

Treetops Learning Community
Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy

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Treetops Learning Community

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy has been developed by Treetops Learning Community (TLC), when the policy refers to school(s) it relates to any school that is a member of the TLC. Current schools that are members of TLC include.

- Treetops School
- Treetops Free School

2. Policy Statement Aims and Principles

This policy is based on our core safeguarding principles. These are as follows:

- The school’s responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance and at the heart of what we do.
- Safer children make more successful learners.
- Representatives of the whole-school community of pupils, parents, staff and trustees will be involved in policy development and review.
- Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

Child Protection Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and trustees and are consistent with those of the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP.)

Policy principles

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding pupils, parents and other partners.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either paid or voluntary capacity.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Young adult refers to all those who have reached their 18th birthday and are still attending the school.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

3. Context

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the trustees of maintained school and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

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

This policy follows the most up-to-date guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education (June 2022)

Research suggests that more than 20% of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-

to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting concerns.

Designated Safeguarding Team and Key Responsibilities include;

Named Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection is

Ben Hawes (Treetops Free School)

Tom Smith (Treetops School)

Tom Smith - Deputy Headteacher & DSL (CCE & County Lines Lead)

Ben Hawes – Deputy Headteacher and DSL (ESafety)

Beccy Fry - Assistant Headteacher & DDSL (Prevent & British Values Lead)

Lucy Meek - Assistant Headteacher & DDSL (Mental Health Lead)

Jane Flatt - VB Manager & DDSL (FGM Lead)

Sara Peaford-Smith – Assistant Headteacher / Therapy Lead & DDSL (LGBTQ Lead)

The nominated trustee is **Neil Woodbridge**

The Headteacher of Treetops School is **Jon Brewer**.

The Headteacher of Treetops Free School is **Anthony Hattam**

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements. The local authority maintains a list of all Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) for child protection.

The DSL:

- a. Is appropriately trained.
- b. Acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community.
- c. Has an understanding of LSCP (Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership) procedures.
- d. Keeps electronic records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and kept separate from the pupil's general file. TLC keep records using *My Concern* a cloud-based software.
- e. Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate.
- f. Notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than 2 days without explanation – as flagged by the attendance officer.
- g. Ensures that when a pupil with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the pupil's social worker is informed.
- h. Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences.
- i. Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans.
- j. Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.
- k. Ensures that all staff sign and indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy. (In Treetops Learning Community this is completed as part of the staff induction.)
- l. Ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually.
- m. Liaises with the nominated trustee and Headteachers as appropriate.
- n. Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training.
- o. Makes the child protection policy available to parents.

The designated safeguarding leads by area are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated persons by area, one

other DSL will be nominated to assume all of the functions above.

The trustees ensure that the school has:

- p. A DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training.
- q. A child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LCSP requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request.
- r. Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Headteacher.
- s. Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks.
- t. A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Headteachers, receive child protection training, with refresher training at yearly intervals. The DSL should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals, as well as an annual update.
- u. Arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff, supply teachers and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.

The trustees nominate a member (at TLC this is Chair, Mr Alan Peaford) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher.

The Headteacher:

- i. Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by staff.
- ii. Allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL team to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- iii. Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures.
- iv. Ensures that pupils' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

5. Good Practice Guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice.

Good practice includes:

- a. Treating all pupils with respect.
- b. Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- c. Involving pupils in decisions that affect them.
- d. Encouraging positive and safe behaviour among pupils.
- e. Being a good listener.
- f. Being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.
- g. Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.
- h. Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information sharing.
- i. Asking the pupil's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support, during PE or administering first aid.
- j. Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
- k. Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some

pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse.

- l. Informing the DSL if pupils are asking questions or writing things in lessons, which could be a cause for concern, for example are sexually harmful or racist in their content.
- m. Create a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated, and issues are identified and intervened early to better protect children and young people.
- n. Victim is a widely understood and recognised term but not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way, Staff should be prepared to use any term the child feels most comfortable with when managing an incident. Alleged perpetrator(s) are widely used and recognized terms, but you should think carefully about what terminology you use especially in front of children, as in some cases abusive behavior can be harmful to the perpetrator too.

6. Abuse of Trust

All school staff, including volunteers and supply teachers, are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach. In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

The Ethical Code of Conduct sets out the expectations of staff

7. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Abuse can happen to anyone, but research shows that some children who have experienced abuse share similar characteristics. This means they are more vulnerable. Having one or more of these characteristics does not automatically mean a child will experience abuse or neglect – and not having any of them is not a guarantee that a child will never be harmed.

We do know that these challenges are often interlinked and the more problems a child and their family are experiencing the greater the risk of abuse. It is important for staff to understand risk and vulnerability factors so they can identify which families need extra support to help keep their children safe.

We need to give special consideration to our children, as they all have special educational needs and or a disability. This means that statistically they are more likely to be abused or neglected.

To ensure that all of pupils receive equal protection, we also need to give special consideration to children who also are:

- a. Living in a domestic abuse situation.
- b. Affected by parental substance misuse.
- c. Asylum seekers.
- d. Living away from home.
- e. Vulnerable to being bullied or engaging in bullying.
- f. Living in temporary accommodation.
- g. Live transient lifestyles.
- h. Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations.

- i. Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, or sexuality.
- j. Involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking.
- k. Do not have English as a first language.
- l. At risk of being drawn into terrorism, radicalisation or extremism
- m. At risk of honour-based abuse (such as female genital mutilation or forced marriage)
- n. Pupils with health conditions
- o. Pupils with mental health needs
- p. Pupils with a family member in prison or affected by parental offending
- q. Pupils who are persistently absent from school
- r. Children who need a social worker

8. Support for those involved in a Child Protection Issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support pupils and their families and staff by:

- a. Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously.
- b. Nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. This will usually be the DSL (Ben Hawes) Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.
- c. Responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with stress or anxiety.
- d. Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies.
- e. Storing records securely.
- f. Offering details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support.
- g. Following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures.

9. Complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfair singling out of a pupil, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying, or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way.

Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Headteacher and the trustees. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

10. If you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation, and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistle blowing code (Appendix 1) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Trustees. If staff have a safeguarding concern/allegation about another staff member (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) that doesn't meet the harm threshold, they should share it directly to the Headteacher.

11. Staff who are the subject of an allegation

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils, and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Headteacher. Allegations against the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. Further information is contained in the school's disciplinary procedures.

11.1. Allegations against supply teachers

If safeguarding concerns or an allegation are raised against a supply teacher these should also be dealt with under TLC's procedures and the LADO must be informed. Although the school are not the employer of the supply teacher a full investigation must be undertaken in liaison with the supply agency. Under no circumstances should the school simply stop using a supply teacher because of concerns and take no further action.

12. Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and trustees will receive initial training during their induction and are required to complete online Safeguarding and Prevent training before their start date. All staff, including the Headteacher and trustees will receive training that is updated every year, and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including inter-agency procedures. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's Visiting Staff Leaflet.

13. Safer recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* together with the Local Authority and the school's individual procedures.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- a. Complete an application form.
- b. Provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.
- c. Provide evidence of identity and qualifications.
- d. Be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority.
- e. Be interviewed.
- f. Serve a probationary period

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's Child Protection Policy and identification of their Child Protection training needs.

14. Extended school and off-site arrangements (including residential trips in the UK or abroad)

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own Child Protection Policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site (for example, 'SBOS') we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, we will check that effective Child Protection arrangements are in place. A risk assessment form should be evaluated for every school trip.

For residential trips (either in the UK or abroad) the leader in charge is "in loco parentis" and has a duty of care to all members of the party. The Headteacher and the trustees have a responsibility for ensuring appropriate leadership, proper planning and organization is in place. Written Risk Assessments are completed before the trip, including an evaluation of foreseeable risks that might be encountered on a trip and the actions in place to prevent or reduce the risk.

Staff will sometimes transport pupils in their own cars. When this is the case there will be another adult in the car with them. In exceptional cases a member of staff may need to transport a pupil in a car on their own. This will always be cleared with a senior member of staff and parents will be informed.

15. Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable, and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect pupils, we will:

- a. Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website, app, social media platforms or in newspapers or publications.)
- b. Use only the pupil's first name with an image.
- c. Ensure pupils are appropriately dressed.
- d. Encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.
- e. Seek pupils' consent, where appropriate.

Staff will not take photographs of injuries on pupils, unless visible when fully clothed (for example on face or hands) and then only if asked by social care. If any clothing needs to be moved to take the photograph, then staff will inform the relevant organisation, that we are unable to take the photograph.

16. E-safety

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding issues and abuse can happen online, offline or both. Being online is an integral part of children and young people's lives. Social media, online games, websites and apps can be accessed through mobile phones, computers, laptops, and tablets – all of which form a part of children and young people's online world. The internet and online technology provides opportunities for young people's learning and growth, but it can also expose them to new types of risks. E-Safety forms a fundamental part of TLC's safeguarding and child protection measures. A whole school approach to online safety helps ensure staff, trustees, volunteers, and parents teach children about online safety, and is clearly demonstrated in our e-safety policy. Cyber-bullying by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed

through our anti-bullying procedures. The Department for Education's statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' obliges schools and colleges in England to "ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place" and they "should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system." TLC are provided this service through Classroom Cloud. Classroom Cloud enables us to create a safe and secure online environment, which is monitored and helps identify students at risk and spotting concerning trends. Any concerning activity is immediately flagged to the DSL. We further use "The Schools Broadband" online filtering and safeguarding service which filters billions of categorised URLs, providing education-specific safe searches across all popular web search engines including Google, Bing and YouTube, in over 40 languages.

17. Counter-Terrorism (PREVENT / CONTEST)

PREVENT: Safeguarding people vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism.

CONTEST: The Government's counter terrorism strategy, which is a multi-agency response to support those most vulnerable in our communities. The 4 main elements include:

Safeguards people and communities from the threat of terrorism.

Stops people from **becoming terrorists** or **supporting terrorists**.

Safeguards children and adults by providing early intervention to **protect** and **divert** people away from being drawn into **terrorist activity**.

Addresses **all forms of terrorism**.

The three main objectives of the PREVENT strategy are:

- Respond to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views
- Provide practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given the appropriate advice and support
- Work with a wide range of sectors, including education, health, faith groups, charities, and the local authority where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be dealt with

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a legal duty on local authorities, including the Police, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the "**PREVENT Duty**". It places a number of responsibilities on those authorities and their partners (including schools) and it is important that they;

- Understand what radicalisation and extremism are and why people may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence
- Know what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it
- Understand how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

It is important to remember that safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different to safeguarding them from other forms of potential harm.

Spotting the signs; There is no single profile that could highlight someone as vulnerable to radicalisation. However, individual circumstances, experiences or state of mind could lead towards a terrorist ideology. These may include; A desire for political change, susceptibility to indoctrination, a need to dominate and control others, a desire for excitement and adventure, a desire for status, a need for identity, meaning and belonging, feeling under threat, feelings of grievance or injustice, being at a transitional part of life.

- All staff are required at Induction to complete online PREVENT training as this forms a

- compulsory element of the Induction process.
- If a member of staff, sees or hears something that could be terrorist related they must report it immediately to the Named Designated Safeguarding Lead. **All** concerns should be raised as a safeguarding concern through to Thurrock MASH using the relevant PREVENT referral form.
- TLC have undertaken a Risk Assessment and an action plan is in place, monitored and progressed annually.
- Useful resources;
 - www.ACTEARLY.UK Help and advice if you are worried someone you know is being radicalised.
 - www.educateagainsthate.com Dfe recommend for education sector
- You can contact Essex Police to discuss any concerns on PREVENT@essex.pnn.uk

18. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, honour based abuse and reporting

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police. This should be done in conjunction with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If there is any suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk of forced marriage, or honour based abuse, then these issues should be discussed with the DSL, as soon as possible, who will then liaise with the family and local authority as appropriate.

19. Looked After Children

Looked after children are a particularly vulnerable group. **The designated teacher for LAC is Claire Harland.** She will liaise with the Headteachers of the virtual schools and look at the allocation and spending of Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium plus.

20. Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health. Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or to a child missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

21. Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation (CSE and CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power, to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. In some cases the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim wants or needs.

Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted that exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and take place online. More information including definitions and indicators can be found in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)' Annex A.

21.1 Serious Violence and County Lines

As well as CCE children and young people are at risk from, or can be involved with serious violent crime, including crime that comes under the umbrella of County Lines. Signs may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or group, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Advice is available from the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and its 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

22. Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behavior suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or are at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behavior, and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child, that is also a safeguarding concern and should be reported using My Concern.

23. Child protection procedures

23.1 Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example, leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse (including witnessing domestic violence), sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or

induced illness.)

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age - or developmentally – inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (witnessing domestic violence). It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

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

Neglect

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

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It is important to remember:

- Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims
- Witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on children
- Children can be victims, and perpetrators, in their own relationships too
- The abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional
- Extra-familial harms can include sexual harassment and domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationships).

23.2 Bullying and Child on Child abuse

Whilst bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious

issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. Bullying affects young people in many different ways. It can impact on their self-esteem, emotional wellbeing, education, and life outside of school. Young people experiencing bullying may feel that they aren't worth help or that nobody likes them. They may feel self-conscious or embarrassed lots of the time. They may also feel scared, sad or overwhelmed, and find it difficult to sleep or eat. A national bullying survey by Bullying UK found that 40% of young people who reported being bullied experienced thoughts of suicide and 39% had self-harmed. Online bullying is a contributing factor for many young people having thoughts of suicide and over 200 schoolchildren die by suicide every year in the UK.

Children with intra-familial abuse in their histories, or those living with domestic abuse, are more vulnerable to peer-on-peer abuse. Children in care, or those that have experienced bereavement, are more at risk of abusing or being abused by their peers.

As a school we will not tolerate any form of bullying or other peer on peer abuse. All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This may include (but is not limited to) bullying including (including cyber bullying) gender based violence / sexual assaults, sexting, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.

Any incidence of bullying or child on child abuse, should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents can access the anti-bullying procedures via the school website, and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider implementing child protection procedures.

23.3 Children with sexually harmful behaviors (including child on child sexual abuse)

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful or abusive. It can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It's harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as those it is directed towards. HSB is characterised by behaviour involving coercion, threats or aggression together with secrecy or where a participation relies on an unequal balance of power. Such a power imbalance may be due to age, intellectual ability, status, physical size and / or strength, gender or race.

Child-on-child sexual abuse is sexual abuse that happens between children of a similar age or stage of development. It can be harmful to the children who display it as well as those that experience it. Children can experience child-on-child sexual abuse in a range of settings, including at school. Abuse may also occur within intimate personal relationships between children.

Recognising child-on-child sexual abuse

- Inappropriate or unwanted sexualised touching
- Pressuring, forcing or coercing others to perform or take part in sexual acts
- Pressuring, forcing or coercing someone to share nude images (sexting)
- Sharing sexual images of a person without their consent

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be the victims of abuse themselves and the Child Protection Procedures will be followed for both the victim and perpetrator.

The school will promote a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated. This will be implemented through

- A carefully sequenced RSHE curriculum
- Training for teachers delivering RSHE
- Routine record keeping and analysis of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online to identify patterns and prevent abuse
- A behavioural approach; including sanctions where appropriate
- Liaise closely with Thurrock LSCP to access a range of support available to children and young people who are victims or perpetrators

23.4 Indicators of Abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell.' It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate, or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- Have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries.
- Show signs of pain or discomfort.
- Keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather.
- Be concerned about changing for PE or swimming.
- Look unkempt or uncared for.
- Change their eating habits.
- Have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships.
- Appear fearful.
- Be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety.
- Self-harm.
- Frequently miss school or arrive late.
- Show signs of not wanting to go home.
- Display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn.
- Challenge authority.
- Become disinterested in their school work.
- Be constantly tired or preoccupied.
- Be wary of physical contact.
- Be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol.
- Display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

23.5 Impact of Abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on

to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety and depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

23.6 Taking Action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- a. In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call for a first aider and if needed an ambulance.
- b. Report your concern to the DSL as soon as possible, definitely before the end of the school day.
- c. Do not start your own investigation.
- d. Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family.
- e. Create a new concern on My Concern.
- f. Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

23.7 If you suspect a pupil is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or you may have noticed physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine to ask the pupil if they are OK or if you can help in any way. Children may not feel ready, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and might not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL.

Use My Concern to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section 'If a pupil discloses to you.'

If following your conversation, you remain concerned; you should discuss your concerns with the DSL.

23.8 School Security (Child Abduction)

Child abduction is when children are taken from their parents or carers without permission. It can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the child (like neighbours, friends and acquaintances) and by strangers.

TLC will always follow a stringent pick-up procedure to make sure children only go home with their designated adults.

Community safety incidents are things like unknown adults loitering near school or trying to talk to children. Any suspicious incidents are to be reported to a member of senior staff immediately.

23.9 If a pupil discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a pupil talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the pupil may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the pupil:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – “I’m so sorry this has happened”, “I want to help”, “This isn’t your fault”, “You are doing the right thing in talking to me.”
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the pupil.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what the pupil’s mother thinks about all of this.
- At an appropriate time, tell the pupil that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go with you to see the DSL. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the DSL.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on My Concern and tell the DSL.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

23.10 Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children’s social care.

23.11 Referral to children’s social care

The DSL will make a referral to children’s social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

23.12 Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public

domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Headteacher or Chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern.) That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child Protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR guidelines. Information is:

- Processed for limited purposes.
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Accurate.
- Kept no longer than necessary.
- Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights.
- Secure.

Incident sheets and other written information will be scanned and stored electronically on "My Concern" which is password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store Child Protection Information on portable media, such as a flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child Protection Information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see Child Protection Records, they should refer the request to the Headteacher.

The GDPR guidance does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information –sharing is available to parents and pupils on request.

23.13 Operation Encompass

At TLC we are working in partnership with Essex Police and Thurrock Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household, this scheme is called Operation Encompass.

In order to achieve this, Essex Police will share information of all medium/high risk domestic violence incidents where one of our pupils have been present, with the DSL.

On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the pupil requires, this could be silent or overt. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with safeguarding and child protection regulations.

We will record this information and store this information in accordance with safeguarding and child protection regulations.

We will record this information and store this information in accordance with the record keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

23.14 Reporting directly to Child Protection Agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or NSPCC if:

- The situation is an emergency and the DSL, the Deputy DSL, the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors are all unavailable.
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

Related safeguarding portfolio policies:

- Physical Intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Personal and Intimate Care
- Complaints Procedure
- Anti-bullying
- Appropriate physical contact
- Whistleblowing
- Behaviour
- Missing children
- Safer recruitment
- Managing allegations
- Grievance and disciplinary

The latest version of the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures are available on the Thurrock LSCP webpage.

Local Information Contact Details

Thurrock Social Care (MASH) 01375 652802

Team for Disabled Children 01375 659637

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team 01375 372468

Local Area Designated Officer 01375 652535

www.thurrocklscp.org.uk

23.15 Information sharing and GDPR

The data protection act and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and safety of children.

Appendix 1

Whistle blowing code for issues relating to children and young people.

Purpose of the code

The school adheres to the Local Authority whistle blowing policy and procedures that enable staff to raise concerns relating to:

- Crime
- A miscarriage of justice.
- Illegality.
- Health and Safety.
- Environmental or property damage.
- Unauthorised use of public funds.
- Concealing or attempting to cover up any of the above.

This code provides additional information to help staff to understand the role of whistleblowing in the context of poor practice and unacceptable conduct and attitudes towards children.

When to use this code.

The whistle blowing procedures and this code may be used by anyone employed by the school in a paid or voluntary capacity who believes they have reason to suspect that the conduct of an employee towards a pupil is inappropriate.

Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not confined to:

- g. Bullying or humiliation.
- h. Contravening health and safety guidelines.
- i. Serious breaches of the school's code of ethical practice.
- j. Professional practice that falls short of normally accepted standards.
- k. Compromising pupils' welfare but in a way that does not meet the threshold for Child Protection Intervention.

Reasons for blowing the whistle

Staff will naturally be reticent to report a concern about the conduct of a colleague. However, each individual must take responsibility for ensuring that pupils are fairly treated. If poor practice is allowed to continue unchecked, it could escalate with serious consequences.

Your action not only protects pupils, but also deters any suggestion that you have colluded with poor practice that you knew was occurring but chose to ignore.

Whistleblowing can also support the member of staff who is the subject of the concern. Their conduct may result from inexperience or lack of training that can be addressed by the school, or they may be under stress and be relieved when their conduct is questioned.

Staff who deliberately fail pupils and show no remorse or desire to improve are unlikely to welcome being exposed, but their conduct has to be confronted for the sake of the pupils and the reputation of the whole school.

Barriers to whistle blowing

You may worry that you have insufficient evidence to raise a concern, that you will set in train an unstoppable chain of events, that there will be adverse repercussions for your career, that you may suffer harassment or victimisation, or that your suspicion or concern might be totally misplaced.

These concerns are entirely understandable but you can be reassured that whistleblowing procedures address these issues.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees from reprisals for public interest whistleblowing. Your union, a solicitor or the local authority legal services can provide you with information about your legal position.

Confidentiality and anonymity

All concerns are treated in confidence and, as far as possible, your identity will not be revealed if that is your wish. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if, as a result of an investigation, you are required to provide a witness statement or attend a court hearing.

You can, if you prefer, raise your concern anonymously. The school would need to decide whether the levity and credibility of the concern warrants investigation if the source of the concern, and the key evidence, is not readily available.

The school will fully support you and do all it can to protect you from any harassment or adverse repercussions that may arise from whistle blowing.

Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and malicious will be dealt with through the staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

Reporting procedure

- l. It may help if you write down, for your own benefit, what you have observed or heard that is causing alarm. One useful way to decide whether your concern should be reported, is to consider whether you would want the conduct of this staff member to continue unchecked if your own child or another young family member was involved.
- m. You may raise concern verbally or in writing. You should report your concern directly to the Headteacher.
- n. If the Headteacher is the subject of your concern, speak to the Chair of Governors.
- o. A friend, colleague or union representative may accompany you to the meeting if you wish.
- p. Ensure the head or chair informs you of their proposed action and sets a date for a second meeting.
- q. Timescales will depend on the complexity of the initial inquiry but the case should not be allowed to stall and you should receive initial feedback within 10 working days. The timescale for subsequent feedback should then be agreed.
- r. Ask for clarification about confidentiality and ensure you have your wishes regarding the protection of your identity recorded.

Process and outcome

- s. The Headteacher or chair will make enquiries to establish the facts of the matter and whether poor practice or inappropriate conduct has occurred.
- t. Members of the school community, including governors, may be asked to provide

- information or advice.
- u. External advice, for example, from legal or human resources or children's services may be sought.
 - v. A written record of the conduct, established facts and outcome of the inquiry will be kept.
 - w. The whistleblower will be kept informed of the process of enquiry.

The outcome of the inquiry will be one of the following:

- x. No poor practice or wrongdoing is established and the case is closed.
- y. The concern has some substance and the subject of the concern will receive advice and support from the Headteacher to improve practice.
- z. Poor practice or wrongdoing is established and disciplinary proceedings are initiated.
- aa. The concern is more serious and an investigation is initiated. This investigation may involve the Local Authority's legal team, children's social care or the police.

If, at any stage in the process, there is reason to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm, children's social care will be immediately involved.

Further action

If you raise a concern and you are dissatisfied with the way it is managed, or the outcome, you may contact the governing body or Local Authority for advice.

Alternatively you can seek advice from your union or professional association, a solicitor, the police, children's social care or Public Concern at Work (PCaW), a registered charity that offers free and confidential legal advice on workplace malpractice.

Public Concern at Work Suit
301
16 Baldwins Gardens
London EC1N 7RJ
0207 404 6609

whistle@pcaw.co.uk
www.pcaw.co.uk

There is also a whistle blowing line run by Childline if your whistle blowing is specifically about Safeguarding or child protection. The phone number is 0800 028 0285.

Appendix 2 Photos and videos

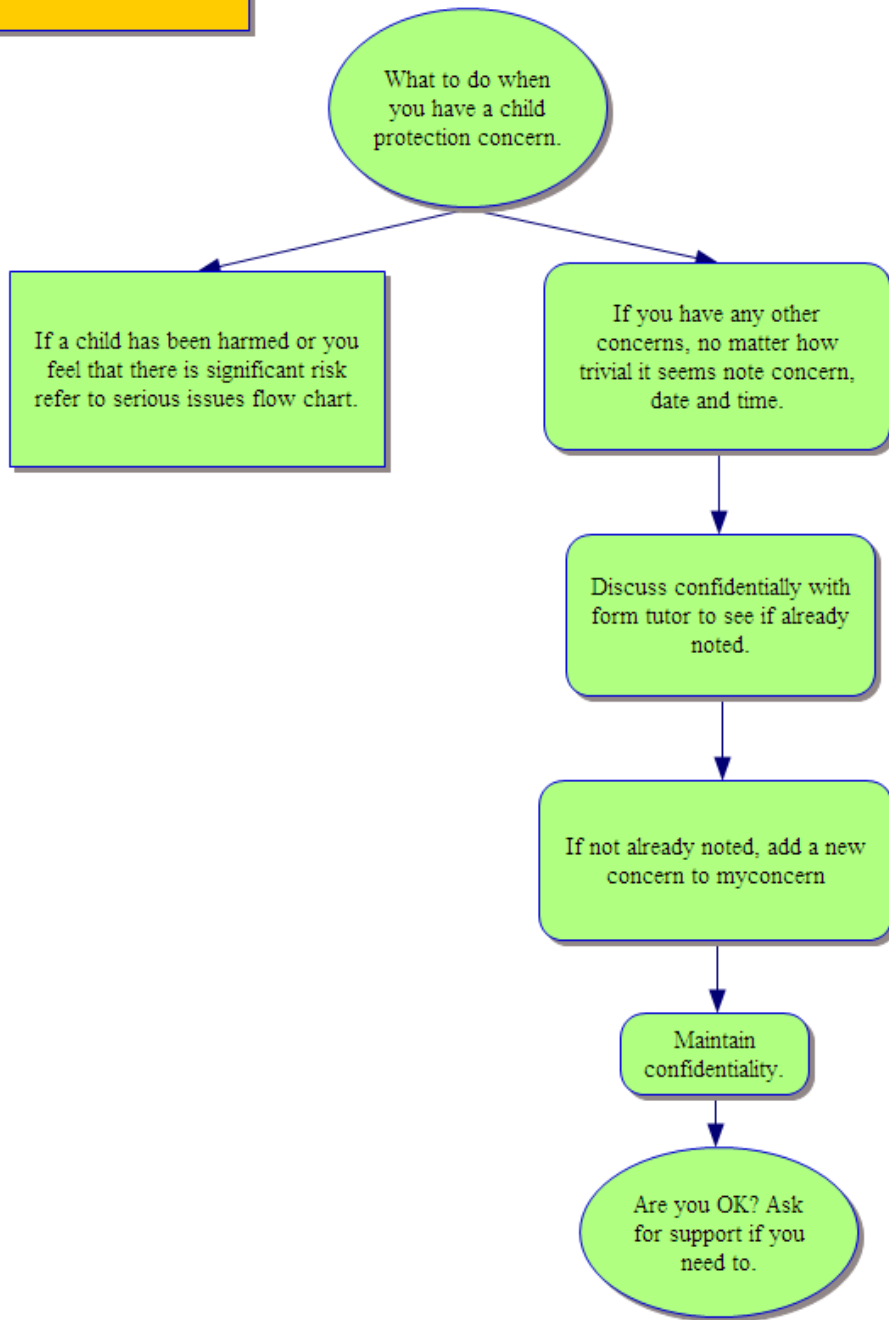
We sometimes take photographs of pupils. We use these photos to help us to give people an idea of what life at our school is like, for example in the newsletter and on the school website.

Please tick the relevant box (es) below, sign and return this form to school.

Use of photos	Tick (✓)
I am happy for the school to take photos of my child.	
I am happy for photos of my child to be used on the school website.	
I am happy for photos of my child to be used in the school newsletter.	
I am happy for photos of my child to be used in printed school materials, for example, the school prospectus.	
I am happy for photos of my child to be used in internal displays.	
I am happy for photos of my child to be used in the media, for example local newspapers.	
I am happy for photos of my child to be used on social media, for example Twitter.	
I am happy for the school to take videos of my child.	
I am happy for the school to use videos of my child for promotional purposes, such as on the school website.	
I am NOT happy for the school to take or use photos of my child.	

Appendix 3
Concern Flow Charts

General Child Protection Concerns.



Child Protection Issues

What to do when a child protection issue occurs

ALWAYS take disclosures or concerns seriously!

Suspicion or disclosure that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm

Is emergency medical treatment needed?

No

Yes

If there is an urgent issue find Terri Carroll immediately (if absent find Deputy DSLs*)

Arrange medical help and inform medical staff it is a child protection issue.

If a pupil discloses to you listen and reassure. Let them know you need to pass on the information. Tell them what will happen next.

If you have a suspicion but the pupil has not disclosed

Notify Terri Carroll as soon as practicable (if absent find Deputy DSLs*)

Add to Myconcern as soon as possible, but definitely before the end of the day.

Add to MyConcern as soon as possible

Maintain confidentiality. Do not contact parents. The designated person you have passed this onto will advise you how to proceed and who else needs to know.

Are YOU ok? Ask for support if you need to.

