health (physical and mental health) or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;

and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. This includes everyone under the age of 18.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Due to regular contact with children all staff at Villa Real hold a particularly important role in safeguarding as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and to prevent concerns from escalating. Children can make disclosures or show signs of harm, abuse or neglect or exploitation at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools. Therefore, through a thorough induction process and the sharing of this policy with all staff, students and volunteers, it is important that ALL staff:

- Ensure that they clearly understand the school's systems and procedures for sharing information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as shared in this policy.
- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times (taking the child's wishes and feelings into account) and reassure them that they will take seriously any concerns raised to them by the child and both support them and keep them safe. This will include determining what action to take and what services to provide on behalf of the child in need (for non-safeguarding concerns).
- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) immediately and consistently promote a culture of vigilance in school, where concerns are shared and dealt with as soon as possible. (However, ALL staff can refer their concerns directly to the First Contact Service if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above and all staff should be aware of their local referral process to Local Authority children's social care. They will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) as soon as possible if they have reported concerns directly).
- Ensure that they immediately share with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) information shared with them by a child or directly observed/witnessed and record it. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies. All discussions, decisions and reasons for them should be recorded in writing adhering to Villa Real's Recording and Information Sharing Policy/Procedure. Staff should never let fears of sharing information stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Ensure that they feel confident in reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Ensure that they are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Therefore, all staff should ensure that they exercise their professional curiosity and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child. This also means considering how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** in **respect of any safeguarding issues** and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child, an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher.
- Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices of staff and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime through whistleblowing procedures and the Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct inclusive of 'Low-Level' Concerns Policy.
- Ensure that they receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. This training will be regularly updated. In addition, all staff will receive updates as required and at least annually to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child.
- Ensure from the 1st July 2015 for schools, (or 18th September 2015 for Colleges) that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, April 2015, that the school has 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and to assess risk of children and young people being radicalised or drawn into extremism/terrorism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols are in place for all visitors so that their views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others).

- Ensure from October 2015 that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.
- Ensure that they understand, through online safety training, that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being cases and the additional risks for pupils online and continue to promote the school's Online Safety Policy/ Mobile and Smart Technology (Acceptable Use Policy) in the protection of all pupils. This includes the management of internet access via children's own mobile phones or electronic devices that can allow them unlimited access to the internet without any restrictions using their own data allowance (3G, 4G, 5G). It is clear in Villa Real's Online Safety Policy/ /Mobile and Smart Technology/ Acceptable Usage Policy/ Procedure, the expectations of pupils regarding their own devices whilst on school site and the consequences of any evidence of inappropriate use of the internet. This includes not using their mobile phones or smart technology to sexually harass, share indecent images (consensually or non-consensually) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.
- Ensure that they remain vigilant whilst visitors are on site and continue to promote the school's commitment to keeping children safe through reminding visitors and parents of the school's appropriate use of personal mobile phones/devices whilst they are on school premises. This includes staff understanding and adhering to the Staff Behaviour Policy inclusive of use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

Villa Real will work with Local Authority children's social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Villa Real has appointed from our SMT Jill Bowe to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This person has the overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place), a role which carries a significant level of responsibility. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post and is given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out the role effectively. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This person is able

to take part in strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and to support other trained staff to do so as well as contribute to the assessment of children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any Deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns (KCSIE 2024).

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

At Villa Real we have appointed the following Deputy Designated Leads Jamie Coram, Sam Dawson, Natalie Fitzpatrick and Alex Morris who are part of the Safeguarding Team. These individuals are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies the ultimate LEAD RESPONSIBILITY for child protection will not be delegated and remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any deputies will be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role is explicit in their job description.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a very detailed role, (see below).

However, if there is an IMMEDIATE safeguarding concern and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) are unavailable please seek immediate support via The First Contact Service (03000 267 979).

The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Leads are identified here:

Availability

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will be available in person or in exceptional circumstances availability may be by phone or other means.

At Villa Real we will arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Manage Referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:

- Of suspected abuse to the First Contact Service and support staff who make referrals to the First Contact Service
- To the Channel Programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel Programme.

- Where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- Where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

Work with others

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners (Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership)
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirements for children to have an Appropriate Adult (PACE Code C 2019).
- As required liaise with the case manager (Headteacher, or where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegations, the Chair of Governors or Proprietor of an Independent School) and the Designated Officer, for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the Senior Mental Health Lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the Headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues

that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school.

- Ensure that we know the cohort of children, who have or have had, a Social Worker and understand their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a Social Worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information Sharing and Managing the Child Protection File

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information will be kept confidential and stored securely. Good practice is to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice.

Where children leave school (including in-year transfers) the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated

Safeguarding Leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff.
- Ensure the school's Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with Governing Bodies or Proprietors 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 Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding and
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a Social Worker, are experiencing with teachers and school leadership staff.

Training, Knowledge and Skills

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any Deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years. The

Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) will also undertake Prevent Awareness Training. This training will provide Designated Safeguarding Leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly Local Authority children's social care, so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and Local Authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- 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.
- Understand the importance of the role the Designated Safeguarding Lead has in providing information and support to Local Authority children's social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and well-being, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and with the safeguarding partners (Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership), other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- 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.
- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school.

- Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- 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.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training will support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- Ensure that staff are supported during the referrals process;
- Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, Designated Safeguarding Leads will be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school may put in place to protect them;
- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

Designated Safeguarding Leads are equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the PREVENT program etc.

Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024: Annex C.

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's suite of safeguarding policies particularly the Child Protection Policy and Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and the Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concern, allegations against staff and whistleblowing) Policy, especially new or part-time staff who may work with different establishments.
- Be aware of all school excursions and residential and clarify with educational visit co-ordinator/group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding/child protection.
- Ensure that a Professional Supervision Policy is in place for all Designated Safeguarding Leads/Deputies and is a well embedded process in school, that allows for critical and reflective practice to promote the educational outcomes and improved mental health and wellbeing of all vulnerable children.
- Ensure that a whole school policy for induction is in place for all new starters including members of the workforce and volunteers, to induct them thoroughly into all key aspects of their role and responsibility in school.

- Ensure a whole school policy about managing behaviour effectively is in place to ensure a good and safe educational environment for all children. This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and provide a safe educational environment for all children. This policy includes bullying/cyber-bullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. This policy should additionally include the use of reasonable force. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, schools we will consider the risks carefully recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. We will also consider the duties under the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber-bullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, is in place, as a stand-alone policy but also covered in the Behaviour Policy.
- Ensure that an effective Record-Keeping Policy regarding information on children's welfare is in place. This details the school's procedures and applications for recording information including use of CPOMS, what data will be recorded and for what purposes, who in school will have access to this information, how it will be shared and transferred and the school's retention schedule.

- Inform LA of any pupil to be deleted from school admission register and follow missing from education protocols.
- Inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Responsibilities of Villa Real's Governing Body

The Governing Body at Villa Real has strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and will ensure that the school complies with its duties under legislation including the obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR) and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The Governing Body will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024 including confirming that all policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect) are understood, and followed by all staff. The Governing Body will also ensure that all Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online which amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in Villa Real are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

The Governing Body has a lead to take leadership responsibility for Villa Real's safeguarding arrangements.

At Villa Real the senior lead Governor for safeguarding is Suzanne Bailey.

The role of this individual is to:

- Ensure that the allocation of additional time, funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding/child protection activity and challenge and test its effectiveness.
- Ensure the self-assessment tool and Designated Safeguarding Lead report demonstrates fully and accurately the safeguarding arrangements and any action to progress areas of weakness or development.
- Ensure that all the Governing Body receive training to clarify their statutory role in keeping children safe to support their quality assurance of those statutory arrangements.
- Ensure that the Governing Body are aware of their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and the need for the school to understand their role in effective multi-agency working under the new arrangements.
- In Villa Real the Chair holds these additional responsibilities as they do not hold the safeguarding portfolio.
- Ensure that they liaise with the Local Authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher or Proprietor of an independent school.
- Ensure that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) or the Headteacher is reported directly to the Designated Officer (DO). Therefore, ensuring effective whistleblowing procedures are in place.
- Ensure that the appointed member of the Governing Body for safeguarding holds the Headteacher to account on all matters involving safeguarding through an effective Child Protection Policy that is embedded and followed by the entire workforce in all of the above raised areas.
- Ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety (which, amongst other things includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Governors will also ensure that this training is integrated, aligned

and considered as part of Villa Real's safeguarding approach and culture of vigilance.

- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to limit children's exposure to potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. This includes ensuring that an effective whole school approach to online safety is in place to empower the school to protect and educate pupils, students and staff in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns where appropriate. This also means confirming that staff, pupils and visitors to their site follow Villa Real's Online Safety/Mobile and Smart Technology/Acceptable Use Policy (which reflects the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e., 3G, 4G and 5G). Governors will also ensure that this is regularly reviewed and risk assessed to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies and that parents and carers are communicated with to reinforce the messages of children staying safe online (inclusive of online sites that children access and who, from the school, they talk to online, for example remote education).
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, keeping themselves and others safe, including online safety through Relationships Education (Primary) or Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary) and that this approach to teaching is tailored to meet the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children and how they identify, including children who are victims of abuse, children with special educational needs or disabilities and children who identify as lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT).
- Ensure that a Designated Teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, including working with the Local Authority's virtual school Headteacher and discuss how pupil premium funding for looked after children will be used.
- Ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with Special Educational Needs. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without

further exploration; being more prone to peer group isolation than other children; the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

- Ensure that where children may need to learn online at home, there are clear, safe and effective protocols and provisions in place.

Information for Parents

At Villa Real, the Governing Body are committed to keeping our children safe and will take any reasonable action to safeguard and promote their welfare. In cases where Villa Real has reason to be concerned that a child maybe suffering significant harm, ill treatment, neglect or other forms of harm, staff have no alternative but to follow Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and inform the First Contact Service or police of their concern.

Procedures

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will be informed immediately by an employee of the school, pupil of the school, parent of the school or other persons, in the following circumstances:

- Suspicion that a child is being harmed
- There is evidence that a child is being harmed

The threshold of significant harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 Section 31 (9) as:

- Ill-treatment
- Impairment of health (as compared to a similar child)

Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002).

Working Together 2018 defines the categories of harm as:

Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused

when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. 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 (also known as Child-on-Child Abuse) in education and **ALL** staff should be aware of it.

** It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but all Child-on-Child Abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Emotional Abuse

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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet

the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including 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.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Children may need a Social Worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Local Authorities children's social care have clear duties to share the fact a child has a Social Worker, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms (contextual safeguarding) take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms. Staff should be aware that experience and indicators of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to boys but for both boys and girls being criminally exploited they maybe at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Staff should also be aware of the indicators that signal a child is at risk from or involved in serious violent crime, for example being missing from education, changing friendships, a decline in school performance, self-harming and unexplained gifts and possessions. Staff should be able to recognise the risk factors that increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education or permanently excluded from school,

having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to the First Contact Service, if necessary. These records may be either handwritten or electronic but will be stored via a secure system. The Headteacher will be kept informed at all times.

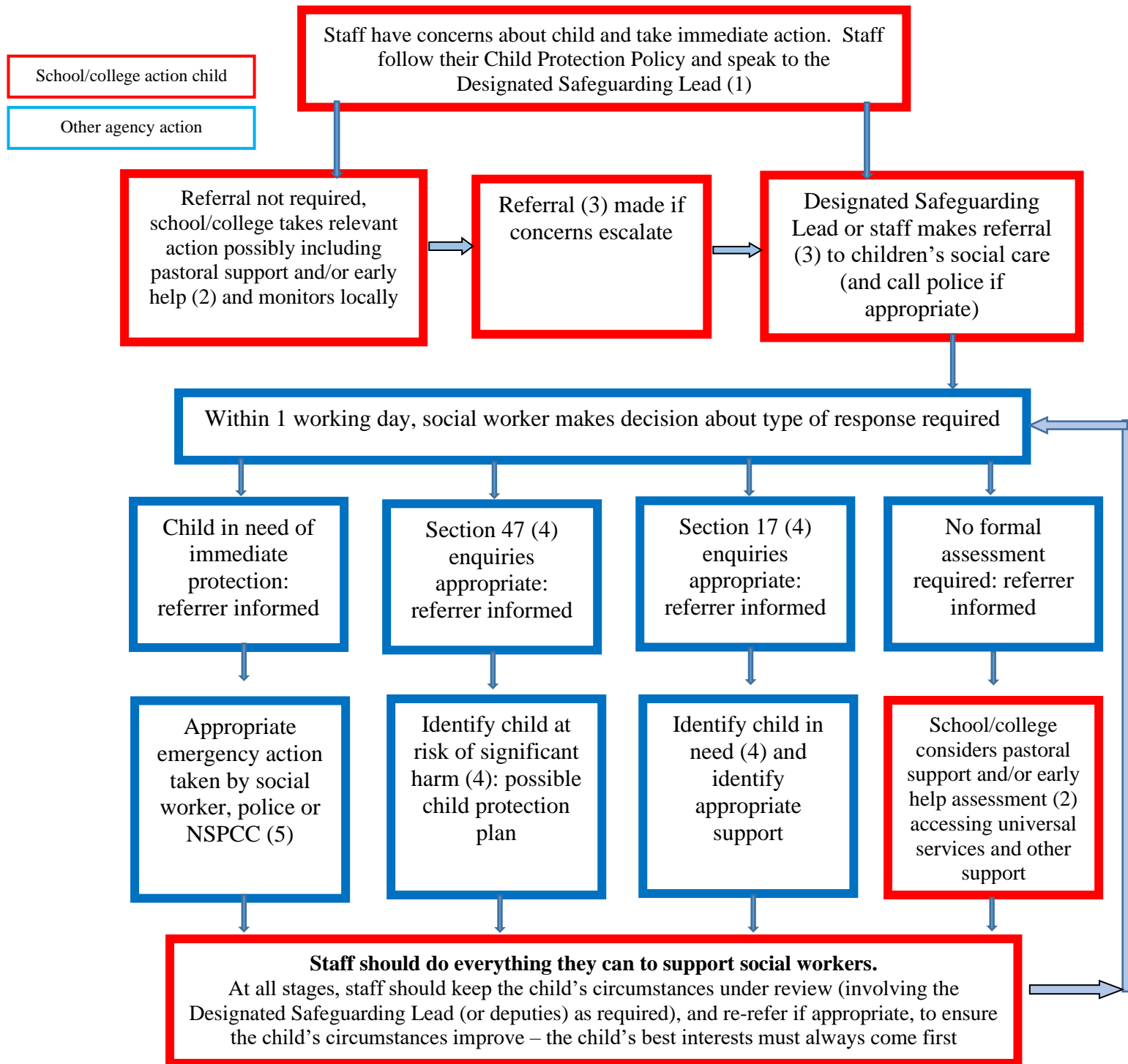
CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff should be considering the context within such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Geographical factors	Schools Response
<p>Our School sits on the borders of several major cities such as Newcastle, Durham, Gateshead – high exposure to county lines in several surrounding locations.</p>	<p>Students are taught during assemblies as well as the Personal Development Programmes, on how to keep themselves safe and how to recognise the signs of grooming and criminal exploitation. It is also covered throughout the key stage 3 curriculum.</p> <p>Display boards are updated regularly. Key contact details of key staff whom they can report incidents to are displayed in prominent areas.</p>
Social and economic factors	Schools Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Bus Station. • Back of the local leisure centre. • New housing estates next to the old people's home. • These are known hot spots for crime and anti-social behaviour. • Areas local to specific children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We teach pupils about personal safety and making the right decisions to keep themselves safe regarding their behaviour beyond school. • Work with DAAC to develop understanding of keeping safe in the community. • Themed safeguarding week/months information and hotspot to upskill staff in recognising and responding to safeguarding issues. • Regular safeguarding updates. • Themed weeks in school such as 'Black History Month and Pride month' etc where students are taught what is respect and what it looks like in school and in the community. This also drives equality and diversity.

Peer Group factors	Schools Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer groups do have an impact, particularly those that have older siblings that attend and Alternative Provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils are taught to be confident and assertive through our PSHCE curriculum, KidSafe and DAAC. We also engage in a full week of 'anti-bullying' mental health/wellbeing week activities. Online safety is also delivered across the year. In the primaries they also have a safer internet day. We encourage any child feeling pressurised to communicate with a highly skilled member of the Year Team.
Home factors	Schools Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of our pupils are connected to the internet at home and regularly use gaming devices to engage in online games with their friends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through our Computing Curriculum, pupils are taught about online safety. Every pupil has signed our 'Acceptable Use' contract. Parents sign an 'Acceptable Use' contract too. Students are taught how to keep themselves safe online via assemblies and our daily personal development sessions and within the curriculum. Promoting online safety via our social media platforms and online screens to share information based around main places around school. We offer termly parent forums where online safety is highly promoted and parents have access to specialist staff to obtain further advice and guidance.

From KCSIE 2024
Actions where there are concerns about a child



1. In cases which also involve a concern or allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of KCSIE 2024
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
4. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
5. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

Safe Schools/Safe Staff

Villa Real's Governing Body have agreed and ratified the following policies, procedures, processes or systems which must be read and considered in conjunction with this policy:

Whistle Blowing/Confidential Reporting

Villa Real's Whistle Blowing/Confidential Reporting Policy provides guidance to staff, volunteers and contractors on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken, when staff have concerns about any adult's behaviour.

Management of a safeguarding concern or allegation about an adult that does or does not meet the harm threshold:

If staff have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) harming or posing a risk of harm to children, then this should be referred to the Headteacher where there are concerns/allegations about the Headteacher this should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

Consultation without delay with the Designated Officers Helpline: Louise Brooks/Sharon Lewis, Tel: 03000 268 835 will determine what action follows. A multi-agency strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context, the Headteacher will attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the Designated Officer. All issues will be recorded on the allegation management form and the outcome reached will be noted to ensure closure.

<https://durham-scp.org.uk/>

Where this concern does not meet the harm threshold, all staff should continue to follow their Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct Inclusive of 'Low-Level' Concerns Policy and share information with the **Headteacher**. This concern may be where an adult's behaviour is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work but does not meet the allegation threshold.

Training and Support

All staff members will be made aware of the systems within their school which support safeguarding and these will be fully explained to all new staff as part of their induction into the school to ensure they can

discharge their responsibilities effectively. This includes: The Child Protection Policy, the policy and procedures to deal with Child-on-Child Abuse; the Behaviour Policy (which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), the Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concern, allegations against staff and Whistleblowing) Policy, the Safer Working Practice Document, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies.

All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) which is regularly updated. Our CPD for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of our whole school safeguarding approach, wider staff training and curriculum planning. The Governing Body or Proprietor decides the frequency and content of this CPD. At Villa Real our whole school training is held in school. In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via staff meetings weekly or internal CPD as required but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and allow them opportunities to contribute to reviewing and shaping the safeguarding arrangements in school inclusive of, the Child Protection Policy.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) and Local Authority children's social care. Villa Real recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://durham-scp.org.uk/>

Record Keeping

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. Villa Real is clear about the need to record any concerns, discussions held, decisions made and reasons for those decisions about a child or children within its care. All records include, a clear and comprehensive

summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome (Purpose, Action, and Outcome). All staff will follow the schools Information Sharing and Recording Policies to ensure record keeping is compliant and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018.

Following a child leaving our school we follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines and information regarding children who have required statutory intervention at any point in their school career will automatically be shared with the receiving school. This is to ensure that all children are given the right support and intervention and information is shared strictly on a need to know basis.

Safeguarding recording within Villa Real is held electronically through a secure management system of CPOMS and all staff have received training in the recording expectations and retention. At Villa Real we started electronic recording from November 2016. All recording prior to this is in paper format.

Attendance at Safeguarding Conferences

In the event of Villa Real being invited to attend child protection conferences, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies), will represent the school and/or identify the most appropriate trained member of staff to provide information relevant to child protection conference (initial/review). In the event that those staff members cannot attend, the following trained members of staff may attend; ; Class Teachers or HLTAs.

Supporting Children

Villa Real recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Villa Real may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The school, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

As an Operation Encompass partner we work closely with the Public Health Advance Practitioner and Management Support Administrator (Operation Encompass Lead) with regards to domestic violence incidents and offer wellbeing checks to our pupils if we are contacted following an incident which has occurred in one of our pupils' homes.

Villa real also recognises that children are capable of abusing other children. Child-on-Child Abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be investigated and dealt with appropriately as part of our school's zero tolerance approach to unacceptable behaviour. No Child-on-Child Abuse should be tolerated or minimised as part of growing up and all those involved will be provided with an appropriate level of support. It is understood that those pupils who have experienced abuse in their own lives may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. See Child-on-Child Abuse Policy for detailed information.

Therefore Villa Real will endeavour to support all its pupils through a clear set of values and standards upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, self-protection.
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- Approaches which allow children and young people to develop critical thinking, literacy skills and digital literacy skills.
- A curriculum that provides preventative education which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.
- A curriculum where children develop personal resilience, understand and can take appropriate risks or have personal strategies/safety plans that allow them to manage their own safety both on and off line. This can include topics covered as part of Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education as well as Fundamental British Values and the SMSC Curriculum which cover harm, abuse, positive and healthy relationships and crime. Such a curriculum will be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities) and will include; healthy and respectful relationships; boundaries and consent; stereo typing, prejudice and equality; body confidence and self-esteem; how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour;

the concepts of, and laws relating to-sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called 'Honour' - Based Abuse such as Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and how to access support and; what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

- A whole school approach to online safety that considers the four areas of risk: Content; being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism. Contact; being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, child to child pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial and other purposes. Conduct; personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g., consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying). Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.
- A coherent management of Behaviour and Discipline Policy & Procedures inclusive of the Use of Reasonable Force.
- Liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's interest to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in all safeguarding situations.

Villa Real recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. School staff will give consideration to children who are subject to a statement of special needs, an education health and care plan or have a medical condition, as these can mask safeguarding issues and may often be attributed to the medical condition rather than that a child may be being harmed. Concerns such as changes in behaviour

and presentation (both physical and mental), mood or injury will be considered for each individual child and their own circumstances and will not be dismissed. Children with SEND and certain medical conditions are often more prone to peer group isolation than other children and there is greater potential for children with SEND and certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs. Therefore, time will be taken to ensure that the full circumstances of any child who has additional needs and requires support around language and communication is shared at the point of referral to ensure the best possible outcome for the child is always achieved and their voice through any form of communication is always heard. To address these additional challenges, Villa Real will consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND and certain medical conditions.

Villa Real also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health issues children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

This policy **MUST** be read in conjunction with other related school policies.

These include:

- **A Robust School Recruitment and Selection Policy** - inclusive of safer recruitment guidance and regulation, for example a **Single Central Record** which demonstrates the pre-appointment checks for all staff (e.g. identity, professional qualifications, right to work in the UK, further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK, for the workforce who are in regulatory activity (enhanced DBS, children's/adult barred list, prohibition from teaching check, section 128 check for management positions) and supervision of those who don't meet this requirement.
- Clear recruitment procedures which embed keeping children safe across every aspect from vacancy to conditional appointments, induction and an on-going safeguarding culture of vigilance.
- Trained panel members who ensure that the policy works in practice in all recruitment and selection within the school.
- School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, Regulation 9: require Governing Bodies or Proprietors of maintained schools to ensure at

least one member of a recruitment panel must undertake safer recruitment training to satisfy all requirements in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Working Together 2023.

- Staff Handbook and policies and procedures
- **Staff Behaviour Policy** (code of conduct) inclusive of 'Low Level' Concerns, allegations against staff, Whistleblowing Policy and Safer Recruitment Consortium Guidance for Safer Working Practices for those working with young people in education settings, 2022. Villa Real will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with young people and agree to work within all policies and procedures to safeguard both children and adults.
- Villa Real will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings being taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).
- **Behaviour Policy** – inclusive of the Use of Reasonable Force/positive handling and confiscating and searching.
- **Anti-Bullying Policy/Online Bullying Policy.**
- **Online Safety Policy/Mobile and Smart Technology** inclusive of appropriate usage documentation (covering the use of mobile phones, cameras and all other technology within the school or setting and appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks.)
- **Remote/Home learning Policy** inclusive of all expectations for children learning at home.
- **Record-Keeping Policy** inclusive of all procedures around the recording, storing and transferring of information regarding children
- **Inclusion & Special Education Needs Policy.**
- **The Schools Educational Visits/Off Site Policy** (reviewed annually) reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school, when undertaking school trips, visits or pupils being creatively educated.
- **Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.**

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy/Process/Plan**
- **Photographic & Digital Imagery Policy** with parental consent forms annually signed.
- **Administration of Medicines Policy** and procedures with trained staff who manage this.
- **Pupils with Medical Needs Policy** and implications for the workforce, pupils and partnership with parents.
- **Attendance Management Policy/Children who are absent from education** - school management for attendance including children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions (unexplainable and/or persistently absent) and the partnership with the LA in reporting children missing from education and those deleted from the school's admission register. This includes the need for two emergency contact details for every pupil, where possible.
- **Missing Children Policy** – inclusive of runaways, missing, and children missing from education, ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses.
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Allegation Management Policy**
- **Confidentiality and Whistle Blowing Policy.**
- **Information Sharing Policy** (internal and external exchange of information)
- **Looked After Children Policy** inclusive of named Looked After Teacher whose role is to champion the achievement of looked after children in your school and work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Virtual Headteacher within the LA who has responsibility for the LAC.
- **Intimate Care and Care Plan Policy** – inclusive of procedure to support pupils who have an accident and either wet, soil or menstruate and need assistance.
- **Unaccompanied Travel** to and from school procedure to ensure pupils safety.

- **Single Equality Scheme.**
- **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Curriculum** inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Mental Health and Well-Being and Fundamental British Values.
- **Relationship Education Policy (Primary)** inclusive of Health Education content.
- **Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy (Secondary)** inclusive Health Education content.

This Policy has been informed by the following legislation and national & local guidance

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/section/ZA2>

Children Act 1989/2004
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

CP Referral Form
<https://durham-scp.org.uk/practitioners/>

Data Protection Act 2018
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

DfE Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Jan 2024
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Education Act 2002 Section 175
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made>

Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/en/ukpga/2021/16/enacted>

Equality Act 2010
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

General Data Protection Regulations, 2018
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-toolkit-for-schools>

Human Rights Act, 1998
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights>

Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

Freedom of Information Act 2000
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga_20000036_en.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings

[Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/728/made>

Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England

https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/16086/1/public_sector_equality_duty_guidance_for_schools_in_england_final.pdf

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

School attendance: Guidance for schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

Sexual Offences Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership

<https://durham-scp.org.uk/>

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Working together to safeguard children HM GOV (2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Appendix 1

Abuse or Safeguarding Issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Abuse	Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse - CSA Centre	Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse
	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	DfE advice
	Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance	Home Office (HO)
	Faith based abuse: National Action Plan	DfE advice
	Disrespect NoBody Campaign	Home Office website
	Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy	Home Office Policy Paper
	Together we can stop child sexual abuse	HM Government campaign
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE advice
Children missing from education, home or care	Children missing education	DfE statutory guidance
	Child missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance
	Children and adults missing strategy	Home Office strategy
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service
Child Exploitation	Trafficking: safeguarding children	DfE and HO guidance
	Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children	DfE statutory guidance
	Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims	HO statutory guidance
	Child exploitation disruption toolkit	Home Office
	County Lines Toolkit For Professionals	The Children's

		Society
Confidentiality	Gillick competency Fraser guidelines	NSPCC
Drugs	Drug Strategy 2021	Home Office strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website
	Drug and Alcohol education – teacher guidance & evidence review	PSHE Association website
(so called) 'Honour' - Based Abuse" including FGM and forced marriage	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office guidance
	Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH and HO statutory guidance
	Forced Marriage	FMU
	Forced Marriage: The right to choose	Home Office
	FGM Resource Pack	Home Office
Health and Well-Being	Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience	Public Health England
	Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE advice
	Overview – Fabricated or induced illness	NHS
Homelessness	Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government guidance

Information Sharing	Government information sharing advice	DfE
	Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub	ICO
Online safety-advice	Childnet	Childnet
	Educateagainsthate	Educate Against Hate
	London Grid for Learning	London Grid for Learning
	NSPCC E-safety for schools	NSPCC
	Safer recruitment consortium	Safer Recruitment Consortium
	Searching screening and confiscation	DfE
	South West Grid for Learning	SWGFL
	Use of social media for online radicalisation	DfE & Home Office
	Online Safety Audit Tool	UK Council for Internet Safety
	Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform	DCMS
	A business guide for protecting children on your online platform	DCMS
	UK Safer Internet Centre	UK Safer Internet Centre
Online Safety – Remote Education, Virtual Lessons & Live Streaming	Guidance Get help with remote education	DfE
	Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education	DfE
	London Grid for Learning	LGFL

	National cyber security centre	National Cyber Security Centre
	UK Safer Internet Centre	UK Safer Internet Centre
Online Safety – Support for Children	Childline	Childline
	UK Safer Internet Centre	UK Safer Internet Centre
	CEOP	National Crime Agency Command
Online Safety – Parental Support	Childnet	Childnet
	Commonsensemedia	Common Sense Media
	Government advice	
	Internet Matters	Internet Matters
	How Can I Help My Child?	Marie Collins Foundation
	Let's Talk About It	Let's Talk About It
	London Grid for Learning	London Grid for Learning
	Stopitnow	Lucy Faithfull Foundation
	National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow	CEOP
	Parentzone	Parent Zone
	Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents	Children's Commissioner
	#Ask the awkward	CEOP
Private Fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers	DfE advice
	Educate Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office advice
	Prevent for FE and Training	Education and Training Foundation (ETF)
	Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources	LGfT
Serious Violence	Serious violence strategy	Home Office Strategy
	Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention	Home Office
	Youth Endowment Fund	Home Office
	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges	Home Office advice
	Tackling violence against women and girls strategy-	Home Office
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office
Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment	Barnardo's	
	Lucy Faithful Foundation	
	Marie Collins Foundation	
	NSPCC	
	Rape Crisis	
	UK Safer Internet Centre	
Harmful Sexual	Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The	

Behaviour	Survivors Trust	
	NICE guidance	
	HSB toolkit	Lucy Faithfull Foundation
	NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework-	
	Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals (Schools)	Contextual Safeguarding Network
	Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now	Stop It Now
Support for Victims	Anti-Bullying Alliance	
	Rape Crisis	
	The Survivors Trust	
	Victim Support	
	Childline	
Toolkits	ask AVA	
	NSPCC Online self-assessment tool	
	NSPCC - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.	
	NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework	
	Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire This resource provides	

	practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.	
	Contextual Safeguarding Network	
	Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit	
	Childnet - Just a joke?	
	Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up	
	NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework	
	Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals - Schools	
Sharing Nudes & Semi-Nudes	London Grid for Learning-collection of advice	
	UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people	
Support for Parents/Carers	Thinkuknow:	CEOP
	support positive sexual behaviour.	CEOP

Appendix 2

Low Level Concern:

Any adult linked to our school who has behaved in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Allegation:

Any adult linked to our school who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Appropriate:

- Behaviour which is entirely consistent with our school's Code of Conduct, and the Law.

Clarity around Allegation vs Low-Level Concern vs Appropriate Conduct

Storing and use of Low-Level Concerns and follow-up information

LLC forms and follow-up information will be stored securely within the school's safeguarding systems, with access only by the leadership team. This will be stored in accordance with the school's GDPR and data protection policies.

The staff member(s) reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concern with others apart from the Head Teacher or those aware in the senior leadership team.

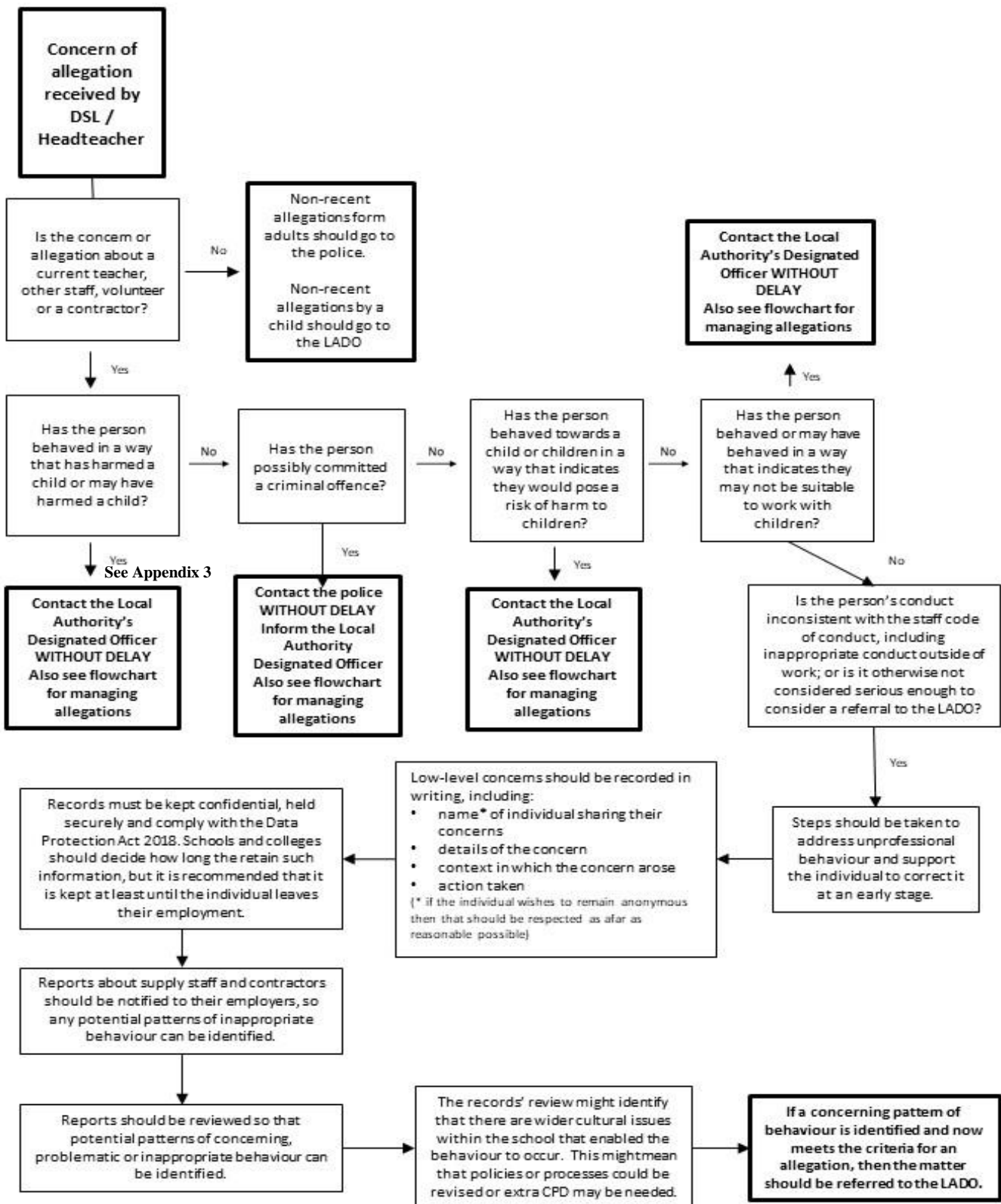
Low-Level Concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in disciplinary or misconduct procedures. Whenever staff leave Villa Real School, any record of low-level concerns which are stored about them will be reviewed as to whether or not that information needs to be kept.

Consideration will be given to:

(a) whether some or all of the information contained within any record may have any reasonably likely value in terms of any potential historic employment or abuse claim so as to justify keeping it, in line with normal safeguarding records practice; or

(b) if, on balance, any record is not considered to have any reasonably likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly

Process to follow when a Low-Level Concern is raised



***NB – if the concern is about the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors should be informed.**

Appendix 3

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts and to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. Please liaise with HR as necessary.

Basic enquiries could include the following:

- was the individual in the school or college at the time of the allegations
- did the individual, or could the individual have come into contact with the child
- Are there any witnesses, any CCTV footage?

When fact finding you may find it helpful to use the 5 WH model of open questions:

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- Why (context/ events leading up to incident)

Examples include:

“What did you see/hear/experience?” “When did the situation occur?” “Where did the situation occur?” “Who was involved?” “How were you impacted by what occurred?” or “How do you see the situation?” “Was anyone else present?” “What was their involvement?” “Can you tell me more?”

If your initial fact finding indicates the allegation could not have happened (e.g. child/ individual to whom the allegation relates was not in school, or physically the incident could not have happened (e.g. slamming a soft closed door) this does not need to be reported to LADO. You will need to keep a record of your allegations management decision making within school/ college. Please ensure any statements from students are signed and dated by the student. You should advise parent/ child of the outcome of your fact finding (e.g. referral to LADO, dealing with incident as a low level concern or that the allegation could not have happened and explain why)

Threshold for LADO: (Please ensure you are familiar with Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures for managing allegations against staff and volunteers who work with children.)

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If you consider that any of the above points are met, a referral needs to be made to LADO within 1 working day – 03000 268835

A referral to LADO does not negate your safeguarding responsibilities. If a child is at risk of imminent harm and/ or you suspect a criminal offence may have occurred, you MUST follow safeguarding procedures and liaise with Children's Services (First Contact) and/or Police before making a referral to LADO.

Low level concerns (Keeping Children Safe In Education)

Governing bodies and proprietors should have policies and processes to deal with any concerns or allegations which do not meet the harm threshold. This is referred to in KCSIE as 'low-level' concerns. It is important that schools and colleges have appropriate policies and processes in place to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern (no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt) that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door when it is not part of their role
- humiliating children.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

If threshold for LADO is not met:

- Follow your low-level concerns policy
- Log your decision making internally – this does not need to be reported/ logged with LADO

Are you feeling worried about yourself or someone else?

Villa Real School Keeping Children Safe

Do you want to talk to someone who can help?



Natalie Fitzpatrick
Deputy Safeguarding Lead









Sam Dawson
Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Jill Bowe
Safeguarding Lead

Jamie Coram
Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Alex Morris
Deputy Safeguarding Lead

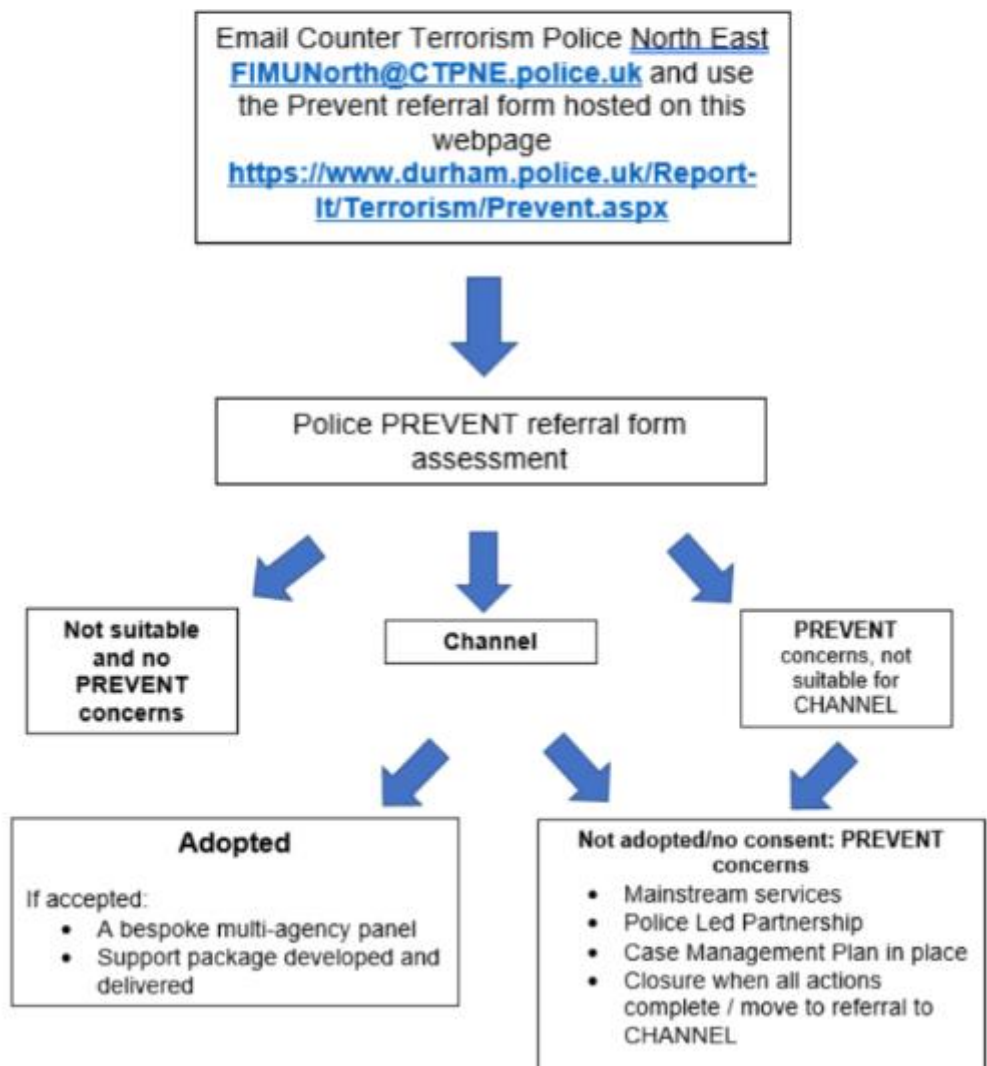
Appendix 5

Multi-Agency Meetings		
 <p style="text-align: center;">Strategy</p>	<p>•Referral taken up by First contact Service: 'reasonable cause to suspect child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm'. •To agree whether to start s47 enquiries and to begin/complete a core assessment under Child Act 1989. •Professionals meeting only •Held at short notice (some professionals may be available by phone).Police Sergeant and investigating officer (VU); Assessment and Intervention Team manager and SW, Health, referrer (if professional) and other relevant colleagues. •Usually held in A&I Team office, hospital. •To PLAN how to look into the concern: share information, consider criminal investigation, medicals, interviews etc.</p>	
 <p style="text-align: center;">Initial Child Protection Conference</p>	<p>•15 DAYS after last strategy meeting •Accessible public building: A&I offices •Parents/carers (supporter/legal adviser) and all relevant professionals who work with family members and children attend • Conference is to decide whether the child(ren) are at continuing risk of significant harm and whether CP Plan needs to be put in place. •Tasks: prepare a report for the conference on all children in family you work with •Share report with parents and carers at least two working days before the conference (open/transparent procedure so parents can know and question all information in advance).•Ensure that child's views are given •Produce single-agency chronology. •If children not put on list then consideration of services needed, now passes to relevant Child Protection Team.</p>	
 <p style="text-align: center;">Core Group</p>	<p>•10 DAYS later. Date for this meeting and first Review Conference is set at the Initial Conference •This 'core' of essential professionals will work with the family and the young person to try and achieve change and improvement so that the child is not still at continuing risk of harm (these safety issues are dealt with before other 'welfare' matters) • Key worker is the social worker •The group complete the Child Protection Plan and complete work on the core assessment as part of this •The chronologies are merged and continuously updated as working documents •Initially meetings quite frequent but generally held about every 4-6 weeks</p>	
 <p style="text-align: center;">Review CP Conference</p>	<p>•10 WEEKS (3 months) before first Review conference. • Evaluate effectiveness of Core Group in effecting change and better care of the children • '..to review the safety, health and development of the child against the planned outcomes set out in the child protection plan' •to see whether CP plan should continue to be in place or should be changed •Child's wishes and feelings must be sought and taken into account •if the child is not still at risk of significant harm then they should not require a CP plan •Tasks: report needed and shared with parents/carers 7 days prior to conference: evaluation what has changed, the impact on child's welfare against objectives set out in the plan</p>	



Prevent referral flow chart for County Durham

The Channel Programme is a key part of the Prevent strategy. Section 36 of the Act requires local authorities and others to provide support for people who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, before they commit an offence. This process, known as [Channel](#), operates in the pre-criminal space and aims to provide support to individuals at an early stage and help safeguard them from radicalisation.



Appendix 6

Briefing Note

DCC's vetting procedures for home to school transport drivers and passenger assistants October 2023

This briefing provides schools with information on Durham County Council's vetting procedures for home to school transport drivers and passenger assistants.

Background

Drivers and passenger assistants (PAS) working on school and social care transport arranged by Durham County Council are subject to a vetting process.

Contractors for taxis, minibuses, buses, and coaches must only use drivers and PAS that have been through the vetting process, covering safeguarding checks and training.

Scope

DCC's Integrated Passenger Transport Group (IPTG) arranges almost all home to school transport provided by DCC and runs the vetting process described in this briefing. Some transport for Children Looked After by DCC is arranged by Supportive (a charity, under a contract with DCC). Where Supportive uses taxis to provide the transport, the IPTG process applies. Supportive also uses volunteer drivers to provide transport, and for them an equivalent vetting process is operated by Supportive.

Schools should be mindful that arrangements for pupils transported by other local authorities are not covered by this briefing. Schools can check with the CLA Social Worker what the transport arrangements for the child are. Any questions should be directed to the Social Worker.

Safeguarding

Drivers and PAS are required to hold an authorisation badge, after application to IPTG. Badges are only issued after consideration by IPTG of a specific DBS Enhanced Disclosure, specifying the child and adult workforce. IPTG seeks advice from CYPs Safeguarding on any cases with matters disclosed (except for traffic etc offences) before reaching decisions on authorisation.

New disclosures are required every 3 years.

IPTG also cross checks against its own records for any previous history that may not have been revealed in the disclosure.

Training

Drivers and PAS are required to have training in safeguarding issues. In all cases this is a level 1 Safeguarding Awareness training (plus a refresher after 3 years), arranged by the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP); this is now done as an online course.

PAS are required to attend IPTG's PA training. Drivers on runs carrying wheelchairs are required to attend IPTG's Accessible Vehicle training. A programme of refresher training for cases where a long time has passed since initial training is underway, with a view to being a 3-year refresher process.

ID Badges

Badges are issued normally for three years but can be for shorter periods. The expiry date and the category of authorisation are shown on the badge. Staff are required to display their badges to school and parents. (Note licensed taxi drivers will also hold a separate badge issued by the relevant licensing authority.)

Monitoring and enforcement by DCC

IPTG carries out a programme of random checks and carries out ad hoc investigations such as in response to reports. Under IPTG's contracts, any use of unauthorised staff is regarded as a gross breach of contract that in practice invariably leads to immediate termination of the contract concerned and potentially others; as well as exclusion of the contractor from new contracts for an appropriate period.

Best practice by schools

Schools are advised to inspect a sample of the badges of the drivers and PAS operating transport arranged by IPTG periodically, to check the necessary badges are held and displayed. Any concerns or discrepancies must be reported as soon as possible to IPTG Monitoring team (IPTMonitoring@durham.gov.uk). The school should retain a record of the inspection and outcome to demonstrate these actions. Schools are advised to include this procedure in their Safeguarding Policy.

Where schools arrange transport themselves such as for school trips, sports purposes, etc, then safeguarding may be protected by specifying that only drivers holding IPTG authorisation are used.