South East Essex Academy Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Author	Caroline Thornton
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The Deanes – Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Keli Hampstead (DSL)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Karen Miller (DDSL) **Oluwatoyin Ayanbadejo (DDSL)**
Designated Safeguarding Governor: Gill Baynes
Headteacher: Desi McKeown
Mental Health Lead: Keli Hampstead
South East Essex Academy Trust CEO: Andrew Cooper

Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-ordinator and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 03330 139 797,

Safeguarding Advisor: Jo Barclay

Referral to Specialist Services

Children's Social Care: Dependant on the child's home address. **Essex Local Authority** for Essex residents. **Southend Local Authority** for Southend residents Where the school has concerns for safety and welfare of a child or young person during office hours telephone: Essex: 0345 603 7627 Southend: 01702 215007
To make **URGENT** referrals **OUT OF OFFICE HOURS** in Essex or Southend telephone: **08456061212**

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR THE DEANES

Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children, their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2023)

This Child Protection policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers, and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our Trust of schools and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023)
- the school Behaviour policy;
- the SEEAT Code of Conduct
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex C of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children *(everyone under the age of 18)* is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

Protecting children from maltreatment

- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Our Trust has a trust wide approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do and underpins all systems, processes, and policies. It is important that our values are understood and shared by all children, staff, parents / carers, governors, and the wider school community. Only by working in partnership, can we truly keep children safe.

As a Trust we understand the importance of working in a way that adheres to the following legislation:

- The Human Rights act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Public sector Equality Duty

This means we do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

Throughout the broad balanced curriculum across our Trust of schools, we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the knowledge, values, and skills they need to identify risks to keep themselves and other safe. This includes on-line, by knowing when and how to ask for help and how to seek support from reliable, trustworthy sources.

The Relationships, sex and health education delivered will cover relevant topics in an age and stage appropriate way, enabling pupils to learn about their rights and responsibilities to behave and stay safe in a variety of contexts on and offline.

2. Statutory Framework

There is government guidance set out in Working Together (DfE, 2018) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. For our Southend school's the arrangements sit under the Southend Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). In Southend, the statutory partners are Southend City Council, Essex Police, and the Southend Integrated Care Board. For our Essex schools, these arrangements sit under the Essex Local Safeguarding Board (ESCB). In Essex, the statutory partners are Essex County Council, Essex Police, and the three NHS Integrated Care Boards.

Note: One of our schools, Westcliff High School for Girls is complex in that students attend from across the County, but also from some of the London Boroughs. If a student is from an authority outside of Essex or Southend, the school will observe the arrangements of the authority which is home to the student.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 *(Section 157 for Independent schools)* places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (May 2022). Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance *(this is not an exhaustive list)*:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Dfe, 2023)

Working Together (DfE, 2018)

Education Act 2002

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 amendment

Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB)

Statutory Guidance on the PREVENT Duty

Counter Terrorism Act 2015

Serious Crime Act 2015

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Guidance on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE, 2016)

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2018)

Data Protection Act (2018)

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

Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE, 2018)

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017)

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

Statutory Guidance on FGM

The Human Rights Act 1989

The Equality Act 2010
Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2021)
Promoting positive emotional well-being and reducing the risk of suicide (ESCB, 2018)
Preventing youth violence and gang involvement (Home Office, 2015) Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance (Home Office, 2018)
Teaching on-line safety in schools (DfE, 2019)
Education Access Team CME / Home Education policy and practice (ECC, 2018)
Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - good practice for schools (ECC, 2021)

Additional guidance for schools with pupils under 8 years of age:

Childcare (Disqualification) and childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/794/contents/made

3. Equalities Statement

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

We give special consideration to children who:

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

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

Schools play a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a trust-wide approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of

sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
    - Healthy and respectful relationships
    - Boundaries and consent
    - Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality
    - Body confidence and self-esteem
    - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
    - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
    - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they are always unacceptable

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. There are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those people in our schools with these specific responsibilities (the designated safeguarding leads and deputy designated safeguarding leads) are shown on the cover sheet of the individual school document.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes and feelings are always considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

All staff and visitors to the school within our Trust, through training and induction will know how to recognise the indicators of a concern, how to respond to disclosure, and how to record and report the information. We will not make promises or keep secrets.

All staff will be trained to recognise that children may not be ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and they may not recognise their experience as being harmful.

4.1 The Governing Body

The governing body will facilitate a trust wide approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development. They will:

- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a senior board level lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board and the associated school safeguarding link governor. This is always a different person from the DSL

- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:
    - Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
    - The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering, and monitoring systems and processes in place
    - Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT (Information Technology) staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards
    - Ensuring that staff understand the expectation and their roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of the safeguarding training

The governing body will make sure:

- The Trust and school DSLs have the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources, and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
- Schools have procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).
- That this policy reflects those children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
    - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
    - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
    - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

- The Chair of Governors will act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate.

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety. In addition, the governing body will:

- In partnership with the school leadership team ensure the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.
- Our governing bodies will also undertake appropriate training to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the

safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole Trust approach to safeguarding. This training takes place at induction and is updated regularly.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named on the front cover of each schools personalised document. This governor takes strategic responsibility at governing body level for safeguarding arrangements in our school. The governing body ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place (also named on the front cover).

The governing body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The governing body ensures that all adults in our school who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least termly, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.

The governing body ensures our pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We work in accordance with government regulations which make the subjects of Relationships Education (for primary age pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for secondary age pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory.

The governing body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.

Our governing bodies will also undertake appropriate training to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole Trust approach to safeguarding. This training takes place at induction and is updated regularly.

4.2 The Headteacher

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. The Headteacher works in accordance with all statutory requirements for safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
    - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
    - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect

- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that on-line safety training is included in staff safeguarding and child protection training
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this

Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of pupils with a social worker.

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

4.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy / Deputies)

All designated safeguarding leads are members of their school's senior leadership team. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes on-line safety and understanding the schools filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe on-line.

Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies, ensuring all staff are appropriately trained and raising awareness of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers, and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are always followed. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to the relevant local authority are made in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

The deputy designated safeguarding lead/s are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy designated safeguarding lead/s will act in their absence.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources, and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

4.4 All school staff

Everyone in the Trust has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which our children can learn.
They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they can identify children who may be in need of help or protection. s

All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) – they do not assume that others have acted.

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part 1 and Anex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they will be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- The systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the SEEAT Code of Conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy/deputies (DDSL), the behaviour policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play

- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM and CCE, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

5. Types of Abuse and Specific Safeguarding Issues

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023) describes abuse in the following way:

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children"

Keeping Children Safe in Education refer to four categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Staff will always reassure children who report abuse / victims of abuse that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor make them feel they are causing a problem. All staff in our school are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we can identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware of environmental factors which may impact on a child's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). We understand that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely 'stand-alone' events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

In addition, staff are aware of other types of abuse and safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. We understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and / or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

5.1 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), or Health Issues

We recognise that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges, and these are discussed in training.
These additional barriers can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury related to the child's disability without further exploration

- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs

- Communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers

5.2 Child-on-child Abuse

School may be the only stable, secure, and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and that this may happen in school, or outside of it. Any incidents of child-on-child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

Our schools recognise that, even though child-on-child abuse may not report, it is likely that it is occurring, and we are clear there is a zero tolerance to inappropriate or abusive behaviour. We understand the barriers which may prevent a child from reporting abuse and work actively to remove these.

5.3 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

5.4 Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive, and violent. The latter is developmentally inappropriate and may cause harm.

5.5 Child-on-child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting, or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur on-line, face-to-face (both physically and verbally).

Sexual Violence

When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sexual violence includes:

- Rape - intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus, or mouth with their penis without consent
- Assault by Penetration - when a person intentionally penetrates the vagina, mouth, or anus of another person with a part of their own body, or with something else, without consent.
- Sexual Assault - is committed if a person touches another person, in a sexual way, without consent. Sexual assault covers a wide range of behaviours, and can include a single act

of kissing, or touching someone's breast, bottom, or genitalia without consent.

Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature; it can occur on-line and off-line, and both inside and outside of school. In this context we refer to sexual harassment as being child-on-child.
Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and lead to them feeling intimidated, degraded, or humiliated; it can create a hostile, offensive and sexualised behaviour.

It is more likely that sexual violence and harassment will happen to girls and is most likely to be perpetrated by boys.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated, and should never be considered as 'banter', 'having a laugh', 'a part of growing up' or any other such comment that normalises inappropriate behaviour.

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an on-line lament which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an on-line element which facilitates, threatens and /or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, stories, and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Making lewd comments, sexualised comments about clothing, and the use of sexualised names
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs, challenging inappropriate behaviours when they occur - we do not normalise abuse, nor allow a culture where it is tolerated.

We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is, and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our schools understand the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor that they are creating a problem by doing so.

All staff understand that they should follow the safeguarding procedures for their setting if they are worried about child-on-child abuse. The DSL will respond to any related concerns in

line with the guidance outlined in Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023).

Support will depend on the circumstances in each case. It may include the completion of a risk assessment to facilitate the children concerned remaining in school whilst safeguarding other children, and the victim. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. Support will also be offered to all parties, including victims and perpetrators.

Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one child is much older, particularly if there is more than two years difference. A younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example if they are disabled, or smaller in stature.

DSL's and their deputies have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour, and where appropriate will access the specialist support available from the sexual violence sector as detailed in in Annex B, of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)

5.6 Serious Violence

All staff are aware of the risk factors and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

5.7 Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CSE is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity. Our schools work with key partners locally to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may have still been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. In Essex, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care, and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.

5.8 Children missing from Education

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude, and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in school, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep children in school whenever possible.

Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Access and Inclusion Team, Social Care or Police). Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to.

Our school must inform the local authority of any pupil who has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

We work in accordance with the Essex Protocol for children who go missing during the school day (see Appendix C), to ensure that there is an appropriate response to children who go

missing.

5.9 Contextual Safeguarding

We recognise that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside of school. This is known as contextual safeguarding. It is key that **all** staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family. Through training we will ensure that staff, volunteers, and governors are aware that extra-familial harms take a variety of forms and can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

5.10 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling, or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse.

Children can be victims of abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home, or they may suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships.

Our Trust recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

Coercive Control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. This is controlling behaviour designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them, depriving the victim of independence, and regulating their everyday behaviour. Examples of coercive behaviour may include:

- Isolating the victim from friends and family
- Depriving the victim of basic needs, such as food
- Monitoring time
- Monitoring via on-line communication tools or spyware
- Taking control over aspects of everyday life, such as where the victim can go, who they see, and what they wear
- Depriving access to support services, such as the doctor
- Repeated putdowns, such as saying the victim is worthless
- Humiliating, degrading, or dehumanising the victim
- Controlling finances
- Making threats and intimidation

5.11 So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

Female Genital Mutilation **(FGM)** comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures. There is a specific legal duty on teachers, if in the course

of their work a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18, the member of staff **must** report this to the police. The DSL will be notified. We will provide guidance and support for teachers on this requirement. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office Guidance: Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (January 2020)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information

Forced Marriage is one entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used to cause a person to enter a marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional, or psychological.
It is a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats, or other forms of coercion are NOT used. This applies to non-binding unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriage.
The Forced Marriage Unit has statutory guidance and multi-agency guidelines and can be contacted for further advice and information: 02070080151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk

5.12 Mental Health

Our staff are 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. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance, and progress at school.

Where we have concerns, this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that places them at risk, immediate action should be taken.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community, and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

5.13 Online Safety and the use of mobile technology

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

To address this, SEEAT aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers, and governors

- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. Any pupil can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage, and personal circumstance. We want to equip our pupils with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered, and respectful way, so they can reap the benefits of the online world.

The 4 key categories of risk

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

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

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

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

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers, and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems. Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

All staff are aware of the risks to children online and we seek to help children keep themselves safe online in a range of ways.

5.14 Prevention of Radicalisation and Extremism

We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is similar to protecting children from other forms of harm, protecting children from risk is part of our safeguarding approach.

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the **Prevent** duty.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

It requires schools to:

● teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion

● be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive

topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
● be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation.

Our Trust operates in accordance with local procedures for **PREVENT** and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Social Care and / or the Channel Panel.

Through training staff and governors understand what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in schools and how to respond when the concerns arise.

6. Children potentially at risk of greater harm

Whilst all children should be protected, we recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm than others (both on-line and off-line) and require additional help and support. The list of children who may be at greater risk, is not exhaustive, but may include children who:

- have a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan
- are in Care or have previously been in Care
- those requiring mental health support
- are absent from education; and
- are electively educated at home (EHE)

Schools understand that children with special educational needs (SEN) and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- The potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We work with social care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for identified children, and that they receive the right help at the right time.

7. Elective Home Education (EHE)

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will work with the Local Authority and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child.

This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers.

8. Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

6. Procedures

Our Trust works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support (through a Child in Need or a Child Protection plan).

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance:

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and

Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2022)
- **Early Help Family Support Practitioner Toolkit** (Threshold Document), which can be downloaded from http://www.safeguardingsouthend.co.uk
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Any staff member or visitor to our schools must refer any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead. Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to the relevant Children's Social Care (as indicated on the front sheet), and / or the Police, using the appropriate referral form.

Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Early Help at the appropriate authority. The school may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern if we are unsure how to respond to it. Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place a child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If it is necessary for another agency to meet with a child in school, we will always seek to inform parents or carers, unless we are advised not to by that agency. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with Social Care, or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, all staff understand they should press for reconsideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead. If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to Social Care where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) and how to share concerns with them.

The Trust, and the individual school's within, regularly review decisions and actions. Relevant policies are updated to reflect any lessons learnt, and ways to strengthen practice.

We look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic, inappropriate behaviour, and contextual issues. Where a pattern, or concern is identified, appropriate action will be taken.

10. Training

In line with statutory requirements, the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with guidance. In addition, all staff members and other adults working with children in our school receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any child protection training undertaken is kept for all staff and governors.

The school ensures that the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate

11. Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those

working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

12. Records and Information Sharing

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our Trust is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection are recorded in our Records of Processing Activity and regularly reviewed; and our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time, and location. All records will be dated and signed or recorded electronically using the individual staff login to an electronic system and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

Records of concern, copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored on the child's file, whether an electronic or paper system is used.

In line with statutory guidance, where a pupil transfers from one of our schools to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's designated safeguarding lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. This will be within 5 days for an in-year transfer, or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. The individual school will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of written confirmation of receipt, or evidence of recorded delivery.

Where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead will contact the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

Where a pupil joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

13. Interagency working

It is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions.

If a child is subject to a Care, Child Protection (Section 47) or a Child in Need (Section 17) plan, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare, and presentation. If the school is part of the core group, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the designated safeguarding lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so, and the actions agreed.

14. Working with Parents and Carers

The Trust is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

We will work with parents and carers positively, openly, and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, courtesy, and dignity. We respect their right to privacy and confidentiality, and will not share sensitive information without their permission, unless it is necessary to do so, to safeguard a child from harm.
We will share with parents and carers any concern we have for their child, unless doing so may place the child at an increased risk of harm.

A lack of parental engagement, or agreement will not prevent the DSL from making a referral.

Through regular communication with parents, we will share updates, highlighting contextual safeguarding issues, the risks and harms related to the internet, unsafe on-line trends and reinforce the importance of children being safe on-line.

15. Allegations about Members of the Workforce - Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and the absolute best outcomes for children at our schools. We recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation.

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct. The Trust works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (Southend Safeguarding Partnership, 2022) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity).

The Trust has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff must be referred to the Headteacher (or the Deputy Headteacher in their absence), as they have responsibility for managing employment issues. Where the allegation concerns an agency member of staff, the Headteacher (or Deputy) will liaise with the agency, while following due process.

Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors, for the individual school.

The SET procedures (Southend Safeguarding Partnership, 2019) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Headteacher, senior named person or the Chair of Governors must inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day (details can be found on the front cover sheet) However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to pupils and parents and HR (Human Resources). The school does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

We work with the thresholds set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and 'Keeping children Safe in Education' (2022).

Organisations or Individuals using school premises

In the event of the school or Trust receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), the school will follow the procedures detailed above, as they would with any safeguarding allegation. This would include notifying the LADO of the allegation.

Low-Level Concerns

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It means that the behaviour towards a child may be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work, and is not considered serious enough to consider referral to the LADO as previously mentioned.

As a Trust we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns, about all adults working in or on behalf of our schools (including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Across our school's staff should report concerns to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will make decisions in respect of low-level concerns.

We understand the importance of recording low-level concerns, and any actions taken in light of the report. We will review the information we hold to identify potential patterns and take action.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer if they feel they have behaved in a way that compromises others, could be misinterpreted, or has fallen below the professional standards.

Staffing matters are confidential, and the school operates within a statutory framework around Data Protection.

16. Whistleblowing

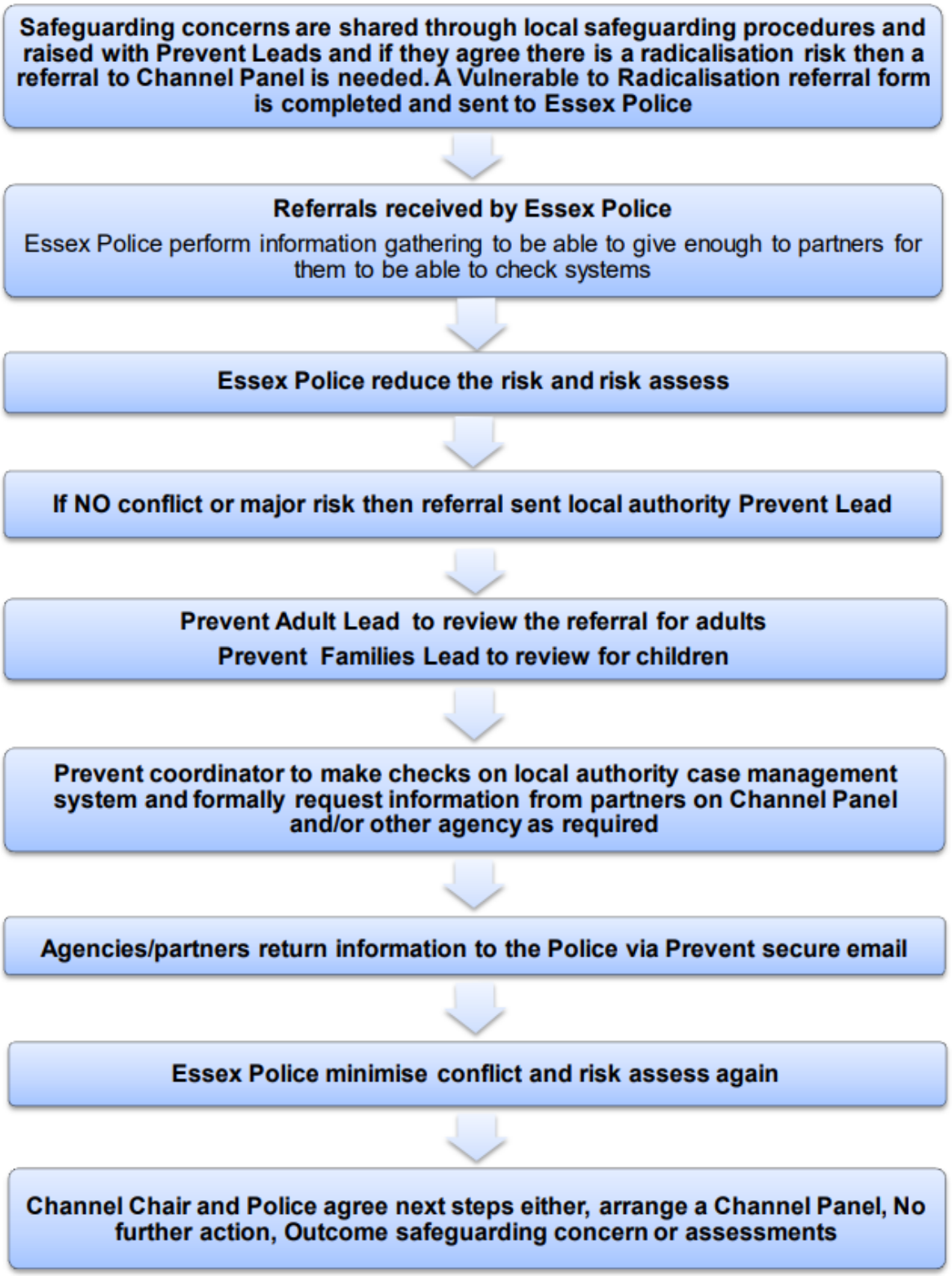
All members of staff within the Trust, and the wider school communities should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the school leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place, and these are available in the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff

who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk. Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on 0808 800 5000 (24-hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

17. Use of Reasonable Force

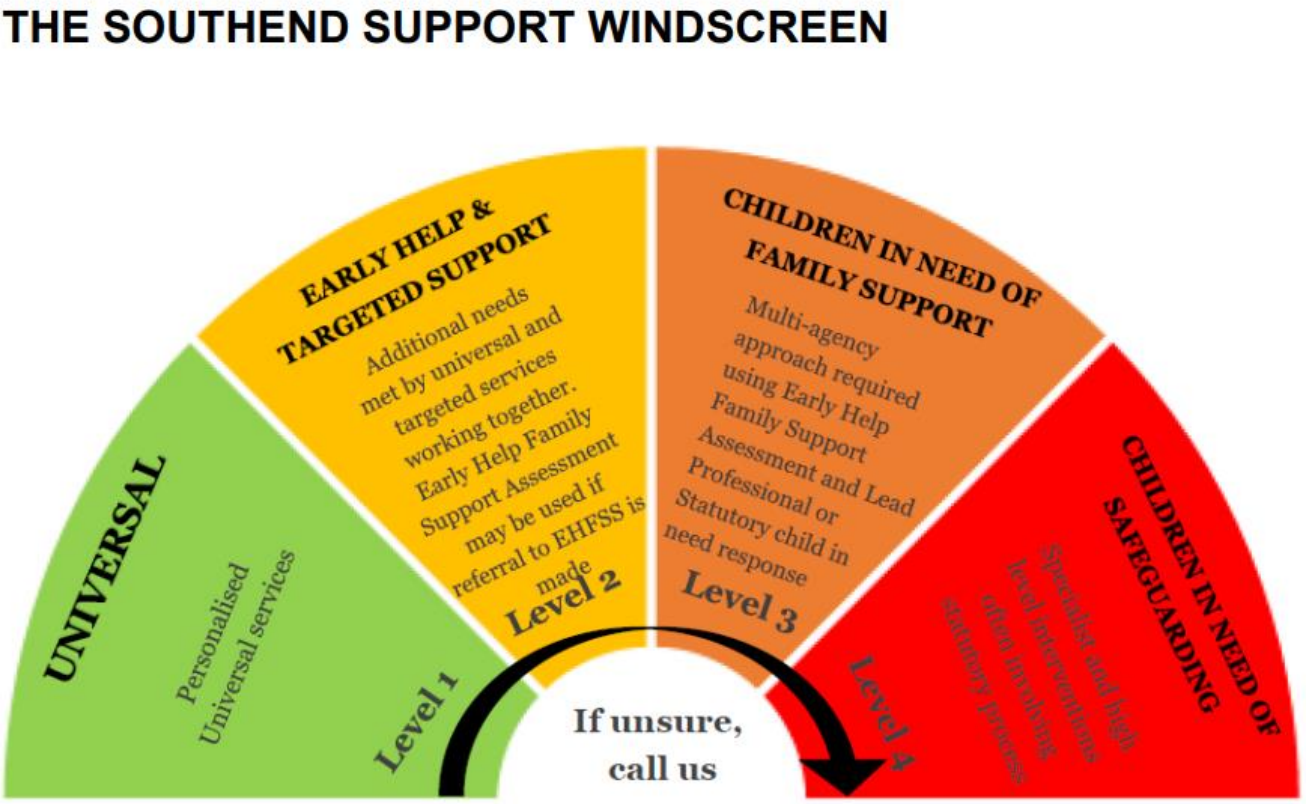
The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force *(see section 2)* and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

Appendix A: PREVENT Referral Flowchart



https://www.essexsab.org.uk/media/1894/doc-set-prevent-policy-guidance-v4.pdf

Appendix B: The Southend Support Windscreen and levels of intervention



All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Early Help or schools, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Family Support Assessment (EHFSA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Children's Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services.

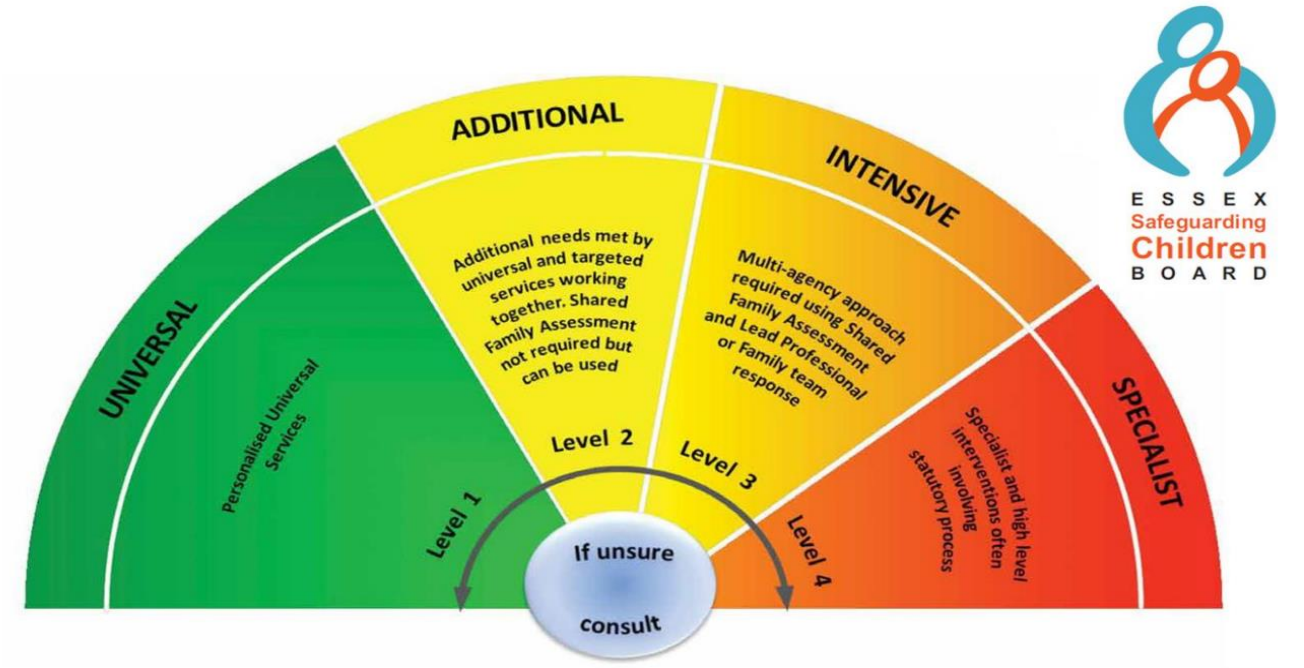
https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/6261/southends-childrens-services-threshold-

document---revised-may-2019

Appendix C: The Essex Effective Support Windscreen

The Essex Effective Support Windscreen

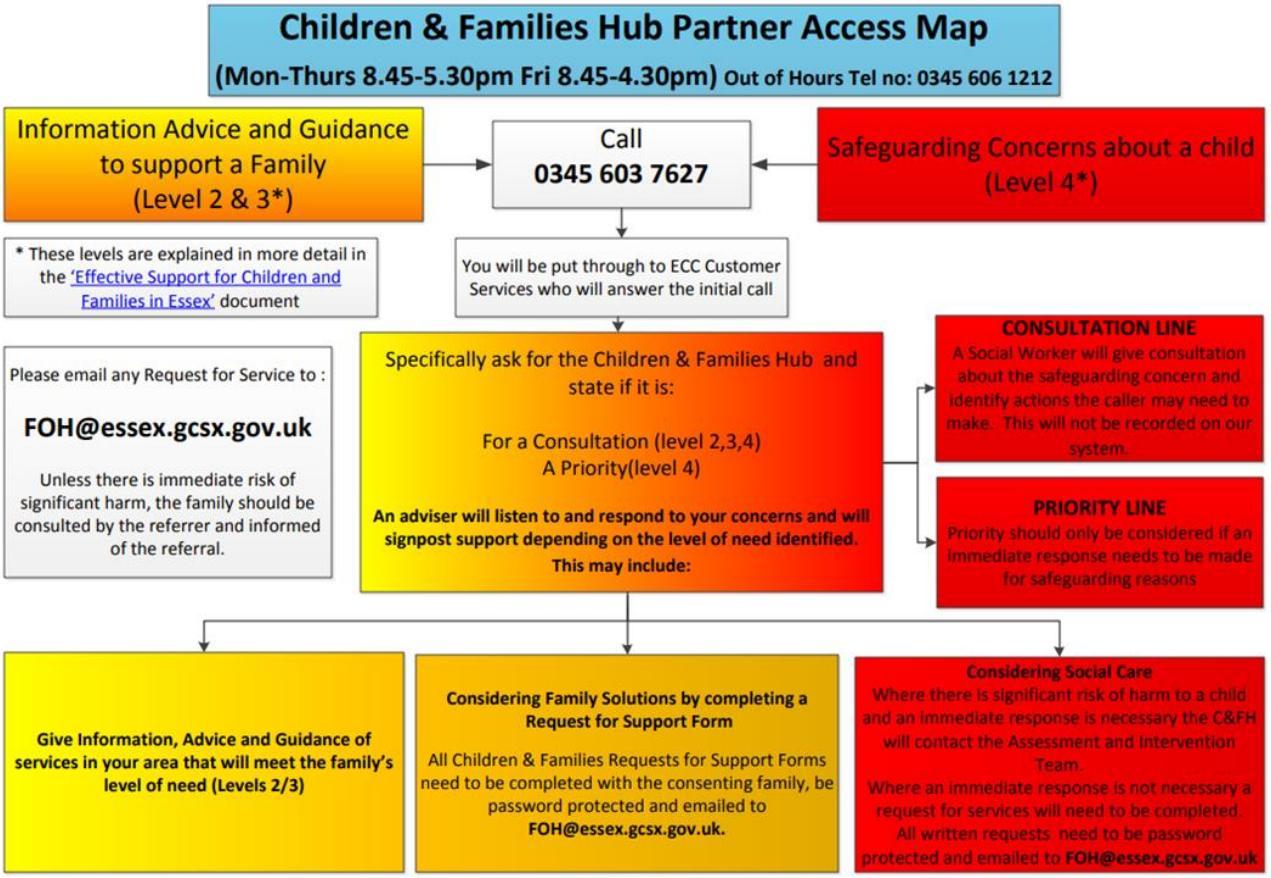
Multi Agency Guidance: Working in partnership to help children and families improve their lives

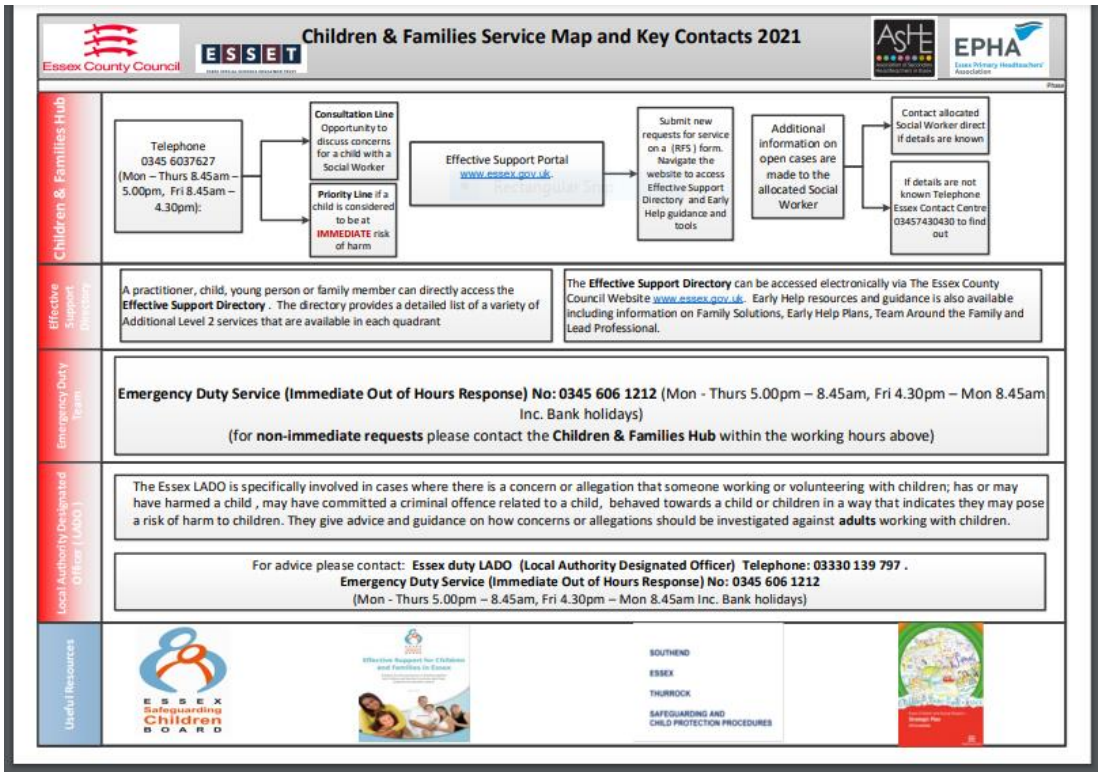


All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

https://www.escb.co.uk/media/1487/effective-support-windscreen.pdf

Appendix D: The Essex Children & Families Hub Partner Access Map





https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Safeguarding/Documents/C%20%26%20F%20Process%20and%20contacts%202021.pdf

Appendix E: Missing Child Protocol

Arrangements for children who go missing during the school day

Definition of Missing

The definition of missing used in Essex is 'anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and his or her well-being confirmed'.

(College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice Guidance)

1. **Introduction**

   This guidance sets out the procedures to follow when children go missing from schools and other educational settings, hereafter referred to as educational settings.

   Missing children are among the most vulnerable in our community. Sometimes children go missing from educational settings; when this occurs, it is important that action is taken quickly to address this, and in line with local procedures.

   This document should be read in conjunction with the educational setting's Child Protection Policy, and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures (SET Procedures).

A child going missing could be a 'one-off' incident that, following investigation, does not need further work. However, a child going missing frequently could be an indicator of underlying exploitation or other forms of child abuse.

Educational settings should consider missing episodes like any other child protection concern and act as appropriate, for example, by contacting parents/carers, MASH+, and in an emergency, the police. It may be appropriate to contact Early Help, by completing an EHFSA
(Early Help Family Support Assessment) to address the issues and prevent escalation. Advice should be sought, and concerns should be escalated if there is no improvement.

Where children missing frequently are open to Children's Social Care, a Missing Prevention Plan may be in place. Where this is the case, the educational setting may be set actions as part of the Missing Prevention Plan and should receive a copy if consent has been provided.

2. When a child goes missing

When it is suspected that a child is missing from an educational setting this must be addressed immediately. Active steps to locate the child should be taken, for example, searching the premises and surrounding areas, contacting the child by phone, text, and social media, and contacting their parents/carers. If none of these actions locate the child, then they must be reported missing to the Police by dialling 101, **or 999 if there is a belief that the child is immediately suffering significant harm.** It is important that the police are informed of any checks already completed as it may save time and prevent duplication of tasks set by the police to locate a child.

Staff at the educational setting must inform the child's parents/carers that the child has been reported missing. Where there is a Social Worker allocated to the child, they should also be informed. After a child has been reported missing, any further information should be communicated to the police by telephoning 101 and quoting the incident number that the police would have provided following the initial report. Further information must be passed to the police as soon as possible, as officers will continue to search for the child until informed of their return.

3. When the child is found

If the child is found by educational setting staff, or if the child returns to the premises of their own accord, the police must be notified immediately by dialling 101 or 999 if the matter is an emergency. It is important that this action is prioritised, as the child will remain classified as a missing person until seen by the police.

4. Essex Police

On receiving a report of a missing child, Essex Police will classify the child as missing and will respond based on the level of risk involved.

Essex Police will conduct a vulnerability interview for all children who have been missing and have returned. It may be that the child refuses to engage or speak with police. On these occasions the parents/carers can assist by reporting to officers their observations on the child's return, e.g. did the child shower, have gifts, appear unwell or under the influence of any substance, etc. The setting may also be able to contribute to this process and should provide the police with any relevant information or observations.

Each child that returns from missing will be offered a ‘missing chat’ (an independent return from missing interview) by a person not involved in their care. This will be facilitated by the Local Authority with responsibility for the child. Missing chats are offered to all children from Essex who go missing.

Appendix F: KCSIE (DfE, 2023)

A copy of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023)** can be found on the school website. The document will be shared with all staff who will sign that they have read and understood it.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023