Empowering all to achieve

Severn Vale School
An Academy

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Date of Policy	September 2026
Date of Next Review	September 2027
Staff Responsible	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Reference	Staff shared area/staff development/school policies/CTS
School/Governor Policy	Governor

Severn Vale School, Quedgeley, Gloucester, GL2 4PR
01452 720458 • svs@sever nvaleschool.com • www .severnvaleschool.com

Ofsted Good rating

This policy has been developed in accordance with guidance in:

- Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002 and 2011
- Government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2026
- Government guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Government guidance: The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales June 2023

All action taken by Severn Vale will be in accordance with the aforementioned legislation and statutory guidance.

School Context

Severn Vale is a secondary school with academy status in Gloucester. Its students are aged from 11 to 16. The Headteacher is Richard Johnson. Ofsted inspected the school in January 2025. This was a routine inspection and was carried out to see if the school has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection. In relation to Safeguarding and Well-being of students Ofsted stated:

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils have adults that they trust to share any concerns.
- The warm relationships between pupils and staff make pupils feel happy and safe.
- Pupils learn about healthy relationships as well as how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils develop strategies to help support their own mental health, for example with the use of gratitude journals.

Statement of Responsibility

Severn Vale acknowledges that it has a duty and legal responsibility to ensure that all reasonable and proper procedures and practices are in place to ensure the safety and protection of children entrusted to its care. This Policy complies with the procedures of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Education Partnership (GSEP), which provides all agencies in the LA with core multi-agency child protection procedures and guidance.

The Policy applies to all staff (both teaching and nonteaching) and volunteers working in the school. It also applies to members of the school's Governing body. It is the intention that this Policy reflects the high level of importance which the school gives to the care and welfare of its students. As an appendix to this Policy, the DfE's information for all school and College staff' is included (KCSIE 2026).

Severn Vale believe that every child matters and that each child has a right to be free from abuse or harm of any kind; emotional, sexual or physical abuse and neglect. As a school, we will do all in our power to combat abuse, and promote that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We are committed to working with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership to fulfil our duty of care to the young people who attend Severn Vale, ensuring that consideration is given at all times as to what is in the best interests of the child.

Severn Vale is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children through:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn
- Fulfilling our statutory responsibilities to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding children - the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is now defined (KCSIE 2026) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children (under the age of 18) as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure 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

Definition of Child Protection

Child protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves measures and structures designed to protect, prevent and respond to abuse and neglect (RCHP 12 Sep 2016).

Definition of Extra-familial Harms:

Extra-familial harms are those that take place outside of a young person's home or family. These can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation (KCSIE 2026).

My Concern Platform

Severn Vale uses My Concern. This is a digital web-based platform, developed by child protection experts, with backgrounds in social care, education and policing. It allows staff responsible for the protection of children and young people at risk to easily manage and record all safeguarding and wellbeing concerns in one central location. It also allows the Safeguarding Team to record, categorise and action concerns for students as well record relevant discussions and the rationale for those decisions or actions. Oversight of My Concern is the primary responsibility of the DSL and DDSL. Other key pastoral and administrative staff also have access to the platform and can input information, as well as keep and update student chronologies. A separate AUP is agreed to annually by staff that access this platform. The platform has multiple layers of security and staff user access is determined by the DSL.

Aims of the Policy

- To support the child's development in a way that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulty and know they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise awareness of ALL teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse (KCSIE 2026).
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known to be at risk of harm and ensure that the school contributes to assessments of need and support packages for these children.
- To emphasise the need for effective levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured set of procedures and protocols within the school that will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies especially Social Care and the Police.
- To ensure that all staff working within our school have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications and a satisfactory DBS (CRB) check and that a single central record is kept.
- To raise awareness that children who are themselves victims or who have witnessed abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of worth or belonging, they may also feel helplessness, humiliation and have a misplaced sense of self-blame.
- To ensure that all staff are aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.
- To raise awareness 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.
- To use the school's curriculum (especially Futures, Religion and World Views and Computing lessons) to equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know who to turn to for help.
- To ensure that all staff, governors, parents and students are aware of the school's approach to the Graduated Pathway through its publication of its Offer of Family Help (Appendix 2).

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm (KCSIE 2026). It includes issues such as:

- Historical Abuse
- Student health and safety
- Bullying
- Racist or any other form of discriminatory abuse
- Hate Crime
- Harassment and discrimination
- Use of physical intervention
- Meeting the needs of students with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Drug and substance misuse
- Child on Child abuse
- Sexual Violence & Harassment
- Educational visits
- Intimate care
- E-safety
  - Cyber-bullying
  - Sexting
  - Online grooming
- The appropriate use of digital resources both in and outside of lessons.
- Issues which may be specific to our local area or population, for example, gang activity or knife crime
- School site security
- Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Mental Health

Community Languages

Severn Vale is a culturally diverse school, which has students, parents, carers and staff who have English as an additional Language. It can be challenging to ensure that everyone understands the full meaning and principles of the guidance. Part 1 of KCSIE in Education 2026 can also be found in a range of translations via the following link.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ACEs are specified traumatic events occurring before the age of 18 years. High or frequent exposure to these ACEs, without the support of a trusted adult can lead to toxic stress. The school recognise that it is vital that professionals who work with young people are equipped with appropriate knowledge and understanding of ACEs, and the impact they can have. The school ensures staff are provided with access to specific training on ACEs as part of its Safeguarding Induction procedures.

Further information:

https://www.actionaces.org/what-are-aces/
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Awareness video

Possible Signs and Symptoms of abuse:

The possible signs of abuse or a child being at risk include, but are not limited to:

- the student says (discloses) that he / she has been abused or asks a question or makes a comment which gives rise to that inference
- there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a student's injury, the injury is unusual in kind or location or there have been a number of injuries and there is a pattern to the injuries
- the student's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour, or there is a sudden or significant change in the student's behaviour
- the student asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons
- the student's development is delayed; the student loses or gains weight or there is deterioration in the student's general wellbeing
- the student appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed
- the student is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his / her parents or carers and
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with children, for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images or videos.
- in some cases, there may be a decline in the child's mental health
- the student has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school, and is in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- a parent or carer in custody (previously it was in 'prison'), or is affected by parental offending
- frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or from a care provider

- Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Contextual Safeguarding

Staff are made aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the home. They can also occur between children outside of this environment. Staff are also made aware that they should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (e.g. sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence). These circumstances may involve the frequenting of certain locations or venues or links to groups or individuals outside of the home that lead to risk factors.

Definitions of Harm and Abuse

KCSIE September 2026 also acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues which may come to the attention of professionals:

Neglect

Neglect can be defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

Signs of Neglect

- Failure by parent/carer to meet basic essential needs e.g. food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care.
- The child seems to be listless, apathetic and irresponsive with no apparent medical cause.
- Failure of a child to grow within normal expected patterns, with accompanying weight loss.
- The child thrives away from the home environment.
- The child is frequently away from school.
- The child is left with adults who are intoxicated or violent.
- The child is abandoned or left alone for excessive periods.
- In some cases, a decline in the child's mental health.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be defined as the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on their emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve the following:

- Conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved.
- Verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling.
- Conveying to the child that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate their views to others.
- Having unrealistic expectations of a child relative to their age or development including interactions beyond their developmental capabilities, overprotection, limited exploration of learning and preventing them participating in normal social interaction.
- The child seeing and/or hearing ill-treatment of another person.
- Serious bullying including cyberbullying causing the child to feel frightened or in danger.
- The exploitation or corruption of a child.

Emotional abuse can be just one of the above or a combination of two or more.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Developmental delay.
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer.
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach.
- Aggressive behaviour towards others.

- Scapegoat within the family.
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children.
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence.
- Difficulty relating to others, withdrawn or seen as a 'loner'.
- In some cases, a decline in the child's mental health.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can be defined as the hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be defined as a situation where a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces ill health in a child.

Signs of Physical Abuse

Bruises that are:

- Frequent
- Patterned (i.e. finger and thumb marks indicating pinching)
- Old and new (look at the colour)
- In unusual positions

Burns and scalds that have:

- Clear outline (i.e. not an obvious "splash" mark)
- Unusual positions
- Indicative shapes (i.e. cigarette, electric fire bars)

Fractures/breaks that are:

- Numerous
- Unreported

Other indicators of physical abuse:

- Bite marks
- Incisions
- Delay in parents/carers seeking medical attention
- No explanation/inadequate explanation/inconsistent explanation of injury
- Child/parent/witness disclosure
- Recurrent injuries (especially if in a pattern i.e. in the same place or on the same day of the week)
- Inadequate parental concern
- Child failing to thrive for no apparent reason
- Fear of adults generally or of certain adults in particular
- Poor Low Lev relationships
- Social isolation and withdrawal
- Aggression and acting out
- Pseudo maturity
- Detachment or indiscriminate attachment
- Eating disorders
- In some cases, a decline in the child's mental health.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse can be defined as acts, which involve forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activity, 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 with an object or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. Sexual abuse may also be defined as non-contact activity 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 including via the internet.

Sexual abuse is NOT solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse as can other children. Sexual abuse is often the hardest to notice and, because of this, it is often unreported until the child involved reaches adulthood and self-realisation occurs.

Signs of Sexual Abuse - Behavioural Indicators:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct.
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age.
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation.
- Self-harm including eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts.
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners.
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports lessons/events (be aware that this may also relate to cultural norms or physical difficulties).
- In some cases, a decline in the child's mental health.

Signs of Sexual Abuse - Physical Indicators:

- Pain or itching of genital area.
- Blood on underclothes.
- Pregnancy in a younger girl especially where the identity of the father is undisclosed.
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to the buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted infections, presence of semen on the vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (eg food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, having a physical or learning disability, or being neurodivergent, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. It is also important to recognise that the individual may not recognise that they are being exploited, may believe that they are making their own choices and may trust those exploiting them.

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse. The following is a list of indicators that highlights common signs which can assist professional in identifying child who may be victims of sexual exploitation. The list is not exhaustive or definitive.

- Underage sexual activity.
- Inappropriate or sexualised behaviour.
- Risky sexual behaviour.
- Repeated sexually transmitted infections
- Repeated pregnancy, miscarriage, abortions.
- Received and unexplained gifts.
- Having multiple mobile phones.
- Having unaffordable new things e.g. clothes, mobile, expensive habits e.g alcohol/drugs.
- Changing the way, they dress.
- Going to hotel or unusual locations to meet friends.
- Being seen at known places of concern in the community.
- Moving round the country, not knowing where they are.
- Getting in and out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends.
- Contact with known perpetrators.
- Involved in abusive relationships.
- Associating with groups of older people or other vulnerable adults.
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation.
- Recruiting other young people to exploitive situations.
- Truancy, disengagement with education.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour.
- In some cases, a decline in the child's mental health.

Severn Vale recognises its duty to report disclosed or suspected incidents of CSE to supporting agencies to ensure that the young person receives the appropriate level of support. The school ensures that in all cases where a student might be a victim of CSE that an appropriate member of staff is deployed to conduct a CSE Screening tool provided by the GSEP to ascertain the level of risk posed to the young person.

Further information:

The Child Sexual Exploitation Screening Tool as well as relevant guidance on it use can be viewed here.
The Government definition of CSE and working together advice can be viewed here.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns (the crossing of County lines). Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- can still involve exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.
- can be facilitated or take place online
- can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.
- 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.
- 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.*
- It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however the school is aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too.
- It is important to recognise that the individual may not deem that they are being exploited, may believe that they are making their own choices and may trust those exploiting them.
- It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, having a physical or learning disability, or being neurodivergent, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Severn Vale recognises that key to identifying potential involvement in CCE across county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. The school's response to CCE is to ensure staff are trained to identify indicators such as missing episodes and other indicators and aware that they should follow the Safeguarding procedures.

For concerns around CCE and CSE, The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's framework for identifying and supporting victims of exploitation and modern slavery. Whatever form it takes, exploitation and modern slavery is child abuse and relevant child protection procedures must be followed if modern slavery or trafficking is suspected.

Serious Violent Crime

Severn Vale recognise that connected or not connected to CCE, young people may also be at risk from serious violent crime. The indicators, which may, but not exclusively, signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with CCE or serious violent crime may include:

- Being male
- Increased absence from school or permanently excluded
- having experienced childhood maltreatment
- 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

- In some cases, a decline in the child's mental health.
- Possession of unexplained items such as weapons, bank cards, large amounts of money
- Fear of reprisals from others if items are confiscated or reported
- having previously been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Online Sexual Abuse

The use of technology to manipulate, exploit, coerce or intimidate a child to (but not limited to): engage in sexual activity; produce sexual material/content; force a child to look at or watch sexual activities; encourage a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways; or 'groom' a child in preparation for sexual abuse (either online or offline). It can also involve directing others to, or coordinating, the abuse of children online. As with other forms of sexual abuse, online abuse can be misunderstood by the child and others as being consensual, occurring without the child's immediate recognition or understanding of abusive or exploitative conduct. In addition, fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor.

NO child under the age of 18 can consent to being abused or exploited. Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse, it can involve serious organised crime, and it can be carried out by either adults or peers. The signs of online abuse or 'grooming' aren't always obvious, and groomers will often go to great lengths not to be identified.

If a child is being groomed, they may:

- be very secretive, including about what they are doing online
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- go to unusual places to meet friends
- have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- have access to drugs and alcohol.
- In some cases, there may be a decline in the child's mental health.

In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.

SEND and Child Sexual Exploitation

Severn Vale School recognise that students identified with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) can be more vulnerable to CSE because of additional barriers that may exist when recognising abuse in this group of students. These barriers include:

- People assuming that indicators of possible abuse such as signs listed above are as a result of the disability and therefore do not warrant further investigation.
- Students identified with SEND may not outwardly show signs of abuse because of being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying.
- Communication difficulties that may exist for students with SEND and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

As part of Safeguarding and Child Protection Training all staff are made aware of the additional needs of students with SEND and the vulnerabilities that these needs present for the student in terms of keeping them safe. Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will be responded to by the DSL (or DDSL) as well as with the school's SENDCO. Additional support for students with SEND will be provided by the SENDCO and key workers who support the student and who are a valuable source of knowledge about changes in behaviour.

Nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI

The school recognises that the creation, possession and sharing of sexual images and videos of anyone under the age of 18 is *illegal* and can present *significant safeguarding concerns*. Severn Vale recognises that there is no single agreed definition of 'sexting'; however, it is commonly understood to mean the consensual and non-consensual creation, sharing or distribution of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, sexually suggestive images, or other sexual content via mobile devices, online platforms or the internet.

Severn Vale follows the guidance published by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) on responding to incidents involving the making or sharing of nude and semi-nude images. A copy of this advisory document can be found here

For the purposes of this guidance, the term 'making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes' refers to the creation, sending, posting, possession or distribution of nude or semi-nude images by children and young people under the age of 18. The term 'images' includes all forms of visual content, including: photographs, videos, livestreams and screenshots. Images may be self-generated, created by another person, digitally altered, or wholly generated using artificial intelligence (AI), including manipulated, synthetic or 'deepfake' imagery and so-called 'deep nudes'.

Severn Vale recognises that disclosures relating to nude and semi-nude imagery, sexually explicit content, or AI-generated/deepfake images can occur in a variety of ways. A child or young person may report concerns directly to a class teacher, the DSL, or any member of staff. Concerns may also be raised through established reporting procedures, by friends, parents or carers, other members of the community, external agencies, or directly by the police. All reports will be treated seriously and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures

All members of staff (including non-teaching) are aware that they have a duty to refer any disclosures of incidents involving nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI to the DSL or DDSL. In the event of a disclosure the DSL will:

- Hold an initial review meeting with appropriate pastoral staff followed by any subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate).
- If evidence of the images exists on one or more student's personal devices the school reserves the right to confiscate the device until further notice to preserve evidence that may be required by other agencies such as the Police.
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm the school will make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately.
- Severn Vale recognises that a young person who discloses they are the subject of nudes or semi-nudes is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. The school understands that it is likely that disclosure in school is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves. The school recognises that in some cases there may be a decline in the child's mental health.

Upskirting

The school recognises that any incident of 'Upskirting' is now a criminal offence in line with the DfE's definition, which describes Upskirting as: "taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm" (KCSIE September 2026). The school also recognise that it is a criminal offence for young people to upskirt adults or staff and vice versa. The school recognises that anyone of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting. All members of staff (including non-teaching) are aware that they have a duty to refer any disclosures of incidents involving Upskirting to the DSL or DDSL.

Further information:

Internet Watch Foundation - www.iwf.org.uk.
NCA-CEOP - www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
The NSPCC helpline - 0808 800 5002

Child on Child Abuse

Severn Vale recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers and that even issues such as Domestic Abuse can occur between young people. Child on Child abuse can refer to one or all of the following definitions:

- The definition for domestic abuse (Home Office 2013) relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and/or financial abuse, and coercive control, in their intimate relationships.
- The definition for child sexual exploitation captures young people aged under-18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age – including another young person.

- The definition for young people who display harmful sexual behaviour refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who demonstrates behaviour outside of their normative parameters of development (this includes, but is not exclusive to, abusive behaviours).
- Serious youth violence is defined with reference to offences (as opposed to relationships/contexts) and captures all those of the most serious in nature including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18.

Severn Vale recognises that:

- responses to incidents of Child-on-Child abuse must reflect the serious nature of these definitions and capture the complexities of the young person's experiences.
- it is possible, after all, that a young person could be sexually exploited by a partner who is or is not gang-associated, of a similar age to them, and who has also been physically abusive.
- concerns raised over a young person who may be a victim of Child-on-Child abuse should not be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up' and all should be referred to the DSL or DDSL.
- in some cases, there may be a decline in the child's mental health.
- a victim of abuse should never be made to feel ashamed for making a report and that is important to explain carefully that the law is in place to protect them, rather than criminalise them.

Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

HBA is a collection of practices used to control behaviour within families to protect perceived cultural or religious beliefs and honour. Abuse can occur when offenders perceive that a relative has shamed the family or community by breaking their 'code of honour'. HBA cuts across all cultures and communities and might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- want to get out of an arranged marriage
- want to get out of a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture

Other Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include: FGM, domestic abuse, threats of violence, sexual or psychological abuse, forced marriage, being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go, or assault.

There is no exhaustive list of nations or cultures in which HBA is practiced, however GSEP guidance states that where a culture is heavily male dominated, HBA may exist. The school recognises that in some cases there may be a decline in the child's mental health.

Forced Marriage (FM)

Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office guidance states that a forced marriage is when one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. There is no religion that says it is right to force you into a marriage and you are not betraying your faith by refusing such a marriage.

Signs of those young people under this duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. For more information, see guidance. The minimum legal age for marriages and civil partnerships in England and Wales has been increased to 18. If an adult is responsible for bringing about the marriage of somebody under 18, they may, under law, be committing a criminal offence.

Signs and Symptoms

Young people, especially girls who are forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development. Signs to be aware of include:

- Staff may become aware of a student because they appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem.
- They may have mental health disorders and display behaviours such as self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia.
- They may come to the attention of the police having been discovered shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol.

- Often students' symptoms can be exacerbated in the periods leading up to the holiday season.
- Students may present with a sudden decline in their performance, aspirations or motivation.
- There may be occasions when a student comes to school but then absents themselves from lessons.
- They may be subject to excessive restrictions and control at home.
- Some students may not be allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities.
- Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college, and even during lunch breaks. (Therefore, school time is their only "free" time to do ordinary adolescent activities that other students do at weekends with their friends).
- Some students may stop attending school and visits to the home by welfare officers or other members of staff may result in the professional being told that the student is out of the country.
- In some cases, the student may have been locked in a room of the house and not allowed to communicate with anyone outside.
- Other students may show a decline in punctuality, especially if they are past compulsory education age, which may be the result of having to "negotiate" their way out of the house.
- Some students, particularly girls, are given minimal time to get to school so they do not have time to meet a boyfriend or talk to friends.
- There are occasions when older siblings and cousins keep a close eye on girls to make sure that they do not meet anyone or talk to friends.
- Some students may come to notice because their homework is incomplete or appears rushed. This may be the result of being actively discouraged from doing it by family members (These students may do their homework late at night, which frequently shows in school because they are lethargic, unable to concentrate and have a general appearance of tiredness).
- Staff may become aware of conflict between the student and their parents about whether the student will be allowed to continue their education.
- Sometimes there may be family disputes over whether the student can make applications to colleges or universities, and the distance of the college or university from the family home.
- Another warning sign might be a family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early - In these cases, there may be a history of considerable absence authorised by the student's parents.
- These absences may be for sickness, or extended family holidays overseas often interrupting the school term.
- Students who fear they may be forced to marry often come to the attention of, or turn to, a teacher, or other member of staff before seeking help from the police or social services.
- Sometimes the student's friends report it to staff.

ALL staff have a duty to immediately report any concerns about students at risk of FM to the DSL.

Further Information: Forced Marriage Unit

Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151
Email: fmu@fcdo.gov.uk
Email for outreach work: fmuoutreach@fco.gov.uk
Facebook: Forced Marriage page
Out of Hours (Emergency): +44 (0)20 7008 5000 (ask for the Global Response Centre)
Immediate Danger: Call 999 (If you cannot speak in an emergency, press 55 when prompted)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is dangerous and a criminal offence. There are NO religious doctrines or beliefs that promote FGM. In October 2015, the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) introduced a mandatory reporting duty for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales. Professionals must make a report to the police in the course of their duties if:

- they are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM or
- they observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18

Who is at risk?

FGM is most commonly carried out when a girl is 5-8 years old. However, it can happen at any age before a girl or woman is married or pregnant. Some girls are babies when FGM is carried out. In the UK, girls from the Somali,

Kenyan, Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Egyptian, Nigerian, Eritrean, Yemeni, Kurdish and Indonesian communities are most at risk of FGM.

What to look for: signs of FGM

A girl or woman may:

- Have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- In some cases, there may be a decline in the child's mental health.

At Severn Vale ALL staff have a duty to report any concerns we have about girls at risk of FGM; all concerns should be reported immediately to the DSL or to the Police by calling 101. All staff must complete FGM online training.

Further Information:

Please see the HM Government Multi Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation which can be found here or the NSPCC Helpline: 0800 028 3550 / Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Historical abuse

There may be occasions when a child or adult discloses abuse which occurred in the past. This 'historical abuse' must be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure or suspicion of current child abuse; the abuser may still represent a risk to young people now. The school recognises that in some cases there may be a decline in the child's mental health as the child begins to revisit and disclose previous abuse.

Prevent Strategy

As part of Severn Vale's commitment to safeguarding and child protection we support the government's Prevent Strategy and guidance to help build resilience to extremism.

What is the Prevent Strategy?

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people forming radicalised views, from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It:

- responds to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views
- the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support
- works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health)

The government definition of extremism in its 'Prevent Strategy' is:

- Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
- The process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

Severn Vale has adopted the Government's definitions for the purposes of compliance with the Prevent duty:

Extremism: "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas"

Radicalisation: "the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism"

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."

At Severn Vale there is no place for extremist views of any kind. Our children recognise that our school is a safe place, and all adults have a duty of care to ensure that this happens. The school recognises that exposure to extremism materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes and will be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this document. We acknowledge that if we fail to challenge extremist views, we are failing to protect our students, and tackling extremism comes under the remit of our Headteacher and the DSL. Education is a powerful tool against the ignorance, division and fear created by extremism. Severn Vale aims to provide all children with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge extremist ideas in line with the Prevent Duty (DfE June 2015)

School Ethos and Practice

At Severn Vale, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum in the context of our school values, so that our children embrace difference and diversity, and feel valued members of our school community. We are aware that children can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from early childhood through a variety of sources and media, and that they may at times reflect or display views which may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, or use offensive language. Any discrimination, prejudice or extremist views, including offensive language, shown by students or staff will be dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy and staff Code of Conduct.

There is **no single way of identifying** an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in student's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Students at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. In particular, outward expressions of faith, in the absence of any other indicator of vulnerability, will **NOT** be regarded as a reason to make a referral to appropriate external agencies such as the Police, Social Services and others which form the Channel Programme.

Teaching Approaches

We place a high priority on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through the delivery of:

- Futures Curriculum
    - 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 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support
    - what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

- Religion & World Views Curriculum
- Computer Studies Curriculum
    - Online Safety
    - Digital Footprint
    - Privacy and Security
- Safeguarding Guidance
- School Line-Ups, Assemblies and Flexible Learning Days

We also adhere to the main methods outlined in the governmental guidance 'Teaching Approaches that help build resilience to extremism among young people.' (DfE 2011):

- We make good connections with our children through good teaching design and a child-centred approach
- We facilitate a safe environment for discussion and dialogue
- We equip our children with the skills, knowledge and understanding and awareness to develop resilience.

We value mutual respect and tolerance to those of other faiths, backgrounds and beliefs. We teach all our children to respect each other and tolerate differences through the school's Futures and Religion & World Views curricula.

The role of staff

The DSL undertakes appropriate training. Guidance for new staff is delivered by the DSL as part of their induction process. All Staff are also expected to have completed Prevent Strategy online training. As per the School's Safeguarding protocols, staff who have concerns over the possible radicalisation or 'extremist' views of students will report these to the DSL or the DDSL.

It is the responsibility of the DSL to decide when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support and guidance at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into radicalisation and/or terrorism.

Channel Duty Guidance:

Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2015) notes the following:

There is no single way of identifying who is likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming vulnerable may include: peer pressure, influence from other people or via the internet, bullying, crime against them or their involvement in crime, anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race / hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.

Example indicators that an individual is engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:

- spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists;
- changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause;
- loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far-right groups);
- attempts to recruit others to the group / cause / ideology; or communications with others that suggest identification with a group / cause / ideology.

Example indicators that an individual has an intention to cause harm, use violence or other illegal means include:

- clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills;
- using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group;
- speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now;
- expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology;
- condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others; or plotting or conspiring with others.

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of Severn Vale's wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences. Detailed guidance on Channel is available via the Prevent Duty Document (June 2015). A copy of this document can be found in the Safeguarding folder in the Staff Shared Files.

The role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body appoint a named Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding. For academic year 2026-27 this is Deborah Jones , both the named governor and Chair of governors undertake appropriate WRAP training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Governors, including their statutory safeguarding duties. The Governing body are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Governing Body support the school's ethos and values, and will support the school in tackling any form of radicalisation or extremism.

Further Info: https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html

Online Safety

Severn Vale continues to encourage and to educate its students in making the most of the opportunities provided by new technologies (including the internet, 'smart' mobile phones, personal portable digital devices). However, it acknowledges that there are associated risks to the well-being of children which may include:

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and

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

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

The safeguarding of these dangers is tackled in many ways, for example through use of online resources, through both its Computer Studies and Futures curricula, together with guidance on adjusting behaviour to reduce risks including the safe use of electronic devices and the internet. Students are encouraged to build resilience, to protect themselves and their peers, and educated with information about who they should turn to for help and to report concerns.

Filtering and Monitoring:

Severn Vale recognises the dangers posed by the Internet. Our school network is monitored by our IT network manager and access to the Internet is filtered to limit the content that children (and staff) can access from the school computers. In addition, Computer Studies teachers use classroom monitoring software to ensure pupils are focused on their work and not distracted by the Internet. The DSL conducts an annual check of the filtering and monitoring system, to ensure inappropriate or illicit online content is blocked accordingly. This is recorded via the school OPSAFE committee meetings and the Governing body are informed.

As technology and young people's online usage continually evolves and changes, the school always strive to make parents and staff aware of relevant guidance and advice, as well as highlight particular risks that stem from safeguarding issues the school encounters and are linked, for example to students' use of new Apps or platforms. The school has a dedicated Online Safety page on its website to inform and signpost students and parents.

Staff Online Safety

The school recognise the recommendations made in KCSIE 2026 that staff awareness of online risks and knowledge of how to counter these and advise young people is of great importance. Staff are briefed annually by the Safeguarding Team on online risks and dangers and receive regular updates/advice from the Safeguarding Team as well as the Subject Leader for Computer Studies. More bespoke training is offered for staff on certain areas, dependent on identified needs. Staff are also made aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place.

All safeguards are outlined in detail in the school's E-Safety and Acceptable User Policies which also set out the protocols for managing, testing and investigating the security of the ICT system to ensure the safeguarding of students as well as the Social Networking Guidance for Teaching and Support Staff.

Further Info:

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/

www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals

www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff/teaching-resources

Mobile Communication Devices (e.g. Phones/Tablets)

Severn Vale operates a mobile-free environment and mobile phone policy in line with DfE Guidance, Pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

The school will not routinely investigate incidents arising from students' use of social media outside school. However, where online activity impacts the welfare of students or staff, disrupts school life, constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination, or brings the school into disrepute, the school reserves the right to investigate and respond appropriately. Parents should be aware that concerns regarding the impact of social media on young people continue to grow nationally, with the UK Government introducing restrictions on social media use for under-16s from Spring 2027. These measures reflect the serious safeguarding, wellbeing and behavioural risks that can arise from inappropriate online conduct.

Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual harassment

Severn Vale has previously adhered to the Sexual violence and Sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Advice for governing bodies, headteachers, senior leadership teams and Designated Safeguarding Leads (September 2021). The guidance defined what sexual violence and sexual harassment is, how to minimise the risk of it occurring and how schools should respond to incidents and alleged incidents. This guidance has now been merged fully with KCSIE 2026.

The school recognises the recommendation for all staff to have read and to be aware of **Part 5 of KCSIE 2026**. Part 5 provides detailed guidance about child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including responding to reports of abuse and protecting victims. Part 5 also signposts to the wider specialist support that is available.

What sexual violence and sexual harassment between children is:

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur 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 online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Sexual violence includes:

- rape
- assault by penetration
- sexual assault - intentionally touching another person in a way that is sexual. These incidents (potentially criminal in nature) may, but not exclusively include incidents such as *grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.*
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

Sexual Harassment includes

The guidance defines sexual harassment as 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. These types of non-contact behaviour may, but not exclusively include *verbal incidents, 'banter', inappropriate conversations or 'locker room' chat*)

Sexual harassment is likely to:

- violate a child's dignity, and/or
- make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or
- create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Harmful Sexual Behaviours include:

- The guidance describes harmful sexual behaviours as problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.
- Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if 1 of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than 2 years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.

Severn Vale recognise that young people who experience sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find it stressful and distressing. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable. The school recognises that incidents of sexual harassment, abuse and sexual assault can take place not only inside school, but also outside of school.

Reporting sexual violence and / or harassment

The school has a '**zero tolerance'** approach to sexual violence and harassment. School staff are regularly reminded about the importance of fostering a culture of listening to students, to always be vigilant and to challenge all types of incidents that occur or are reported whether they be contact or non-contact. Staff are aware that such behaviour should never be dismissed and that dismissing such abuses risks normalising them and creating a culture where students do not feel safe. Students can report incidents of sexual violence or harassment in line with any other safeguarding disclosure to any trusted adult within the school.

The school recognises that often students will approach a trusted member of staff to make such a disclosure. Initially, and in line with guidance within KCSIE, staff then have a duty of care to pass on the disclosure to a member of the school's Safeguarding Team immediately, where upon the Safeguarding team will report the disclosure to appropriate agencies such as the Police and Children's Services.

In cases where the young person has made a disclosure to a parent, and it is the parent who informs the school, the Safeguarding team will then arrange contact with the parent and ensure the information has also been passed by the parent to the Police. Reports can also be passed direct to the school's Safeguarding Team both during school hours and out of hours via the dedicated email address safeguarding@severnvaleschool.com

The DfE has commissioned the NSPCC to launch a new helpline called Report Abuse in Education. The dedicated NSPCC helpline number is **0800 136 663**

Action following a Disclosure of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

In the event of a report, staff should follow the school's general safeguarding procedures outlined and which are in KCSIE. The starting point regarding any report should always be that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. When addressing the disclosure, the DSL and/or DDSL will take initial control of the investigation. In line with guidance in addition to standard safeguarding protocols, other important considerations to be made by the Safeguarding Team will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including might a crime have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- the type of alleged abuse involved (i.e contact or non-contact)
- the ages of the children involved
- the developmental stages of the children involved
- the mental health and well-being of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children, for example if the alleged perpetrator is significantly older
- if the alleged incident is an isolated incident or a sustained pattern of abuse
- if the alleged perpetrator constitutes a risk to other students

Following a report of sexual violence

The DSL or DDSL will carry out an immediate risk and needs assessment. This will inform the actions that will then be taken. Following a report of sexual violence:

- The alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the alleged victim*.
- The school will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport to and from the school.*
- The school will consider whether it is appropriate to temporarily forbid the alleged perpetrator from attending the school site.

NB: The school recognises that in some cases of sexual assault allegations there are circumstances where the alleged perpetrator may not be aware of the allegations for a range of reasons. In circumstances where the matter has been reported to the Police, but they as an agency have not yet acted, it may be appropriate following an assessment of the risk for the school to not alert the alleged perpetrator to the allegation and to make alternative supportive provision instead for the alleged victim, as well as other safeguarding measures, in the interim. The school recognises the importance of liaising with both the victim and their parents in these circumstances. In other circumstances, such as where there is a criminal investigation into sexual assault, the school should remove the alleged perpetrator from any shared classes with the alleged victim and carefully consider how to maintain a reasonable physical separation. All reports of sexual violence should be considered on a case-by-case basis with reference to KCSIE.

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator

The guidance recognises that the school will have to balance safeguarding the victim, and the wider student body, with providing the alleged perpetrator with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implementing any disciplinary sanctions.

Discipline and the alleged perpetrator

Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a sanction accordingly.

Working with parents and carers

- The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence.
- Where a disclosure has been made solely to the school, but to no other agency, the school will encourage the young person and parent (where appropriate) to report the incident to the Police.
- This might not be necessary or proportional in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

Multi-Agency Response and Guidance:

- In any case involving an allegation of sexual violence or sexual assault the school will always liaise with other agencies such as the Police, Social Care, the Sexual Assault and Rape Clinic (SARC) as well as other Well-Being Services.
- The school acknowledges that often in such cases it is necessary for such agencies to carry out their own extensive enquiries, prior to forming conclusions or recommendations.
- The school will, in all instances, place the best interests of the students involved, at the forefront of its decision making, however, the school's response will in most cases be guided by the recommendations of other Agencies such as the Police and Children's Services.

The school recognise the importance of staff reassuring victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported. The school recognise that children and young people should never be made to feel ashamed or that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

A dedicated NSPCC helpline is now available to support anyone who has experienced sexual assault, abuse or harassment in educational settings. The dedicated NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663

Safeguarding other children

Severn Vale recognise the importance of supporting children who have witnessed sexual violence. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required. The school will do all it can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed, including online or by social media.

Should this occur, the school will ensure appropriate actions are taken and partner agencies such as the Police and Social Care will be contacted.

Further Information:

Gloucestershire ISVA Service
The Gloucestershire Independent Sexual Violence Advisory (ISVA) Service is delivered in partnership by First Light and Barnardo's.

Together, they provide specialist support for anyone impacted by sexual abuse, or sexual violence.
Helpline (01452 222352)
https://www.firstlight.org.uk/our-services/gloucestershire-isva-service/

The NSPCC Helpline 0800 136 663 / https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour

Domestic Abuse

KCSIE defines domestic violence and abuse as: *'Encompassing a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.'*

Severn Vale recognise that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates across all police forces in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, covering all educational settings including nurseries, primary and secondary schools. Severn Vale are an active participant in Operation Encompass within Gloucestershire.

How it Works

- Timely Notification: Police share brief information directly with a trained 'Key Adult' (usually the designated safeguarding lead) at the child's school.
- No Delays: Information is passed on before the school day begins, even if the incident occurs over the weekend (notified on Monday morning).
- Holistic Coverage: Notifications apply to any child connected to the household, regardless of whether they were present or directly involved in the incident.
- Support: This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs.

Further Information: National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247 / www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS)

Helpdesk open Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm:
Phone: 01452 726 570
Professionals helpline: 01452 726 561
Email: support@gdass.org.uk
www.gdass.org.uk

Mental Health

Mental health is now included in the definition of safeguarding, which now includes "preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development" (KCSIE 2026). Severn Vale recognises it has an important role

to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. All staff are made 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.

Only trained professionals should make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but as laid out in KSCIE 2026 it is recognised, that staff are well placed to observe children and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. The school acknowledge that Abuse, neglect and other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact, and all staff are made aware of how these experiences can affect children's mental health, behaviour and education. Staff should act on any mental health concerns and report them to the appropriate staff.

At Severn Vale these staff are the Heads of Year and Assistant Headteachers for each Key Stage, as is outlined in the schools Additional Pastoral Care (APC) procedures and in the Whole School Approach to Well-Being guidance. Staff should act on any mental health concerns that **are also safeguarding concerns,** following the school's child protection policy and report the concern to the DSL or DDSL.

In line with DfE recommended guidance the school has a Designated Mental Health Leads in place. The Designated Mental Health Lead is Amy Lloyd (Lead Well-Being Practitioner). For the academic year 2026-27 Amy is on maternity leave. Questions and queries should be directed to the school's SENDCO.

Family Help

The school recognises that every family is unique with its own combination of strengths and weaknesses. Any family can get overwhelmed by what seems like endless challenges when it comes to juggling money, school and each other's needs. And sometimes families are disrupted by a change in circumstances such as a mental or physical illness, a job loss, or an addiction.

What is Family Help?

The Family Help Team is a part of Gloucestershire Children's services aimed at supporting children of all ages with the aim of improving a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem(s) getting worse. When children and families need this extra support, they often need it quickly. A referral made by the school for Family support can be done at all stages of a child's life: pre-birth, during pregnancy, childhood or during adolescence.

What does Family Help include?

Support for pupils which includes:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Promoting self-esteem and confidence.
- Promoting positive behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
- Providing individualised support.

Support for families which includes:

- Providing information and signposting to other services in the local area.
- Liaising with a range of external services such as housing and Family Support Workers.
- Assistance in completing paperwork and forms e.g. housing, foodbank vouchers, attendance and support at school and other agency meetings.
- Advice and support in promoting positive behaviour at home.

The school's Early Help Co-ordinator is Hayley Haddock (hayley.haddock@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Responsibilities

School staff

Whilst the Headteacher and Governors have overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of this policy at Severn Vale School, we recognise that all adults, including temporary staff and volunteers, have a full and active part to play in fulfilling their responsibility to protect our students from harm. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and partner agency employees working in the school.

As part of the induction process that all staff follow, they are required to sign that they have read and are aware of:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
  - (Part 1: Safeguarding Information for all staff)
  - (Part 5: Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment)
  - (Annex A: Further information)
- Behaviour Policy 2026
- Social Networking Guidance for Teaching and Support Staff
- Guidance to Safer Working Practices
- Code of Conduct and Whistle Blowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- E-Safety Policy

Sharing Information

The school acknowledges that data protection regulations do not prevent the sharing of information to keep children safe. DPA and UK GDPR regulations **do not** prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the Designated safeguarding lead or a Deputy DSL. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.'

When a student leaves Severn Vale, the Safeguarding Team will always endeavour to ensure that a young person's Safeguarding file is transferred within five days of the young person enrolling at a new school or college. All Safeguarding files are transmitted separately from any main student files and are done so securely, via encrypted email, My Concern Transfer, or by recorded postal delivery. Safeguarding Files will not be transferred until confirmation is received by the school of the student being on roll at their new education setting. Safe receipt of the files will also be requested by the school.

The Role of the Safeguarding Team

The DSL is: **Catherine Stevenson** cstevenson@severnvaleschool.com

The DDSL is: **Charlotte Horsfall** chorsfall@severnvaleschool.com

The contact email for the Safeguarding Team is **safeguarding@severnvaleschool.com**

The DSL is responsible for:

- Assessing and in all cases of suspected abuse, referring, students to relevant agencies as set out in this policy.
- Ensuring that ensure each member of staff knows the names of the DSL and DDSL and understands everyone has a responsibility to refer any concerns relating to a student.
- Ensuring all staff have access to and understands the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures in accordance with KCSIE (2026), especially new and part time staff.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the importance of being alert to the signs of abuse and the appropriate response to disclosures or suspicions of abuse.
- Acting as a focal point of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safeguarding and safety.
- Leading and managing the effective deployment of the Deputy DSL and other appropriate pastoral staff to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are implemented and all students receive appropriate support and intervention.
- Keeping records of concerns about a child even if there is no need for an immediate referral.
- Keep chronology-based records of significant meetings and events linked to students for all students on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student records until the child's 25th birthday. These records should be copied to the child's next school or college.
- Ensuring that the indication of the existence of the additional file mentioned above is marked on the student records.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.

- Ensuring that either they or a suitably trained staff member attends case conferences, core groups or other multi agency planning meetings and contribute to assessments.
- Ensuring that the Social Care key worker for any student with a current Child Protection Plan and, who is absent from an educational setting without an explanation, is notified of the student's absence on the day.
- Liaising with the Headteachers PA (Lyn Woodrow) over the updating and maintenance of the school's Single Central Record.
- Organising the delivery of Interim Safeguarding training in line guidance from GSCP as part of the school induction process.
- Organising LA delivered Safeguarding training by the GSEP each year and ensure that staff training is renewed and updated every three years for all school staff with direct contact with students.
- Producing the school's annual Safeguarding Audit report in accordance with its responsibilities in partnership with the GSEP. The assessed outcomes of the report should be used by the DSL to formulate the school's Safeguarding Action Plan which is subsequently passed on to Governors.
- Producing termly reports for Governors detailing any changes to the policy and procedures, the training undertaken by all staff including the DSL, the number and types of cases and number of students on the open to Children's Services, as well as any referrals made in accordance with the Prevent Strategy.
- Providing analysis of the annual Staff Safeguarding Awareness Quality Assurance Survey. This survey measures staff awareness of current Safeguarding procedures, both internal to the school and with regard to wider national policies and procedures.
- Ensuring staff in the school are regularly reminded of key safeguarding matters, updates or changes to national, local or internal guidance, protocols or systems (eg via email and staff meetings).
- Ensuring that the designated teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement and well-being of Children in Care – CIC (also known as Looked after Children - LAC) will undergo appropriate training. The Designated Teacher for CIC (DTCIC) is Julie Williamson.
- Playing a lead role in the school's termly Operational Safeguarding (OPSAFE) Committee, which comprises the Headteacher, Deputy Head, Safeguarding Team, the Business Manager, Site Manager, IT Manager.
- Playing a lead role in ensuring that the school's IT network is suitably equipped and monitored to limit and restrict misuse or abuse by students or staff and complies with national and local guidance as set out in this policy.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children with a social worker are experiencing, or have experienced, with other relevant professionals.
- Ensure and encourage staff to know which children have a social worker and to understand the impact of their circumstances on their academic progress and attainment as well as maintain a culture of high aspirations for them.
- To record all incidents of physical restraint or positive handling by staff centrally
- To record all incidents of 'low level' concerns raised about staff centrally

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

The DDSL is the first point of contact in the absence of the DSL to avoid any unnecessary delays in responding to a student's needs. The role of the DDSL is to work alongside the DSL to assess, where necessary refer and where appropriate deploy staff to ensure that any of the safeguarding responsibilities mentioned above are met by the school.

Training

The DSL and the DDSL will undergo appropriate accredited Safeguarding training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. Their accredited training will be updated every two years. The Governing body of the school will ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training will be regularly updated. Induction and training will be in line with advice from the GSEP.

Severn Vale will ensure that at least one person on any appointing recruitment panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training, in line with School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. The DSL for the school will undertake Safer recruitment training regardless of whether they are involved in the specific appointment process. The members of the Governing Body will receive Safeguarding Training from the DSL. Training is also provided for appropriate members of the Governing Body from the LA Governor Services Department. The DTCIC will undergo appropriate training.

The DSL & DDSL actively participate in a range of training to ensure their knowledge is up to date.

The IT Manager will work with the DSL and DDSL to ensure that the school's IT network is continually equipped and monitored to limit and restrict misuse or abuse. Due to the ever-evolving nature of modern technology Online safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

All Staff at Severn Vale are expected to have completed Prevent Strategy online training and completed FGM online training.

The Governing Body

The governing body must understand and fulfil their responsibilities which are:

- Ensuring there is a Safeguarding and Child Protection and staff behaviour policy.
- Ensuring the school operates safer recruitment procedures and that at least one person on every recruitment panel has completed Safer Recruitment training.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers. They make a referral to the DBS if a person in a regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have if they had not resigned.
- A member of the SLT has lead DSL responsibility.
- On appointment, the DSL undertakes inter-agency training for new DSLs and then updates this training every two years.
- Ensuring the DSL provides regular and effective Safeguarding updates to the governing body via a progress rated Safeguarding Action plan.
- All other staff have safeguarding training as part of the induction process and then access GSEP accredited Level 2 Safeguarding training, which is updated every three years.
- A member of the Governing Body, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the LADO on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the headteacher.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure are reviewed annually and that the policy is available on the school website.
- Consider how students are taught about safeguarding. This will be as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through Futures, assemblies.
- That enhanced DBS checks are in place for all Governors.
- To ensure that the school's approach to the Graduated Pathway is clearly stated through its publication of its Offer of Early Help (Appendix 3).

Procedures

- The DSL is an associate member of SLT. The DDSL is also the school's Family Support Practitioner (FSP).
- Both the DSL and DDSL hold Level 3 Child Protection training accreditation, and this is updated every two years as per DfE guidance.
- The Assistant Headteacher with strategic Line-Management for Safeguarding, Mark Nichols also holds Level 3 accreditation
- All staff involved in recruitment undertake Safer Recruitment training.
- Whilst the school does not routinely carry out online searches on applicants, this may be undertaken as part of pre-recruitment checks. If this is carried out, then candidates will be made aware.
- All members of staff (full time and part time) are provided with Safeguarding and Child Protection awareness information at induction and the school safeguarding statement so they are aware who the DSL and DDSL are if they have a concern about a student.
- All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates on Online Safety and reporting concerns.
- All other staff and governors have Safeguarding and Child Protection awareness training update as appropriate by the DSL or GSEP Governor's Services, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and understand how to respond to a student who make a disclosure.
- The DSL sits on the school Governors Children & Families Committee (CFC), which includes the named Safeguarding Governor for Safeguarding, Attendance and SEN.
- The CFC Committee also receive an annual report on Children in Care. It is the role of the CFC committee to support, monitor and if necessary, challenge the DSL with regards to operating procedures. The CFC committee is also responsible for ensuring there is clear strategic leadership of Safeguarding and that current and future processes and protocols are reviewed and updated in line with National guidance.

- All parents/carers are made aware of child protection procedures through the publication of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on the school website and reference to it in the parent handbooks. They are made aware of their entitlement to have a copy of the policy via the newsletter.
- The school will ensure that child protections concerns/ allegations against adults working in the school are referred to the LADO for advice and that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the DBS for consideration for barring following resignation or dismissal.
- The school's procedures will be reviewed regularly and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy updated annually and in accordance with updated guidance.
- The names of the DSL and DDSL will be clearly advertised within the school along with a statement outlining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- All new members of staff are asked to read and sign that they have read each of the following school documents as part of their induction:
    - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026
    - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (Part 1)
    - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (Part 5)
    - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (Annex A – Further information)
    - Behaviour Policy 2026
    - Social Networking Guidance for Teaching and Support Staff
    - Guidance to Safer Working Practices
    - Code of Conduct and Whistle Blowing Policy
    - Health and Safety Policy
    - E-Safety Policy

- These policies are publicly available on the school, website and to all staff on the school network.
- The school will ensure that IT Network is continually equipped and monitored to limit and restrict misuse or abuse by students or staff.
- All staff are expected to complete annual Cyber Security Awareness and GDPR training online.

Procedures and Responsibilities for Reporting Concerns about a Child

If a child discloses harm or abuse to a member of staff, the following procedures **must** be followed by all staff:

DO:

- Listen carefully to what the child is saying.
- Remain calm and take what the child is saying seriously ensuring that they know you are doing so.
- Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing by telling someone.
- Ensure that you continue your conversation where you cannot be overheard.
- Listen carefully to what the child says. Try not to interrupt and only ask questions for clarification to prevent leading the child in any way.
- Explain that you have to tell someone else who will be able to help and has met other children in similar situations. Explain that this person will either be **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall**
- Take the child to **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall** or inform one of them of the conversation
- Make a written report, dated, timed and signed. Give this to **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall**
- Take care of yourself and work out how you are feeling. Talk to **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall**

DO NOT:

- Rush off to find someone else to listen to the child.
- Promise confidentiality.
- Promise the child that everything will be alright now that they have told someone.
- Make any kind of judgements about the child or the abuser.
- Ask lots of questions.
- Press the child for more information than they are willing to give.
- Make assumptions about how the child is feeling.
- Keep the information to yourself.

If you suspect a child is being abused but they have not disclosed to you, tell **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall** as soon as possible. Do not talk to the child as it may put you in a difficult or unprofessional position.

All staff are particularly reminded that:

- From October 2015, teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL or DDSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.
- Normal referral processes must be used when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Staff should also inform the DSL or DDSL.

In the event of a disclosure of potential abuse or where there is a concern about a child's welfare, the DSL or DDSL will establish the key facts of the case and will then initiate the following procedures: Contact will be made with the Children's and Families Helpdesk/Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

Children & Families Helpdesk/MASH
Gloucestershire Tri Emergency Centre (GTEC),
Quedgeley,
Gloucestershire,
GL2 2AX
Tel: 01452 426565 (out of hours Emergency Duty Team - 01452 614194)
Professionals Advice line 01452 427070
Email: childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the DSL or DDSL will consult with the Gloucestershire Social Care Children and Families Helpdesk and gauge their recommendation for proceeding (see Appendix 1). If concern is such to believe that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made by the DSL or Deputy DSL through the completion of a Multi-Agency Service Request Form (MARF).

A copy of this will be saved stored securely for access only by the Safeguarding Team. Where possible and appropriate parents would be contacted and made aware of the referral, unless to do so would be to place the child at greater risk. If no response or acknowledgement is received within three working days, the DSL, DDSL or an appropriate member of pastoral staff will contact the Helpdesk again.

In Child Protection cases, the Headteacher is informed and updated by the DSL. It is the decision of the DSL or DDSL as to whether case information is passed on to additional pastoral staff such as the Head of Year, or Tutor.

Absence of a DSL

If Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall are not available, then staff must report any concerns directly to Mark Nichols (Assistant Headteacher). If he is not available, then staff should report concerns directly to the Headteacher.

If neither the DSL or DDSL are available, please be aware that if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care team via the contact details as above. Following this a MARF should be completed via the online portal, Multi-Agency Service Request Form (MARF) and a copy retained and emailed to the safeguarding team for secure storage on the My Concern platform.

Suspension of Children with a Child Protection Plan

Severn Vale understands that Children with a Child Protection plan are more at risk of harm if their family is placed under unexpected stress. The school follows the guidance provided by the GSEP in cases where the decision is taken to permanently exclude a student on a CP plan. A guidance leaflet outlining Child protection and exclusion from school guidance for professionals can be found here. If a student who has an allocated social worker is suspended from school then the Safeguarding Team will notify the social worker on the day of the suspension to make them aware.

Children Missing in Education (CME)

The school recognises that unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation. Severn Vale uses the statutory Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance. Severn Vale hold an Admission Register that records when any student is taken off roll. The school records the reason why the students have left the education setting. The school then contact the LA and ensure they are aware that the child has left the school's

roll. The school then send the CT file for the child to their new school. The Admission Register is regularly scrutinised by the Senior Leader responsible for each year group and by the school's CFC Committee.

To ensure we are aware that our students are not "missing education" or are persistent absentees from school we have implemented the following steps:

- Every two weeks the Attendance Improvement Manager and the Year teams liaise over determining whether any students have been absent (unauthorised) for 10 days consecutively.
- The Attendance Improvement Manager will also look at data to check for absent students prior to the 10 Day threshold.
- The Attendance Improvement Manager will investigate any students at risk of CME. The outcome of investigation is shared with the LA in liaison with the DSL.
- In cases where the duration of the absence or reasons behind the absence is of concern, the school will seek advice from Children's Services, which may lead to a referral being made by the school.
- Staff (tutors in particular) should raise any concerns over unusual or lengthy absences with the relevant Year Team and the Attendance Improvement Manager.

Looked after children (Children in Care) & Previously Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Severn Vale recognise that the Governing body should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe (KCSIE 2026). In Gloucestershire the term 'Looked After Child' is now more commonly referred to by schools and agencies as Children in Care. The DTCIC is Julie Williamson (Assistant Head & SENDCO). Julie Williamson holds an enhanced GSCP Level 3 Safeguarding certification.

The DTCIC ensures that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They are also responsible for ensuring that they also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA looking after him/her.

The DTCIC will have details of the child's social worker. Each Child in Care will have a Personal Education Plan implemented in consultation with the Virtual School (Children in Care Education Support Service), Social Worker and Carer. The DTCIC attends regular training/briefings provided by the LA and the Virtual School regardless of whether there are currently children within the school who are in care.

Venetia Ford is the Assistant Designated Teacher for Children in care and holds an enhanced GSCP Level 3 Safeguarding certification. The Assistant DTCIC acts as the daily contact for students in care and will oversee their academic and personal progress. The Assistant DTCIC meets regularly with the students, keeps carers up to date and liaises with school staff to ensure students have robust and relevant SMART targets for their Personal Education Plans.

Severn Vale acknowledge that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe and to monitor their progress and needs. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that the school and other agencies work together and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Working in partnership with the Virtual School:

The school recognises the expanded role of Virtual Schools, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of any children with an allocated social worker. The school works closely with the Gloucestershire Virtual School's Senior Education Advisor in seeking advice and guidance on improving outcomes for those students.

Record keeping and Children who are removed from roll for Elective Home Education (EHE)

If a parental request is made for a child to be removed from roll to be educated at home, the school will request that the parent formalise the decision in writing after which the school will ensure that a referral is made to the EHE team within the LA. Contact: Gloucester EHE team (Tel: 01452 426960/427360). Severn Vale operate this procedure to

ensure that the LA fulfils its duty to ensure that a child being educated at home is receiving appropriate education and that the EHE Home Visitors can offer advice to parents who decide to home educate. It is not the parent's responsibility to inform the LA, only the school's. The LA EHE Policy includes information for Home Visitors on Safeguarding and making referrals should this be necessary.

The school acknowledges guidance within KCSIE that elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education. If Severn Vale is concerned that a child might be at risk of harm and has been removed for EHE the school will refer to its referral protocols as laid out in this policy.

Abuse of Trust

School staff are, by the nature of their role, in a position of trust with students. All sexual relationships within such a relationship of trust, regardless of sexual orientation or age of the parties, are unacceptable. Any member of staff found in breach of this trust will be subject to school disciplinary procedures and police procedures.

Care must be taken by staff to avoid misunderstandings about the nature of any relationship with students. If a member of staff has a concern about a student's perception of any relationship with them, or another staff member, they must note this concern and inform **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall.** If a member of staff is concerned that a student is providing the impetus to move the relationship into an unacceptable area, they should keep a record and report the situation to **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall** If a member of staff feels that any of their actions may have been misconstrued, he or she should make a record and report the circumstances to **Catherine Stevenson or Charlotte Horsfall** who will offer professional advice.

All staff are particularly reminded that:

Staff should also feel able to follow the school's separate Whistleblowing Policy to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the school, potential failures by the school or its staff to properly safeguard the well-being of students or other wrongdoing in the workplace that does not involve the safeguarding and welfare of children.

Supporting Students

Severn Vale recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses' violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth and that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. The school accepts that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our school will support all students by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying relevant agencies such as Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

Supporting Staff

- The school recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- The school will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations Against Staff

- All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a student. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- All Staff should be aware of local guidance on behaviour issues, and the school's own Behaviour Policy.
- Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including guidance on the use of social media will be given at induction.
- The school understands that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff or contractor working within the school environment.
- If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy.
- The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LADO as described in the section **'Governors'**, without notifying the Headteacher first.
- The school will follow the local procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a consultation with the LADO.
- Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and the Business Manager in making this decision.
- In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice from the LADO.
- We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context.
- If an allegation is made against a member of supply staff, then that member of staff may be asked to write a formal account of any incident, if required and may be subject to further investigatory procedures as deemed necessary by the Headteacher via consultation with the LADO if necessary. In line with KCSIE guidance, the school should not decide to cease using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. It is the responsibility of the school to 'lead' on any formal disciplinary procedures initiated by the conduct of supply teachers.
- The school recognises the need for staff to report **'low level'** concerns about other staff to appropriate Senior Leaders. Whilst these concerns may not reach the harms threshold, constitute a formal allegation or warrant any disciplinary procedures, staff are advised to pass such concerns on in order for them to be logged accordingly.
- 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.
- Any such concerns must be reported to the Headteacher and or DSL who will then liaise with each other, unless the concern is about the DSL themselves. In this instance, it should be reported direct to the Headteacher. It is the duty of school management to create an environment where staff feel safe to do so.
- The Headteacher will be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns, however this may be done in consultation with the DSL.
- The DSL must ensure that all reports are recorded clearly with the facts of what the concern was, how it became a concern, and the actions taken. Examples of behaviours could include, but are not solely categorised as the following:
    - being over friendly with children
    - having favourites
    - taking photos or videos of children on their mobile phone
    - engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door
    - using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language
    - inappropriate activities outside of the school community and outside the working school day

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per both its student and staff behaviour policies.

Transferable Risk

Severn Vale understands that it has a duty to consider how anyone working in the school who has behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. An example of this may be

where the school would need to consider the response to a member of staff involved in domestic violence incident at home, where no children were involved and what triggered these actions. The school would need to consider whether a child in school could trigger the same reaction and be put at risk by that member of staff.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy. Allegations regarding the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body whose contact details are readily available to staff via the school web site and/or Clerk to the Governors Lyn Woodrow.

Physical Intervention

Severn Vale acknowledges that staff must only ever use limited physical intervention as a reasonable and appropriate last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be no more force than is necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events should be recorded and reported to the Headteacher and DSL.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained in the Positive Handling Options technique. All appropriate staff will be provided with guidance on physical intervention protocols and the use of 'reasonable force'. The School understands that physical intervention of a nature, which causes injury or distress to a child, may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. The school recognises that touch is appropriate in the context or working with children, and all staff have been issued with the 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

Social Networking

Social networking offers a world of possibilities to teaching. Many staff and young people in schools are already users of sites such as Facebook and Twitter However, it is essential to ensure that staff keep themselves and young people safe online and, as teachers, staff have a key role to play in actively promoting these safety messages and in acting responsibly online. Severn Vale has formulated its own Social Media Guidance for Teaching and Support Staff. This document is included within the staff induction process as part of the required reading all staff must sign acknowledgment of.

Prevention

Severn Vale recognises that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with students e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children to report whether they have had happy/sad breaks/lunchtimes
- Ensure that all students know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including Futures, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular, this will include anti-bullying work, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training. Also focused work with primary school as part of the transition process to Secondary school and more personal safety/independent travel.
- Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Severn Vale keep all child protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The School will co-operate with police and children's social care to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under

section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in accordance with the requirements of Working together to safeguard children (March 2018), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015) and Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2015).

Where allegations are made against staff, Severn Vale will consult with the LADO and, where appropriate, the police and children's social care to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom. All external partner agencies who work with students at Severn Vale subject to disclosure within Service Level Agreements their safeguarding accreditations to which their staff are subject to as well as the context, use of and storage methods of data pertaining to young people of their families.

Site Access and Security

Severn Vale acknowledges that it has a duty and legal responsibility to ensure that all reasonable and proper steps are taken to ensure that the school premises are as secure as circumstances permit. The school uses an iPad based check in facility in the Main Reception area for visitors and two iPad based check in units are available to staff for their check in. The software used produces a visitor ID badge including a digital photo of the guest.

- All visitors must sign in on arrival and then sign out on departure.
- All visitors will be given a named visitor photo ID to be worn and it must be clearly visible at all times whilst on School premises.
- All visitors are required to sign an electronic declaration at Main reception check in that contains Safeguarding expectations
- All staff must wear School ID badges at all times.
- All students will be discouraged from entering school site prior to 8am in the morning.
- Access to the school buildings prior to 8am is limited to staff with electronic ID badges only.
- The Main reception of the school is staffed from 8am each day.
- Access to the school buildings is limited to staff with electronic ID badges only after 4.30pm.
- Access to the PE areas for events such as sports fixtures will be through the Sports Hall entrance only.
- The Main reception of the school is staffed until 5pm
- CCTV is in Operation across the school site

Self-Harm Protocols & Definition of Self-Injury

Whilst self-harm is not directly mentioned in KCSIE (2026) Severn Vale regard self-injury to be a coping mechanism for young people who are attempting to deal with high levels of distress and emotional pain. It is any deliberate, non-suicidal behaviour which causes physical pain or injury and is aimed at reducing the emotional pain and distress of the individual concerned. These behaviours may include deliberate cutting, bruising, bone breaking, banging and non-suicidal overdosing.

We understand that self-injury is not suicidal behaviour. However, the emotional distress that causes these behaviours can lead to suicidal thinking and actions and we will consequently take **ALL** incidents of self-injury seriously, investigate them and attempt to provide the most appropriate, school based, emotional support possible. Wherever possible we will involve external agencies.

Additional Pastoral Care (APC) Procedures for Staff

Sometimes students may:

- disclose issues related to their Mental Health or Well-being.
- present as 'sad', anxious or depressed.
- present or disclose thoughts of self-harm, actual self-harm (i.e. cuts, burns, scratches).
- present or disclose as having had suicidal thoughts or feeling suicidal.

As per KCSIE guidance, NOT ALL Mental health and Well-being concerns or scenarios are related to direct safeguarding issues. A concern is considered a safeguarding concern only when a student is at risk from another person(s). Mental Health and Well-Being concerns form such a significant part of our pastoral work at SVS that it can NOT all be covered by Safeguarding staff. In order for us to respond effectively these are situations are covered by our Additional Pastoral Care protocols.

The monitoring of APC systems for each year group is the responsibility of:

- The **Head of Year** – to pick up student asap and triage concerns
- The **Head of Key Stage Assistant Headteacher** – to act as a backup in case of HOY not available or absent
- The **Mental Health & Well-Being (MHWB) Practitioners** – to act as secondary triage if required in more severe cases
- The **Safeguarding Team** – to act as a final fail safe in case of staff absence or unavailability

If a student presents any of the previously identified issues staff are directed to follow these steps:

1. Do NOT promise confidentiality – Explain that you need to pass it on to Pastoral Staff
2. Do ask if the student has told another adult or is accessing support about how they are feeling
3. Email ASAP the relevant APC staff group for that cohort
4. If you have not received a response from the Head of Year or Head of Key stage before 2.15pm on the same day please follow up with a chaser email to the same APC group. This will then be followed up by the Mental Health & Safeguarding Teams.

Please note that the Safeguarding Team are included in each of the APC email groups so there is no need to send information separately.

Warning Signs of Suicide

Severn Vale recognise that sometimes there may be obvious signs that a young person is at risk of attempting suicide. However, this is often not always the case.

High-risk warning signs

NHS guidance identifies that a young person may be at high risk of attempting suicide if they:

- threaten to hurt or kill themselves*
- talk or write about death, dying or suicide*
- actively look for ways to kill themselves, such as stockpiling tablets

*Staff are advised to use professional judgement in assessing the context and phrasing of comments made by young people regards self-harm and suicide. The school recognises that not every young person who says or writes a comment about harming himself or herself may be suicidal.

In line with the school's APC protocols, any young person that staff believe display any of these warning signs should be referred immediately to their Year Team and attached SLT member, or in their absence the DSL/Deputy DSL or Headteacher. The parents/carers of the young person will be notified immediately and requested to collect the young person as soon as possible. Parents/carers will then be guided by the school to follow NHS advice, which would be to attend the nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department and ask for the contact details of the nearest crisis resolution team (CRT). CRTs are teams of mental healthcare professionals, such as psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses, who work with people experiencing severe psychological and emotional distress.

If the young person has previously been diagnosed with a mental health condition the school will endeavour to contact a member of the young person's care team or the centre or clinic where they were being treated. If the young person is subject to a CIN or CP plan the school will endeavour to contact and notify the assigned Social worker. On their return to school the young person and parents/carers will meet with an appropriate member of the Pastoral and if appropriate a School Safety plan put in place.

Protocols for Intimate Care Plans

Julie Williamson – SENDCo, Assistant Head
Dan Higgs - Medical and Allergies Lead
Louise Watkins – Deputy SENDCo
Catherine Stevenson: DSL
Charlotte Merryfield: DDSL
Mark Nichols: Assistant Head – Strategic Lead for Safeguarding & KS4
Richard Johnson: Headteacher – SEND Line manager

1. Any student requiring personal care must have an intimate care plan. The SENDCO (Julie Williamson) will oversee this. There is a folder in the Graduated Pathway SEND IHP area entitled Intimate Care Plans, where you will see a copy of the students that require them and a master copy.
2. The plan must be written by the Medical and Allergies Lead in conjunction with the SENDCO and the student and parents/carer, this covers any safeguarding issues and the staff providing the personal care are not putting themselves at risk. The DSL will be copied into any emails relating to the topic.
3. The parents/carers of any student requiring personal care should be made aware of how they can help by providing the correct clothing for the young person e.g. loops on trousers so they are easy to pull up and down, no tights.
4. The SENDCo must organise up to date training where available and ensure that the staff providing the personal care must be given a training session to explain the role of the intimate care plan with the student and another member of staff to go through the plan. There must always be at least two staff who can provide the personal care for a student.
5. For students who do not always need a personal carer in lesson ensure they are aware of who is available to administer personal care should they require this. Agree with the student when this might be applicable.
6. There are various aids that the school can purchase to help with personal care making more acceptable for the student and carer. The Advisory Teaching Service are the main point of contact for any questions about this or helping to provide any aids necessary. She will also come and support the drawing up of an intimate care plan if needed and undertake training with staff.
7. When constructed all Personal Care Plans are to be saved in the identified staff shared area and a note is to be added to the My Plan/My Plan+/EHCP identifying that one is in existence. A separate email to all those who teach this student must be made to raise awareness and point them in the direction of where to find, so that they can familiarise themselves with what the protocol is.

Safeguarding children with medical conditions

Severn Vale recognises that an incident relating to the management of a child or young person's medical condition (including allergies) would not in and of itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the child or young person might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to a school or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk.

Severn Vale staff follow the Allergy and Anaphylaxis policy in line with DFE statutory guidance.

Additional Areas linked to Safeguarding

Anti-Bullying

The school's policy on anti-bullying and conflict resolution is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse. To provide further opportunities for pupils to share concerns, Severn Vale operate a confidential online system to report incidents of bullying anonymously. This is accessed through the school website. Reports can be made both in and out of school. Each report allows the pastoral team to investigate and take the necessary actions. We keep a record of bullying and conflict incidents.

LGBTQ+

The school has a named LGBTQ+ co-ordinator. This role works in liaison with the Heads of Year to support and help with any pastoral issues linked to LGBTQ+ students. The Co-Ordinator hosts weekly LGBTQ+ club for the students, so that they have a safe space to discuss issues etc. When supporting gender questioning students and the approach to changing names/pronouns, the school has a set process which is very much led by the wishes and wellbeing of the students. Where necessary and in consultation with the student, the school will ensure provision such as suitable alternative changing facilities are available for lesson such as Physical Education. Signposting to LGBTQ+ support organisations is available on the school website.

The school has a Whole School Approach to Transgender Students guidance document in place. This document can be found on the school website. It which includes an acknowledgement that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and that children may have wider vulnerabilities, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs. It highlights the importance of the school working with children and families to consider the broad range of the individual's needs. The document outlines that in the majority of cases the school will do this in partnership with their parents (except in rare circumstances where involving parents would bring a significant risk of harm to the child).

Racist Incidents

The school's policy on racist incidents is set out separately. It acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. The school keeps records of all racist incidents and their outcomes.

Hate Incidents

Incidents Homophobic and transphobic bullying and hate crime are viewed as particularly serious by the school. They attack young people's right to feel safe and confident about their sexual orientation and their gender identity. The school recognises that any such incidents and crimes are often motivated by prejudice and hate and can have a devastating effect on those who are targeted. Further information can be found in the school's Behaviour, Bullying & Conflict Resolution Policy.

Operational Safety

Severn Vale has an Operational Safety (OPSAFE) Group comprising of the Headteacher, DSL, DDSL, Operations Manager and IT Manager. It is the role of the OPSAFE group to plan and implement policies, strategies and protocols regarding all aspects of safety for staff and students. This includes the school's implementation of Online Safety procedures as well as those aspects of physical safety such as site security and School's Emergency Preparedness Responses (eg Lockdown processes). The school's policy on E-Safety is set out separately. Guidance for use of Social Networking can be found at Appendix 2 of this document.

Health and Safety

Severn Vale's Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our students both physically within the school environment, and for example in relation to internet use, and when away from the school and when undertaking school trips and visits.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation

The school follows DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. It recognises that using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure student and staff welfare. It is inevitable in any school that circumstances will arise where it becomes necessary to conduct a search. Where a search is necessary, it is important that it is conducted safely, sensitively and in accordance with the rights of students and the statutory powers of schools.

Identified staff have a statutory power to search a student of their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student may have any of the items which appear in the DfE list of 'prohibited' items or any other item that the school rules identify as an item which may be searched for.

Protocols for Peripatetic Instrumental Tutors

Severn Vale works with a range of peripatetic Instrumental tutors. Often these tutors work 1-2-1 or in small groups with students during the school day and within the Music Department of the school. All peripatetic staff are required to complete and fulfil the necessary DBS requirements. This includes:

- Proof of right to work e.g Passport / Birth Certificate
- DBS (3 x proof of ID)
- References (minimum - one current and one historic)

- Written declaration of any digital devices actively used in lessons (phones, tablets, laptops etc) to Subject Leader for Music
- Completed Safeguarding for Children Level 1 Certificate (link provided as part Safeguarding Induction)
- Signed Annual Declaration Form

In addition to this, ALL peripatetic staff are required to:

- Read and retain a copy of KCSIS Part 1, Part 5 and Annex A
- Read and retain a copy of SVS Social Media Guidance for teachers and support staff

ALL peripatetic staff must complete SVS Safeguarding Induction Training provided by the DSL. This training can be attended in person, face to face or online. Once the accredited training is completed, staff print off and pass this to Lyn Woodrow (Headteacher's PA). The training accreditation and printed certificate are mandatory.

Offsite Direction

Paragraph 32 of the DfE's guidance on Suspension and Permanent Exclusion makes clear that "headteachers should also consider … an off-site direction (including those previously known as Managed Moves or Managed Transitions) as preventative measures to exclusion." It goes on to make clear that "Off-site direction may only be used as a way to improve future behaviour and not as a sanction or punishment for past misconduct."

All non-DFE regulated settings that the school engages with are asked to provide written evidence of Safer Recruitment practice, including DBS checks and having active Safeguarding Policies. The school tracks and monitors where students are based off site during school hours and of any modifications to timetables in line with Local Authority guidance.

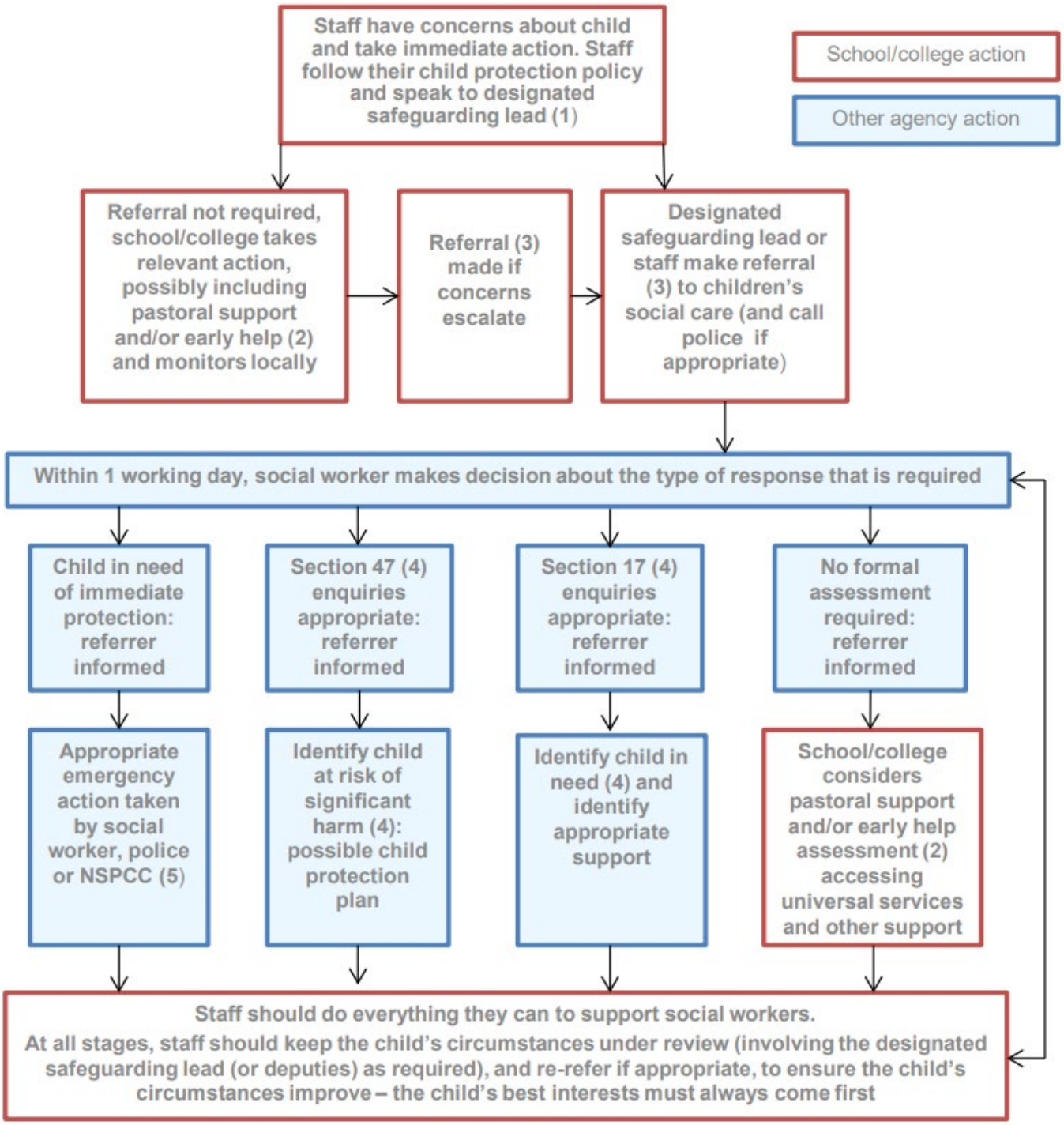
The school has a legal right to put in place Offsite Direction and do not require parental agreement to do so. The school acknowledges that where alternative provision offsite is used, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will liaise accordingly with those Alternative Providers.

Use of school premises and facilities (Lettings & Hire)

Organisations that hire the school premises are required to provide evidence of documentation to safeguard the school's facilities and safeguard members of their own club/organisation. Such documentation includes:

- If the organisation/club event caters for young people / vulnerable adults. This must include their recruitment and vetting procedures (eg DBS) and the name and contact number of their Child Protection Officer or Safeguarding Leads
- The school seek assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (available for inspection, as needed); and liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.
- The governing body also require assurance that safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.
- In the event of any allegation's management linked to an external organisation who use the school's facilities, the organisation must notify the school's DSL and Finance Manager immediately of the allegation. Whilst the organisation will be expected to follow their own safeguarding processes, the school will also follow its safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO if necessary.

Appendix 1 – Procedure for Referral to Children's Services



Appendix 2

Social Networking Whole School Guidance for Teachers and Support

Staff Social networking offers a world of possibilities to teaching. Many young people in schools are already users of sites such as Facebook and Twitter However, it is essential to ensure that you keep both yourself and young people safe online and, as teachers, you have a key role to play in actively promoting these safety messages.

A common-sense approach

- While social network profiles are easy to set up and use, it is important that you keep a professional distance online, just as you would in the 'offline' world. Think carefully about how any digital communication might appear to a third party. Compared with a conversation in the real world, technology increases the potential for messages to be seen out of context, misinterpreted or forwarded to others. The use of sarcasm and innuendo are not appropriate and it is essential to remember that you are in a position of trust.
- If you have a website or have set up a social networking site for your School, Department or Team bear in mind that once you place something there, it is in the public domain, which means people can access it, change it and share it with others. All accounts should be linked or registered to via Staff school email addresses.

a) Guidance for Adults

1. Remember you are in a position of trust as a member of school staff.
2. Remember that some sites have an age restriction (i.e. Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years)
3. Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face - be aware of what you say and how you say it.
4. Don't engage in one-to-one conversations with young people via chat facilities or instant messaging - this is the same as going into a private room with a young person and closing the door.
5. Do not provide personal details about young people on your website or social networking group (this includes school name, email address, ID, etc).
6. Always ensure you have parental permission to use any photos of young people and only use their first names on any caption.
7. Only use appropriate photos on your Social Media site, the sort that you would be happy putting on a public notice board - remember that everyone could view them.
8. If you are concerned about the way a young person is attempting to contact you, report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Safeguarding Lead, or Senior Leadership Team.
9. If you need to email or text young people, always copy the message to another adult from your school or SLT and if sending emails to groups of people use the 'BC' facility to avoid sharing e-mail addresses.
10. Don't use your personal social networking account to communicate with young people.
11. Do NOT pass on yours or other staffs' personal contact details to young people under any circumstances
12. Monitor places where interaction occurs including walls, discussions boards, comments on photos, tagging of pictures and 'Group' or 'Fan Pages'.
13. Be careful and about who you follow online. Staff should take note that their religious or political affiliations online might potentially influence young people.
14. Only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible.
15. If you sign yourself up to social networking sites you need to be aware that content is speedily updated. Photos can be tagged and posted on your account.
16. Only use designated and official profiles and communication routes for email or social networking to keep contact with any young people in education and your private life separate (e.g. School Trip based contact groups, Subject Area based groups).
17. For ALL staff at Severn Vale School designated communication route for all young people whether currently or previously on roll is through the school email network.
18. ALL communications with pupils of a partner primary school age should be done through their parents or carers, not directly.
19. If at any time you are unsure or require guidance on any of the above points seek advice from either the DSL, Deputy DSL or the Headteacher.

b) Safety for Young People

Most children and young people assume they are safe when using the internet because they are in their own home. They will usually assume that the person they are chatting with is who they say they are and most of the time this is true. However, the only way to protect young people is to teach them to understand the online environment – including the risks it poses – so that they can learn to stay safe themselves. This is even more important now that the internet is available on many mobile phones. It's a good idea to share this basic advice with young people:

1. Never give out personal information to online friends or adults. This includes mobile numbers, instant messaging ID, email address, mobile number, school name and any pictures of you, your family and friends.
2. If something is published online, anyone can access it, change it or share it with others. Keep social network profiles private.
3. Use webcams with caution and only with family and friends who are already known in the real world, as images can be copied, changed and shared.
4. Do not post inappropriate images of yourself online which send out the wrong impression and make you vulnerable.
5. Remember that online friends are just that and if they are not known to you in the real world, they may be lying about who they are.
6. Children and young people should never meet up with a person they have met online unless they take a trusted adult with them.
7. Think before opening files from people you do not know in the real world. They may contain anything from a virus to an inappropriate image or film and should be deleted.
8. If you wish to contact a member of staff at Severn Vale School do so only using the member of staff's school email address.
9. Know how to block someone online and report them to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) if you feel uncomfortable. You can save the www.clickceop.net website to your favourites so that you can report any suspicious behaviour straight away.

Training and advice

CEOP has developed an education programme for 11 to 16 year-olds, called Thinkuknow. This can be used as part of the schools training programme.

For further information visit:
www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Staff may also wish to consult advice and guidance from their Unions:

Further information can be found below:

http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/InformationandAdvice/Professionalissues/SocialNetworking/NASUWT_0 07513

http://newteachers.tes.co.uk/content/be-smart-when-it-comes-using-social-media

Appendix 3

Severn Vale School Local Offer 2026-2027

Early Help Co-Ordinator: Hayley Haddock

Level 1 Support

- Adaptive Teaching
- Tutor / Head of Year / Pastoral Mentor / Key Stage SLT
- Pupil Mutual Respect Contracts
- Additional Pastoral Care (APC) Register
- Futures Curriculum: Includes Sex and relationships education and Anti-bullying
- Student Voice: County Online student survey / school parliament
- Computer Studies Curriculum: Includes E-Safety
- SEND register: My Profiles/My Plans
- SEND referrals
- Positive Behaviour Mentors
- Wellbeing referrals
- Staff trained in Mental First Aid.
- GSCP school alerts
- Online safety guidance on school website
- Policies and Guidance: Safeguarding, Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, Guide to Safer Working Practices, Social Networking Guidance for Staff, Whole school Approach to Wellbeing
- Child Protection training for all staff including safeguarding procedures
- Flexible Learning Day Curriculums
- Annual Chelsea's story CSE Drama Delivery and other workshops as required
- DSL and Deputy DSL
- Designated Teacher for Children in Care and Assistant DT
- Operation Encompass
- Family Support Practitioner
- Assistant SENDCo supporting GHES students
- Attendance improvement Manager

Level 2 support

- SEND interventions
- Wellbeing support with SVS Practitioners
- School Nurse
- PCSO
- YES Mentoring
- Family help Referrals
- TAF/TAC/TALC/Nav HUB referrals
- CAMHS referrals
- Educational Psychologist Referrals – via SEND team
- Signposts to Family Information Service
- LQBTQ coordinator
- Young Carers coordinator
- Child Exploitation screening tool
- Quality of care profile e tool
- Substance misuse screening tool
- Occupational Health referrals
- Speech and Language referrals
- CAAAS referrals
- Alternative Provision Settings
- Young Gloucestershire Referrals
- Youth Support Team

Level 3 Support

- DSL and Deputy DSL complete Multi-Agency Safeguarding training every 2 years
- DSL and Deputy DSL complete Child Exploitation Training every 2 years
- All staff FGM trained
- All staff PREVENT trained
- SLT and identified staff safer recruitment trained
- Governors safeguarding trained and named safeguarding governor
- Identified governor safer recruitment trained
- Identified governor completes PREVENT Training
- Child protection procedures follow GSCP Guidelines
- All staff and governors complete online Safeguarding and QA annually
- Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Interagency working with social care, CYPs, Youth Support, Police, MASH, CIN, CP, MARAC, Strategy Meetings, High Risk Management plans
- Children's Helpdesk
- MARF referrals