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CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY (2)



High Close School

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SAFEGUARDING/ CHILD PROTECTION/ CONCERN PROCEDURE

Dealing with Safeguarding/ Child protection issues must take **Priority over all other work.**

If you see, hear, or are told of any issue that raises a concern about possible abuse. This is what you should do:-

Respond

Stay calm, listen to what is said, and reassure the young person. Do not challenge, criticise, or promise confidentiality. You should not investigate but listen and gather as much information as they want to tell you. You can ask for clarification-i.e. "what do you mean? Can you explain?" Do not ask leading questions.

You can ask a child if they have been harmed and what the nature of the harm was.

Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than they wish.

Give the young person time and your attention. A young person should never feel they are a problem for sharing concerns.

Report

You should verbally pass this concern on to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. In their absence or out of office hours inform the Senior Leader on Call. Remember Safeguarding takes priority over all other work.

Record

- Complete the on-line CPOMS form.
- Date, and record who, what and when.

Record facts and use the language the young person uses. If you add an opinion make it clear that it is your opinion. **The report must be written before you leave work and directly after you have verbally handed over to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:-

- Assess the issue reported.
- Identify who will be contacted if it is required for example, Social Care Referral, Parents/ Carers/ Social Workers.
- Identify any follow up work that may be required – i.e. Early Help, Key/Link working, information sharing and who should do this.

Safeguarding Young People is everyone's responsibility.

This policy is in line with the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023](#) and [Working together to Safeguard Children 2018](#). (Including factual updates up until 2022) Due to the recent coronavirus pandemic there are additional procedures in place to support young people and also to support staff to ensure they are safeguarding young people at all times. This is in line with [Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings](#). Staff can find the additional measures in Appendix F in this policy and throughout this policy should there be any further additional measures required in the event of a similar outbreak.

INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding children and young people is paramount and is integral in all staff members roles and responsibilities and in all policy and procedure. Safeguarding and Child Protection is at the forefront of all the work we do as a school and underpins all of our policy and processes.

All children and young people have the right to be protected. At High Close School, we need to ensure that we have a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding; all young people must be safeguarded and protected from harm, whatever their specific needs and circumstances. The best interests of the child are paramount and must always be at the centre of all decision making.

High Close School is a Residential and Day Special School that caters for young people with complex Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Staff must be aware that these needs may increase their vulnerability and therefore staff should be vigilant at all times to safeguarding concerns. All young people at High Close have Special Educational Needs and therefore are statistically more vulnerable and in need of more support, this policy is based on this assumption throughout. Young people at High Close are provided with higher levels of support than is available in mainstream education and all staff working with young people are trained in order for them to understand additional needs and work accordingly with young people's individual needs.

High Close is a Barnardo's project and High Close operates within Barnardo's Basis and Values. High Close's policy is in line with Barnardo's Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedure (Children's Services) and staff can access this through [Inside.Barnardos](#). The Head of Corporate Safeguarding is Richard Simpson.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (anyone under the age of 18 years) is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It relates to all aspects of school life and life outside of school including:

- young peoples' health and safety
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of young people with medical conditions including mental health
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care
- online safety (e-safety)
- safe management of visitors
- safer recruitment
- appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, taking into account the local context

Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues and these are highlighted in sections; Definition, types, sign and indicators of Abuse and Specific Safeguarding Issues.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department for Education statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (KCSiE).

It is a requirement that all staff in school should ensure that they have read Part One of this document as a minimum. In addition, High Close expects that all staff in direct contact with young people should read Part 5, and Annex B. Staff will be required to record this through the document library on CPOMS so there is a record that they have completed this. Governors will read at least parts, 2, 3, 4, 5, Annex B and Annex C as well as Part 1. Annex F has a table of substantive changes. Senior Leadership Team will be expected to read the whole document.

Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, the Non Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. Schools and colleges **must** have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The school understands and meets the obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and this is reflected in this policy and other school policies including the [11. POLICY Equality Diversity and Inclusion Nov 2021.docx](#).

The school incorporates the [National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools](#) requirements relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection. High Close abides by and adheres to the Non-maintained Special Schools Regulations 2015.

The statutory document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out the arrangements for how all organisations must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Wokingham has joined with other Local Authorities (Reading and West Berkshire) to form the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership. You can find more details of this on their [website](#). The Berkshire West Safeguarding Arrangements have been published and High Close has a representative on the Education **Engagement** Safeguarding Sub Group.

Staff should also refer to [Barnardo's Children's Services Safeguarding Policy](#) and the [Barnardo's Safeguarding Code of Conduct](#). All staff (including temporary staff/Agency staff) are required to sign the Safeguarding Code of Conduct when they start work at High Close School.

High Close School recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, and protect them from harm, and respond to child abuse by:

- Creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and young people;
- Identifying where there are safeguarding concerns and taking action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.
- Recognising that there may be additional needs to consider, to avoid discrimination and harassment (such as those relating to age, gender, sexuality, religion, culture, disability and race). Young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities (particularly around communication) face barriers that may require additional support and consideration. Staff should refer to the school's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Many Serious Case Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews have noted missed opportunities for services to intervene and prevent abuse occurring. It is crucial therefore that the school works in partnership with other agencies to safeguard and protect the young people placed at High Close School.

Regardless of their role, every member of staff (and volunteer) needs to ensure that they are aware of their duties and responsibilities to help safeguard and protect the young people placed at High Close School.

ETHOS

Barnardo's believes that respecting, appreciating and listening to, the views of children and young people ensures that they feel fully involved in our services and helps everyone to make better, more informed, decisions about their welfare and safety. Therefore, all High Close staff and volunteers will actively encourage and enable young people to report any concerns / complaints and record the views, wishes and feelings of all the children and young people supported by the school. This includes encouraging young people to share their concerns around poor or abusive practice. Staff can refer to the document 'Complaints' for further information.

Similarly, we must be aware that there are a number of barriers as to why children may not speak out and reveal abuse. This could be because they:

- Do not feel ready or know how to tell someone
- May feel embarrassed or humiliated.
- May have been threatened
- May have language barriers either through speech and language difficulties or if English is an additional language for them
- Have additional needs that make communication difficult
- Are scared of what might happen to them if the perpetrator or their family found out.
- Feel guilty.
- Are afraid that they will not be believed
- Have previously suffered abuse.
- Think that they are to blame.
- Do not want the perpetrator to get into trouble.
- Believe that they may have brought the abuse on themselves.

- May not recognise the harm they are experiencing is abuse
- have been told to keep it secret
- May not think they will be believed because the person perpetrating the abuse is in a position of trust or authority

There are forums where we ensure that young people's voices are heard, for example, the School Council, Unit Meetings, Independent Visitors, and pre-review questionnaires. Staff can also refer to the policy on 'Pupil Access to a Person Independent from the High Close School Staff Group' and the document 'Participation'.

Each young person has a link worker/key worker/ tutor (primary). This enables young people to build a positive working relationship with key individuals so they can communicate their concerns if needed. Young people at school also have access to confidential counselling and therapy should they choose to access this. However any safeguarding concerns in counselling will be passed to DSL and the young people are made aware of this at the commencing of therapy.

We also complete an annual safeguarding questionnaire so young people can tell us how safe they feel the school is.

PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their legal and personal responsibilities to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of young people placed at High Close School and to ensure that staff know what to do should they have a concern.

Staff are given the opportunity to contribute to the policy and procedure of Safeguarding and Child Protection through consultation of the policy annually and through feedback in refreshers and training as well as supervision and direct feedback to the Lead DSL.

High Close School strives to create a culture in which children are valued, heard and that their right to be safe is upheld; this policy aims to support High Close staff in achieving this in accordance with Barnardo's core values.

This policy outlines how to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible abuse to ensure that staff recognises the significance of what they are observing, and the procedures that they need to follow if they have a concern.

This policy pertains to the Safeguarding of young people under 18. In exceptional cases where young people turn 18 when still at High Close they will be safeguarded in the same way as other pupils however in these cases staff working with that young person will be informed about Adult Safeguarding procedures by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF (including volunteers)

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Schools and colleges should

work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. We as a school must consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

All staff must read and be aware of the below policies as well as the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and they will be asked to sign that they have read and understood them.

- [Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour \(Behaviour Policy\)](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [Missing Children policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Code of Conduct](#)

THE ROLE OF STAFF

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed. Staff should refer to '[What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#)' and are required to read this on an annual basis.

In addition to working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s, staff should be aware of the Early Help process (please see Safeguarding and the waking day curriculum/Early Help Offer section of this policy) and their role in it, including working with Local Authority Social Care departments when required. Staff should also be able to effectively work, communicate and share information with other external agencies as required to safeguard young people.

Staff have a statutory responsibility to pass on information which gives rise to a concern about a child's welfare, including risk from neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

All staff, volunteers and consultants have responsibility for ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people placed at the school. By reading, understanding and following this policy and the policies outlined above staff will ensure they are completing their responsibilities. In these documents it highlights that staff should **act professionally, put children and young people first, act as a role model and lead by example**. Staff should ensure that they follow the processes outlined within this policy when safeguarding the young people. Staff and volunteers will be asked to re-visit the policy each time it is reviewed and updated.

TRAINING AND INDUCTION

At High Close School, we recognise that in order for staff and volunteers to fulfil their duties in line with KCSiE 2023 and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)', they require an induction and regular training updates to ensure they develop and maintain the necessary skills, judgement and confidence in their work in Safeguarding and protecting young people.

All staff are required to complete a Safeguarding Core 1 Introduction training day (within the first 6 months) and complete Safeguarding E-Learning (in their first 2 weeks) in their probationary period before being confirmed in post during their Induction. All permanent staff are required to sign the Safeguarding code of Conduct on their first day of working at High Close.

All staff are required to complete Annual Child Protection and Safeguarding training.

Staff with direct contact with young people are also required to complete Prevent, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) e-learning as part of their induction period and refresh this training when directed.

Staff and volunteers will have different training needs which are dependent on their degree of contact with children and young people, their responsibilities and the level of decision making. The school holds a central record of training (including safeguarding) completed by all staff and volunteers.

Education, care and therapy staff are provided with half termly refreshers in safeguarding as a mechanism to enable staff to understand their responsibilities under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. There is an annual refresher for all staff on Keeping Children Safe in Education with follow ups to aid all staff in their understanding as well.

Staff are required to complete catch ups for Safeguarding training if they are absent and this is recorded on the central training record.

Governors will all receive Safeguarding and Child Protection training as part of their induction and will also receive annual refreshers to support their strategic challenge and oversight.

Training is supported by professional supervision. Child Protection and Safeguarding is an agenda item for supervision and meetings across campus. Care staff have the opportunity to discuss Child Protection and Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Professional Boundaries within their supervisions.

Care, Therapy and Education staff also receive Online Safety training yearly to support their understanding of the need to keep children safe online **which includes training on the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to online filtering and monitoring.**

For supply staff and those on short contracts who work at High Close School for only a short period, perhaps only a day, we require that they read and sign a briefing sheet (please see Appendix D) as we believe that the most appropriate way of ensuring essential information on safeguarding children and young people is made available. This outlines their duty of care towards the children and young people placed at the school to ensure that staff act in a way that ensures their safety and welfare at all times.

In addition, this briefing outlines what they should do if they have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if they think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect. This document highlights their responsibility to share relevant information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and gives details as to how they should do this. There are posters around campus to ensure all temporary staff are aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies are.

Local Safeguarding arrangements for Induction and Training are found [here](#). High Close works to these guidelines and ensure that all staff meet the required training directed.

PROCEDURES

DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING / CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES MUST TAKE PRIORITY OVER ALL OTHER WORK

A young person may choose to disclose information, or staff and volunteers may observe behaviour that raises concerns around possible abuse. Staff and volunteers must not try to investigate, but rather listen and explain to the young person that they will have to pass on the information. Staff and volunteers should ensure that the young person's safety is the priority

Immediate response to the young person:

It is vital that any staff actions do not cause the child further harm or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- Stay calm and be reassuring
- Find a quiet place to talk
- Believe in what you are being told
- Listen, but do not press for information
- Say that you are glad that they have told you. Staff should reassure young people that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported. Young people should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Listen to the young person; if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it;
- Use your active listening skills, ensure your body language is appropriate to the situation, it is important the young person knows you are listening
- It is acceptable to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them; (injuries must be recorded on a Body Map on the CPOMS record, if an injury has occurred at school it should also be recorded on a Child Superficial Injuries form, **if the injury has occurred at home it should be recorded on an Existing Injuries form (EIF)**)
- Do not question the child in a way that will introduce new words, phrases or concepts into their minds.
- You can ask a young person if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm is. Staff must ensure they do not ask leading questions – if staff are concerned young peoples communication skills mean they are unable to verbally communicate they should seek advice from the DSL's.
- Do not challenge, confront or criticise their information, even if it seems unlikely or if there are obvious errors. They may be unable to give accurate timescales or dates.
- If a disclosure is made, the pace should be dictated by the child without their being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as “what did they do next?” or “where did they touch you?” The staff or volunteer's role is to listen not to investigate.
- Use open questions (for clarification of what they have said)

- Accept what the young person says. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this;
- Do not criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love;
- Do not promise confidentiality, reassure the young person that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell and why. It is important that you don't make promises that you cannot keep such as "I'll stay with you all the time" or "it will be alright now".
- Staff should avoid making written notes when a young person is disclosing wherever possible – staff should write up the information after they have finished their conversation and they have made sure the young person is safe and calm

Staff should be aware that some young people's communication difficulties may impede them in being able to disclose information or understand questions. If staff are concerned that a young person does not understand a situation or cannot communicate a concern they should seek advice from a Designated Safeguarding Lead/s immediately.

Recording information

The school uses the Child Protection Online Monitoring System ([CPOMS](#)).

This is a secure recording system with managed access so only appropriate staff can access specific records. CPOMS has provided confirmation that their systems meet GDPR requirements.

Staff or Volunteers should;

- Verbally inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy designated staff). The DSL will discuss with the member of staff next steps/appropriate actions to take
- If necessary (if unable to record onto CPOMS straightaway) make some brief notes immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. Any notes must be signed and dated and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s.
- Ensure that this information is transferred to a CPOMS incident record. This must be done as soon as possible and before the staff member leaves work that day. At this point the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s will decide appropriate actions.
- Observed injuries and bruises are to be recorded on a Barnardo's [Child Superficial Injury form](#) (if they occurred whilst the young person was on campus) and be uploaded to CPOMS. If any observed injuries/bruises etc occurred whilst the young person was on home leave this should be recorded on the body map on the CPOMS incident record and on a [Barnardo's Existing Injuries form](#). If the injuries required medical attention then they should be recorded on a [Barnardo's Incident Report Form \(BIRF\)](#)
- Staff and volunteers should note any non-verbal behaviour and ensure that that the language used by the young person (**do not 'tidy up' / translate into 'correct' terminology**) is recorded.
- Staff should ensure their recording is factual. Child Protection and Safeguarding reports can be used in multi agency meetings/courts etc so it is important that the recording is factual and accurate.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s will ensure that the Safeguarding / Child Protection report reflects decisions made and actions taken in response, including if no further action will be taken and the reason or rationale for this. The primary Designated Safeguarding Leads (Natalie Potter and Baljeet Hodges) meet weekly during term time to review all ongoing Safeguarding records and to discuss further actions.

Reporting / referring process

During normal **school** working hours (8.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.) staff should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s. Outside of these hours staff must immediately inform the Senior on Call (who is a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Staff must not assume that someone else will report concerns. If staff have a concern they should notify the Designated Safeguard Lead/s immediately, if someone else has already reported the concern DSL's will check that whether the information is the same, if there is new information staff will be asked to either add to the existing record on CPOMS or create a new one.

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

On the basis of the information, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s will consider which route to take with regards to safeguarding and protecting the young person in question:

- Ensuring the young person wishes and feelings are taken into account when taking appropriate action
- Whether a referral is required to the relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). When making a referral it is important that we provide as much information as possible for the assessment by Social Care to consider all the relevant factors/evidence so the assessing worker can consider all aspects including Contextual safeguarding concerns.
- Whether it is necessary to make a consultation with the Local Authority if it is deemed that a referral is not appropriate or if there are queries whether it requires a referral. DSL's/staff will request written confirmation from the Local authority of this consultation.
- Whether any immediate action needs to be taken to safeguard the young person e.g. keeping the young person at school if they are due to go home or restricting staff duties if there is an allegation against staff
- Whether there needs to be any internal actions
- Or seek Early help Support.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for identifying who will contact the following if / where appropriate:

- Respective Local Authority Social Care Department.
- Wokingham Borough Council Social Care
- The Police ([When to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges](#))
- Berkshire West Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- Parents/carers, where appropriate, following discussion with the responsible Local

- Authority Social Care Department if consent issue is not clear.
- Barnardo's – Director of the Region(if required) and the Head of Corporate Safeguarding who will assess whether it meets the threshold for internal escalation and reporting to the Charity Commission
- Ofsted

The relevant Local Authority Social Care Department will assess referrals and are required to make a decision within one working day about the type of response required. If it meets their threshold, will investigate in accordance with Section 47 or section 17 or refer to early help services of the Children Act (1989). Referrals are made to the young person's Local Authority Social Care department. If the concern arises whilst the young person is at High Close, it will be referred to Wokingham Social Care.

For further information on Section 47, Section 17 and Early Help referrals staff should refer to Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

DSL's and relevant staff (as directed by the DSL's) will maintain contact with the Local Authority when a referral is made and will follow up to ensure we receive feedback about the Local Authority Social Care's decision making and actions. If staff/DSL's do not agree with the Local Authority, then they will press for reconsideration and also will use formal escalation procedures if they believe further actions can be taken to ensure the wellbeing of the young person. DSL's will refer to the Local Authority's Threshold documents and their escalation procedures where needed.

You can find the Levels of Need/Thresholds document for Wokingham on the Berkshire West Safeguarding Partners site, thresholds documents for other local authorities can be found on their Safeguarding Partnership sites.

Staff can find numbers for the Local Authority Social Care referral numbers on the Local Authority websites. The referral information is in Appendix G for Local Authorities of young people at High Close, you can also use this service to find out the appropriate Local Authority contacts <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>. Staff will ensure that they will allow Social workers to have access to undertake Section 17 and Section 47 assessments when required.

Where DSL's believe that Early Help is appropriate for the young person it will be considered whether the Early Help the school offers is appropriate or whether external Early Help from the Local Authority would best meet the young persons needs at that time. Further information about the schools offer of Early help can be found in the section 'Safeguarding and the waking day curriculum/Early Help Offer' which is later in this policy.

Where staff identify a private fostering arrangement¹ is planned or in place this should be reported to the DSL who will notify the Local Authority who are required to check whether this arrangement is suitable and safe.

Record keeping/auditing files

Young people's Child Protection and Safeguarding records (CPOMS records and hard copies of original records) are only accessible by staff who require access. Unit staff monitor records every

¹ Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home for more than 28 days.

half term to ensure that no patterns are missed and to ensure they have an overview of the young people's needs. Each child's monitoring report will be reviewed by the DSL's, half termly.

The DSL administrator (Pam Gadsby) oversees all records and ensures they are filed correctly and in line with procedure.

Record retention arrangements and schedules can be found in the Service User Recording Protocol.

All concerns are recorded including discussions and decisions that are made. All records include:

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

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS (DSLs)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies at High Close School are:

<p>Natalie Potter (Leader for Care/Lead DSL) Baljeet Hodges (Team Manager – Family resource Team/Deputy DSL) Wendy Gosling (Acting Principal /Deputy DSL)</p> <p>Laura Byron (Deputy Head of Care (Senior On Call and deputising in the absence of DSL)) Gail Wild (Senior Project Worker - Family Resource Team and deputising in the absence of DSL)</p> <p>Vicky Kinsman (Cedars unit manager (DSL for Senior On Call)) Nathan Belgrave (Oak unit manager (DSL for Senior On Call)) Matt Lilley (Rowan Day Unit Manager (DSL for Senior On Call))</p>
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The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place, and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues and is the primary person to whom members of staff and volunteers report concerns.

The role of Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is explicit in the relevant staff's job descriptions.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are available during school hours and through the on call system whilst residential units are open. All staff have the contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Senior On Call staff. Baljeet Hodges is the first point of contact, in her absence all Safeguarding concerns should go to Natalie Potter. If Baljeet and Natalie are not available staff will be made aware of who is the DSL on duty.

In line with KCSiE 2023 & 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)' and any guidance issued by Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s are required to have undertaken recognised multi-agency training in order to fulfil their responsibilities and that this is kept up to date with appropriate refreshers every two years. DSL and deputies ensure that the refresher training is received from different accredited providers to ensure a wider depth of knowledge.

Please see Appendix E for responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies

DEFINITIONS, TYPES, SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

In 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023), abuse is described as 'A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children'.

'What to do if you are worried if a child is being abused (March 2015) has further information about abuse and indicators.

Professionals should be alert to the potential additional need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child

- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day

Child protection is part of Safeguarding. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. It is our responsibility to ensure that any young person who is at risk or who has suffered harm is protected and kept safe.

Safeguarding is broader and covers all those areas that deal with ensuring a child's safety. This means:

- Ensuring that young people are safe and protected from maltreatment, abuse or neglect
- Ensuring that young people have optimum life chances to ensure they have the best chance to make a success of their adulthood
- Preventing anything that might put their health or development at risk and are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

The desired Safeguarding outcomes are that children and young people ARE safe, and that they FEEL safe.

Staff should consider the context of safeguarding and should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff (especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitations, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

All staff are expected to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads regardless of whether they occurred in school or out of school. For more information on Contextual Safeguarding staff can visit the [Contextual Safeguarding Network website](#).

Significant Harm - As professionals working with children or young people, it is vitally important that we are able to recognise if and when a child with whom we come into contact may be suffering from significant harm, regardless of which category of abuse the harm may indicate. However all staff **MUST** report any concerns regardless of whether they feel it is significant or not.

Types of abuse

Staff should be vigilant and mindful that abuse could occur at any time for any young person and therefore should report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputies if they are aware of any concerns, small concerns can become cumulative evidence of a need for intervention and should be reported.

Staff should be aware that some of the indicators could be attributed to the young person's additional needs i.e. sensory needs however they **MUST NOT** dismiss or minimise any concerns due to this and should report this to the DSL's as per the procedures at High Close.

Physical abuse

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

Recognising potential Physical Abuse:

The following list is not exhaustive however may be an indication of physical abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable explanations or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather, refusal to undress for PE
- Going missing or being absent from placement
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted
- Bruises seen on parts of the body not normally harmed through play, such as in or around the mouth
- Bruises that appear as a small 'grasp' or finger marks to a child's arms or legs
- Injuries that look like they have been caused by an implement
- Bruises that appear to be of different ages (colour) in the same area
- Injuries that appear the same on both sides of the body, legs, head or arms
- Injuries that appear as bite marks, especially when the marks appear to be those of an adult or an older child (more than 3cm across)

Emotional abuse

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

Recognising signs of potential Emotional Abuse:

The following list is not exhaustive however may be an indicator of emotional abuse

- Very low self-esteem, often with an inability to accept praise or trust in adults
- Excessive clinging and attention seeking behaviour
- Over anxious – being excessively ‘watchful’ (hyper vigilant), constantly checking or being over anxious to please
- Withdrawn / socially isolated
- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Neglect can be a result of poor parenting. This does not mean that the parent/carers deliberately does not provide care for their child but that they do not recognize how to be a parent/carers, either because of their own difficulties or because of their negative experience of parenting during their own childhood.

Whilst this may not be deliberate neglect staff should still address it through the same safeguarding procedures. Staff should not minimize or dismiss a young person’s experiences because they think a parent is trying hard, they should address the concerns and support the parent to improve how they parent, this may involve social care support.

Recognising potential Neglect:

The following list is not exhaustive however may be an indicator of neglect

- Constant hunger and complaints of tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor state of clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies
- Below average weight / height
- Reluctant to go home, particularly at weekends / holiday

Sexual abuse

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

Recognising potential Sexual Abuse

The following list is not exhaustive however may be an indicator of sexual abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to their age, or acting out precocious sexual behaviour with others
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-harm, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a specific person
- Enuresis/Encopresis (wetting themselves/soiling themselves), day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; oversensitive or overreacting to criticism
- Reluctant to go home

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs of abuse and hide what is happening from everyone. Many learn to 'manage' their problems, making it hard for others to help.

We may observe behaviours / physical presentations that cause concern, however, it is also important to remember that the causes of these may not be abuse, but due to other issues. As a result, staff should be vigilant and aware and report any concerns they have. Designated Safeguarding Lead/deputies will take into account all the evidence they have available to look at the whole picture for the young person and will also consult staff who work closely with the young person where necessary.

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

(all concerns regarding the following specific safeguarding issues should be referred to the DSL's as normal; DSL's will follow normal referral procedures unless otherwise stated below)

As part of the Barnardo's organisation there is a wealth of knowledge and experience that staff can draw on by contacting other projects that specialise in some of these areas. Staff should discuss with a member of Senior Leadership Team If they feel liaising with another project would be beneficial to get contact details.

Online Safety

The use of technology has become an integral part of today's society. Today's children and young people are growing up in a digital world. Whilst there are many benefits to this staff should be aware of the potential safeguarding issues that may arise from the young people's use of online devices. Through monitoring of Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns it is noted that online safety continues to be a concern at High Close, in line with national trends, and we continue to monitor and evaluate our approach to safeguarding children.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk (the 4 C's):

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content; for example pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children/ young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- 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) or online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Social media, internet chat rooms, discussion forums, apps, connected gaming experience and bulletin boards may be used as a means of contacting children with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships, which may include requests to make and transmit pornographic images of themselves, or to perform sexual acts live in front of a webcam. Contacts made initially in a chat room are likely to be carried on via email, instant messaging services, mobile phone or text messaging.

Online content can be shared quickly and easily, staff should be aware that the sharing of content can be extremely emotionally damaging for young people. There are various organisations that can support with the removal of content; the Internet Watch Foundation can be contacted for imagery that is illegal. It may be pertinent for DSL's to direct staff, parents/carers and young people to make a Child Exploitation and Online Protection report on the CEOP [website](#). Staff

should also read [Teaching Online Safety in School](#) for further information and paragraphs 135-148 and Annex B of [KCSiE 2023](#).

Staff may confiscate mobile phones/internet enabled devices if they believe that young people are using them inappropriately or there may be illegal/inappropriate content on them (Please see [Searching, screening and confiscation advice for schools](#)). In line with this advice, DSL's/delegated staff may search devices if they are concerned about the content.

Online bullying is an ongoing concern for young people at High Close and nationally. Where appropriate this is addressed under the Countering Bullying policy but may be addressed within the safeguarding policy where relevant. Young people are supported to understand how to interact appropriately online and staff work with families/carers to help them support their young people online when at home.

Staff provide support for all online issues for young people and parents/carers and offer individual work as well as group work. Regular messages are sent out by the Digital Lead and DSL's and the school website has recorded webinars to support parents/carers in helping them to keep their young people safe online. Where young people are using remote education staff will communicate with parents and carers to let them know what young people need to do and how they will access their work in order to help parents/carers to know what to expect and what to be aware of.

Sharing Nudes or Semi-Nudes is the act of sending nude or semi-nude images (including text/photos/videos), primarily between mobile phones through a variety of social media platforms/messaging apps etc. The widespread ownership of mobile phones and internet enabled devices amongst young people makes this issue a growing concern. This has previously been called 'Sexting' and can also be known as youth produced sexual imagery, youth involved sexual imagery, indecent imagery, image based sexual abuse.

Staff can refer to the guidance below for further information.

[Sharing nudes or semi-nudes: Advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

If there are any concerns about youth produced sexual imagery (indecent images), DSL's will make a professional judgement as to whether they need to view any images in order to refer appropriately, for example if we are concerned that images may constitute possible CSE/grooming etc. DSL's will not view images unnecessarily, if staff find inappropriate/illegal content/imagery whilst monitoring young people's phones they should stop immediately and report to the DSL's. (Please see Appendix A for guidance and procedure for DSL's), Staff must not send on any images that are sent to them by young people or parents/carers and must report this immediately if they are sent anything of this nature.

Concerns regarding online safety may require reporting to the police and/or Social Care, DSL's will decide on the course of action dependent on the concerns and will ensure appropriate referrals are made.

Due to the nature of social media and the way young people use these forums, incidents and concerns can occur quickly and can easily involve several young people. Young people may share images to someone they feel is 'safe' and it may then be shared on, staff should be aware that

young people will need support in these situations as well as education and guidance. Staff should be vigilant and report any concerns they may have using the Safeguarding procedures.

There is also growing cause for concern about the exposure of children to inappropriate material via interactive communication technology – for example, adult pornography and/or extreme forms of obscene material. Allowing or encouraging a child to view such material may warrant further enquiry.

Staff should be aware that young people are at risk if they are accessing sites that encourage gambling and can also be victim to scams or phishing where individuals can steal money/online property or can coerce/trick young people into transferring money or online goods without them realizing. Staff can find support for young people about gambling at [BigDeal](#) and should report any scams or thefts via the police, further support or information to support young people can be found at [Internet Matters](#). Staff can report concerns about young people or staff at risk to phishing to [Anti-Phishing Working Group](#)

Staff should also be aware of online challenges and online hoaxes. Staff should report to DSL's any potential concerns but also should be aware of media 'hype' that can cause professionals and parents/carers to inadvertently direct young people to inappropriate sites or apps. Staff should not share any information about potential online hoaxes or challenges without checking this out with DSL's. DSL's/the Digital Lead will share appropriate information with young people and parents/carers via parenthub or letters when required. Staff can find out more information of how to manage these issues here [Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes](#).

High Close provides online safety education via IT curriculum, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), key working, group work, and individual work. Young people who have previously raised concerns regarding their ability to be safe online may have individual contracts that provide guidelines and expectations and may include staff monitoring their phones/devices to ensure they are safe. All young people are expected to sign the Online Safety acceptable use contract when they start at High Close.

Staff should refer to the school's Online Safety policy which details safeguards for young people and also the school's policies on filtering and monitoring internet use. Whilst it is essential to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, we should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

The filtering system blocks known risks such as pornography, self harm information, radicalisation information etc. The schools filtering system has been tested using South West Grid for Learning's (SWGfL) filtering provider tool to ensure that it is signed up to the relevant lists that require filtering.

The school internet system is monitored by the Network manager. All alerts received are checked and any that could constitute a safeguarding concern are referred to the DSL's to follow up. In the absence of the Network manager, all alerts would be forwarded to the DSL's to ensure monitoring continues.

Physical monitoring occurs during lesson times and social times by staff supervising young people whilst using online devices. Young people may require 1:1 supervision whilst online if concerns have been identified and this will be detailed in their Individual Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment. Supervision levels may vary from intermittent monitoring to 1:1 monitoring. Young

people who have been identified as more vulnerable may also have their devices monitored by staff through regular checks.

Where monitoring or safeguarding reports show a concern for individual young people or groups of young people, DSL's and key staff will assess what access they are able to have on site whilst work is completed to support them to use online devices more safely, this can include young people not being able to access online devices whilst in the care of the school for short periods of time, or access being supervised.

Monitoring and filtering arrangement that are currently in place have been risk assessed for the cohort of young people. Over the next year we will be monitoring and evaluating online safety safeguarding concerns recorded to assess whether further controls are required for the school network.

Over the next year staff will contribute to a 'library' of appropriate sites for young people so there are a number of sites that can be easily accessible and that are appropriate for learning. Access to different sites will be differentiated based on age and/or needs to ensure young people have appropriate access but are not overly restricted in order for them to be able to practice the online safety skills they have learnt in a safe environment.

Young people may use mobile phones at school at allowed times however if concerns arise young people may have 'contracts' for mobile online device to ensure staff can safeguard them appropriately. Any young people accessing or sharing inappropriate messages/photos/videos may lose access to their phone whilst on school site and the appropriate safeguarding measures will be put in to place depending on the concern.

Residential young people are not allowed mobile devices overnight due to the potential safeguarding risks and also to promote good sleep hygiene. Year 11 and older pupils may earn to have phones/mobile devices overnight in preparation for leaving however this is closely monitored by staff in case of any negative impacts on the young person.

Appendix F covers additional online safety concerns regarding remote education during the pandemic and lockdowns and additional considerations staff should take. Staff should also see [Safeguarding and remote education](#) for further information. Staff can also find further information at [NSPCC - undertaking remote teaching safely](#).

High Close meets the 'Cyber security standards for schools and colleges' and further information can be found in the Online Safety policy.

Child on child abuse

Staff should be aware that children and young people can harm other children and young people and should not dismiss it as part of growing up or normalise it any way. Staff must be clear that all child on child abuse must be challenged and addressed otherwise it may lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for young people and potentially a culture that normalises abuse which prevents young people from reporting as they see it as 'normal'. This can happen both inside and outside of school.

Child on child abuse can take many forms, including:

- sexual harassment and sexual violence (please see below section for specific sexual harassment and sexual violence)

- physical abuse (include contact and online which facilitate or threatens/encourage physical abuse) including initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- bullying / cyber-bullying/ prejudice-based bullying/ discriminatory bullying including Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic bullying
- grooming

At High Close school, we minimise the risk of children harming other children in a number of ways, including the formal and informal curriculum and existing pastoral systems. See the following linked policies for more information:

- RSE
- Countering Bullying
- Online Safety

We will ensure that the needs of children and young people who harm others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims. Both children will be supported through our existing pastoral and therapeutic systems / services and, where the local thresholds/criteria have been met, referral to Children's Social Care under Section 47.

All incidents of child on child abuse/harm will be investigated under the Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures of the school. **All staff** have a responsibility to address and report child on child abuse to ensure all young people can be safe.

Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Staff should refer to KCSiE 2023 for detailed information and guidance regarding Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment (KCSiE Part 5) which incorporates the previous guidance 'Sexual violence and Sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (SVSH)'.

Ofsted completed the ['Review into sexual abuse in schools and colleges \(2021\)'](#) a rapid review into the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools and colleges and this informs the guidance within KCSiE 2023.

The terms victim and perpetrator are used throughout KCSiE. These terms may not be appropriate depending on the incident and staff should be careful of the terminology they use, especially in front of young people. The term victim may not be one that a young person wants to be described as and likewise perpetrator may minimise any harm that the young person who has exhibited these behaviours may have experienced as well. We use this terminology in this policy to reflect the KCSiE guidance but this does not mean staff should use this terminology as a matter of course as the words perpetrator can have connotations which may not reflect the situation.

Sexual harassment can take various forms, the below is not an exhaustive list

- Sexual comments including, telling sexual stories, making lewd (rude and offensive in a sexual way) comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual 'jokes' and taunting
- Physical behaviour – deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (this may also occur in sexual violence) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Online sexual harassment, this may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

- Online sexual harassment may include:
 - Consensual and non consensual sharing of nude and semi nude images and videos. Taking and sharing nude photos of young people under 18 is a criminal offence
 - Sharing of unwanted explicit content
 - Upskirting
 - Sexualised online bullying
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion and threats

Sexual Violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

- Rape. A person (A) commits an offence if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Assault by penetration. A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Sexual assault. A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Staff should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Examples of this could be forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

Staff should be aware that incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment could happen at High Close School and should maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**. This can occur at any age range and could occur face to face or online. As a SEN school it should be noted that young people with SEND are three times more likely to be abused by their other young people. Young people who are LGBT (or who are perceived as LGBT) can be targeted by peers as well. Staff should also be aware that girls are more likely to be victims of sexual violence and harassment and it is more likely that boys will be perpetrators **however this does not mean** that girls cannot be perpetrators or that boys cannot be victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Staff should take all reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment seriously.

Staff should be clear that any incidents of sexually inappropriate behaviour should be addressed immediately and not minimised or tolerated. Downplaying, minimising or dismissing such incidents can result in a culture where sexual harassment and violence is normalised and accepted which is unacceptable. A whole school approach to preventing child on child sexual harassment and sexual violence is the best way to ensure the best outcomes for young people. This means all staff must be aware of potential risks and must address and report any behaviours in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedure. Young people should be clear on how to report any concerns and know that their concerns will be treated seriously and they can safely express their views and give feedback.

Staff must be clear on their responsibilities and ensure that they follow up any concerns they observe or have reported to them. Staff should also be aware that preventative education plays a big role in reducing the risk of sexual harassment and sexual violence, the importance of safety and Child Protection and Safeguarding is something all staff should promote, regardless of their role. High Close has a comprehensive Relationships and Sex Education curriculum (please see RSE policy in All Staff group – policy and procedure section) that supports young people as well as an extensive early help offer through key working/link working and specific targeted work delivered by the Family Resource Team. Consent is taught to all young people in age- appropriate ways and reiterated through the curriculum as the young person progresses.

Staff must be clear that a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity, the legal age of consent is 16 years old and that sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual behaviours exhibited by young people can range from normal and developmentally appropriate to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) is an umbrella term to cover the behaviours that fall under the latter end of the spectrum and must always be reported to the DSLs.

The DSLs will consider the behaviours exhibited and the ages and stages of development for the children and young people involved, for example sexual behaviour can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent. This does not mean younger children cannot abuse older children, consideration needs to be given to the 'power balance' between the two children and cognitive ability or additional needs of the young people. Consideration is also given to the nature of the incident, was it a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse?

Further information on support agencies to help address HSB can be found in here [NSPCC - Harmful Sexual Behaviour Briefing](#) . DSLs have completed training on HSB and will continue to update their knowledge regularly.

Children and young people who develop harmful sexual behaviour may have experienced some form of abuse and neglect themselves. Staff should also be aware that within our environment at High Close we may have a higher incidence of these kinds of behaviours due to the young people's difficulties in understanding social norms and appropriate behaviour. This MUST NOT be an excuse to minimize these behaviours or a reason not to take action and all concerns will be followed up appropriately, however staff should be mindful of the young people's difficulties when assessing how best to support both the victim and perpetrator.

Staff should be aware that incidents may occur solely or partially online and should refer to the above information on online safety and the online safety policy in conjunction with this policy when managing such situations.

Staff should be aware that in this case both the young person perpetrating the abuse and the victim need to be safeguarded and should work appropriately with both. Safeguarding procedures must be followed in the same way for any concerns regarding sexual harassment and sexual violence by reporting to the DSLs and following the child protection and safeguarding procedures. Staff should also consider the Equality Act when supporting young people in regard to their sex, sexuality and gender identity and with regards to planning positive support for specific groups if there was evidence of a particular group being disproportionately affected by sexual harassment and/or violence.

Staff should ensure that any incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence are dealt with promptly and through the safeguarding and child protection process. Staff should be aware that managing the support for both the victim and the perpetrator can be difficult and should seek advice from DSL's and SLT to manage this appropriately. This may include completing a risk assessment for certain cases to ensure everyone's safety, particularly if there is an ongoing investigation to ascertain what happened as we cannot wait for an outcome to this before safeguarding all the young people concerned. Parents/carers will be informed of any concerns unless informing them could cause an additional risk to the young person. In cases of sexual violence DSLs will take advice from the police before sharing any information as this could impact on any criminal investigation, the same applies for Social Care referrals and the potential impact on possible social care investigations. DSL's may also take advice from the NSPCC helpline for professionals (08088005000, help@nspcc.org.uk).

It is important to note that any reports regarding sexual violence must be reported to the police. Referrals should also be made to Social Care and a multi-agency approach will be adopted.

Reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence may result in different actions being taken depending on the individual issues raised in the case however there are four broad approaches that as a school we will consider. For all of these approaches it is important is made explicitly clear that any sexual harassment or sexual violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school but that we will support all children and young people to address any concerns.

1. In terms of incidents that are less severe of sexual harassment or potentially one off then a referral to external services may not be required but can be addressed through the early help offer of the school in terms of education and key/link working or targeted group work
2. That the incident requires external support but not a statutory referral i.e. Early Help through the local authority or specialist services
3. Referral to Social Care – this must happen if a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger. Social Care may undertake an assessment to determine the level of support required – this must not prevent us as a school taking action and we would work alongside external agencies whilst ensuring the safety of the young people within the school.
4. Reporting to the police – this would be at the same time as reporting to Social Care and must happen for all concerns regarding Sexual Violence however some cases of Sexual Harassment may warrant a report to the police as well.

Staff must consider the victim and perpetrators needs and ensure support is in place for both and all responses will be proportionate to the risks/potential risks of each individual case. Where there needs to be changes to the class or unit for young people the needs of both children must be considered however in cases of alleged sexual violence the perpetrator should be removed from any areas they share with the victim. This may involve amending the provision for the young person and each case will be different. Removing the perpetrator from classes or the residential unit etc is not considered a judgement of guilt but to ensure all young people are safe and protected. Risk assessments will be put in place for any cases of sexual violence and will assess the victims needs, if there have been any other victims, the alleged perpetrator and their needs, the others in the school (young people and staff) and the time of location of the incident to determine whether that location could be made safer. Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and will also consider the potential for intra familial harms and whether support is required for

any siblings. The risk assessment will also identified any areas where there could be improvement and any lessons learned will be used to update policy and procedure where required.

The victim must never feel they are the problem for making the report. Staff must also be aware that the victim may be bullied for making a report and must be vigilant and put in appropriate supports where necessary. Victims may need long term ongoing support and staff/DSLs will ensure they consult the appropriate agencies to support with this where appropriate. Young people may ask the school to not share information about an incident. Staff have a duty to share any information of this nature with the DSL's and young people are made aware of this regularly. DSL's will look at the issue on a case by case basis and will take advice should such a situation arise. Perpetrators will also need support and again staff/DSLs will ensure appropriate plans are put in place to facilitate this.

It is important to explain to any young people involved that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in a way that young people can understand and does not scare or upset them.

Any criminal investigation or Social Care action could take time and High Close will put in place appropriate measures and/or consequences alongside any investigation that may take place as to delay this could cause further harm to young people in line with 'Advice on Behaviour and Discipline in schools' and the school's 'Promoting positive behaviour and relationships' policy.

In the case of unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports consideration must be given to the reason why the young person made the report and whether this is indicative of the young person who made the allegation suffering a form of abuse and provide appropriate support which may include a referral to social care. If a report is deliberately invented or malicious then appropriate consequences should be considered in line with our behaviour policy 'Promoting positive behaviour and relationships'.

Local support

Solace (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) Slough <https://www.solacesarc.org.uk/#> – Phone: 0800 9709952, Email: info@solacesarc.org.uk

Trust House (Reading) – Phone: 01189 584033. Professionals Referrals process <http://trouthouse Reading.org/professionals/>

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

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

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

CCE

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Young people can become trapped into exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. It is important to remember that young people may be victims of CCE as if they become involved in criminal behaviour their vulnerability as a victim can not be recognised and they may not be given support as victims themselves, particularly older children who may appear to have agreed to be involved in criminal acts. It is also important to note that whilst the experiences of boys and girls who are victims of Child Criminal Exploitation may differ they are both at risk and they also have a higher risk of CSE as well.

CSE

CSE is a form of sexual abuse and can include physical and non contact activities (please see Sexual Abuse section for how this may occur). CSE can occur over time or be a one off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through sharing video/images on social media.

Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More information include definitions and indicators are included in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE can affect any child in any community who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. Staff should also be mindful that young people over the age of consent (16 and 17 year olds) can also be victims of CSE.

Staff can also refer to the DfE guidance [Child Sexual Exploitation: definition and guidance for practitioners](#) and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Staff will receive training on Child Sexual Exploitation and be regularly updated on relevant guidance as it is published.

Possible indicators of CSE/CCE are:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts/new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school
- Children would have older boyfriends/girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant (CSE indicator)

County Lines

County Lines criminal activity pertains to drug networks or gangs who groom and exploit children and young people to transport drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. There is further information in KCSiE (Annex B) and also in [‘Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults - County Lines](#)

Serious Violence is a possible risk for young peoples who have been targeted by gangs and criminal networks/ CCE/CSE.

Staff should also be aware of the indicators detailed within the CCE/CSE section (including increased school absence, unexplained physical injuries, self harm, unexplained gifts) that young people may be at risk of or involved with serious violent crime. Risk factors for serious violence that increase the likelihood are being male, being frequently absent from school or being permanently excluded from school, an experience of child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Whilst these factors do not mean that a young person is involved in Serious Violence it does indicate that staff should be aware of the possibility of them being targeted. Young people at High Close may be more vulnerable due to their additional needs and therefore staff must remain vigilant if concerns are raised particularly around what young people are doing outside of school. Staff will raise any concerns about Serious Violence with the DSL's. For further advice about Serious Violence staff can find further information in Annex B of KCSiE and also here <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit/> .

Gang Violence

Young people can be affected by gang violence and young people at High Close can be particularly vulnerable due to their SEN and other additional vulnerabilities. Young people at High Close often have difficulty in making friends and sustaining positive relationships, as well as determining other people's intentions and therefore could see gang membership and involvement as a positive in their lives. Staff should be aware of any mention of new friends and possible concerns regarding new friends and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Leads where needed. Staff can also refer to [Ending gang violence and exploitation](#), [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and the [Serious Violence Strategy](#) from the government for further information.

Child trafficking

Child Trafficking can have a devastating and lasting impact on its victims. Children can be trafficked into, within and out of the UK.

‘Trafficking of persons means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.’ ([Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked \(2011\)](#))

Staff should be aware that young people may be trafficked in and around the country and should be vigilant of this concern particularly if young people go missing.

Staff should also be aware of the impact on young people if parents/carers are victims of trafficking. Young people who are victims of CCE/CSE/County Lines can also be trafficked.

Under Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Social Care practitioners are required to make a referral to the [National referral Mechanism](#) as soon as possible if there is a concern regarding modern slavery or human trafficking and staff should discuss this with Social Care when making the referral.

Barnardo's is a first responder for the National Referral Mechanism and so can complete referrals however this would need to be discussed with Social Care as part of the referral to them. If Social Care did not agree to make a referral we have a responsibility to make the referral if we feel this is necessary.

Staff should check that the case has been referred to the police as part of the National Referral Mechanism process.

Mental Health (including Self harm/Non Suicidal Self Injury)

Mental Health concerns (including Self harm/Non Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI)) are a prevalent concern nationally and within High Close.

Mental Health concerns can take a number of forms and staff should be vigilant if they feel that a young person is struggling with their mental health in some way. All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, trauma, neglect or exploitation.

Young people with Special Education Needs are more likely to experience Mental Health issues and young people at High Close often have associated mental health diagnoses. Staff can find further information on this in [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) and [Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#). Staff can also access [Every Mind Matters](#) for lesson plans and activity ideas to complete with young people.

All staff are trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention and are aware of the impacts of trauma and mental health difficulties on young people at school. Staff have also received training in Attachment and ACE's (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and understand the effects that trauma can have on young people and our aim is to support young people to develop coping strategies and support them to manage their feelings and emotions whilst working with Mental Health professionals to ensure targeted support is in place.

High Close has a Head of Therapy (Anne-Marie Stewart Wright) who is available to support young people directly and also advise on concerns around mental health for young people and support staff in helping them work positively with young people. We also have an Occupational Therapist, and Speech and Language Therapist who support young people in managing their needs. We have a counselling service (ARC) that provide sessions for young people at High Close. Staff form positive working relationships with young people and each young person has a link worker (or tutor in Primary) who oversees the young person's day to day plan and ensures they are aware of the young person's needs and addresses them accordingly.

The Deputy Head of Care (Laura Byron) is the Senior Mental Health lead and will work with staff across campus to ensure our offer to young people meets their needs appropriately. The Mental Health and Wellbeing policy is in place to ensure all staff have the skills and tools to support young people but also support their own mental health and wellbeing to enable them to support all young people effectively.

Emotional wellbeing and resilience is core to the work staff focus on with young people and our Behaviour Support system, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) focuses on how to support young people with their emotions and feelings and to develop healthy coping strategies.

Self-Harm/NSSI can indicate mental health concerns. This can take many different forms but in general terms is the act of deliberately causing harm to oneself either by causing a physical injury or by putting oneself in dangerous situations and/or self-neglect. Self-harm is generally a coping mechanism; there can be many reasons why a person chooses to self-harm but it is important that staff consider the possibility of a link between self-harm and trauma / abuse.

The majority of concerns regarding Self harm/NSSI recorded for young people at High Close are threats to self-harm which occur when a young person is struggling with their emotions and has run out of appropriate coping mechanisms.

As a school we have adopted a strategy for staff to help the young people to focus on their emotional state, and consider alternative ways to express their distress, and staff to respond accordingly to the emotional distress, rather than focus on the threats to self-harm.

Staff are to;

1. Speak to the young person about why they have made that statement
2. Ask them if they intend to harm themselves
3. If they say yes, explore whether they have thought how they intend to do this.

Staff should then report to the DSL to see if further action should be taken if they are concerned by the young person's responses.

Staff work with internal and external professionals such as Child and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYMPHS) including CAMHS as well as using Therapeutic Crisis Intervention methods to support young people in managing their emotions and learning new coping skills. Safety plans may be created with young people where they are able to in order to help them identify healthier coping strategies. Some young people are unable to access safety plans due to their additional needs and staff will then work with them to develop support plans to help them manage their emotions and develop better coping strategies.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Living with domestic violence must be followed up under Child Protection Procedures. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent in April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Experiencing domestic abuse can have serious long lasting emotional and psychological impacts on children and staff should be aware of this and ensure they support young people appropriately and recognise the impacts it may have on the provision required.

The statutory definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over

who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Economic
- Coercive and controlling behaviour

Further information can be found [here](#).

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. Staff can also refer to the Home Office guidance [Domestic violence and abuse: how to get help](#)

Adolescent to Parent violence and abuse.

APVA is a hidden form of domestic violence and abuse that is often not spoken about. Young people at High Close may exhibit violent or aggressive behaviours towards their parents and carers and staff should report any concerns around this under the safeguarding procedures. More information on this can be found here [Adolescent to parent violence and abuse \(APVA\)](#)

Teenage Relationship Abuse/ Intimate relationship abuse is when someone hurts or upsets the person that they are in a relationship with. Usually, girls are the victims and boys are the abusers but it can happen to boys as well. It can also occur in same sex relationships. It is now recognised in legal definitions as a form of domestic violence but if both young people are pupils, could also be considered as child on child abuse. This can be a result of previous experiences of domestic abuse but this is not a determining factor.

Violence against women and girls

Statistics show that women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse and violence however staff should remember boys and men are affected by domestic abuse and violence.

High Close is signed up to the Operation Encompass alerts so when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse they alert the Designated Safeguarding Leads so appropriate support can be given to young people within the school. <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

Staff can refer to additional advice here

[NSPCC: domestic abuse](#)

[SafeLives: Young people and domestic abuse](#)

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the [Prevent duty](#).

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations.

Staff should be aware that our young people at High Close are particularly vulnerable to being targeted and ‘recruited’ due to their difficulties in maintaining relationships and friendships. Young people with Special Educational Needs are highlighted as ‘at risk’ and staff should be particularly aware of the online radicalisation through social media and the internet and should refer to the Online Safety policy for guidance on how to manage this. Further guidance is provided in ‘The Prevent Duty - departmental advice for schools and childcare providers’ (gov.uk) and also at [Educate Against Hate](#).

All staff complete Prevent Duty training and this is refreshed regularly to ensure staff are aware of the potential indicators of radicalisation and what action to take to support young people.

Promoting fundamental British Values is incorporated in the curriculum across the school and within the residential units in order to build children’s resilience. The work that all staff at High Close complete with young people on building their self-esteem and self-worth as part of day to day practice means that the risk levels for our young people are further reduced. Staff should be aware that radicalisation is not necessarily related to a specific religion but can also be linked to extremist political groups i.e. Britain First or groups that have a single cause i.e. PETA.

Staff can refer to the Government’s [Channel guidance](#) for further information but should report any concerns under the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

There is a dedicated system to report concerns regarding extremism which may be used in conjunction with normal safeguarding procedure. DSL’s will report to the Prevent Officer at Thames Valley police who will process the referral, DSL’s will call 101 to verbally inform them to ensure any immediate actions required are taken and then follow up by emailing preventreferrals@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk.

Any prevent concerns are reviewed within the Safeguarding governor meetings each half term.

If a young person is referred to Channel, they will be required to provide consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

Faith Abuse

Faith abuse includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or ‘leading them astray’ (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or muti murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune, such as telephoning a wrong number which is believed by some to allow malevolent spirits to enter the home. Staff should

refer to <http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/calfb/> for further information. Staff should be aware that young people with additional needs or challenging behaviours may be more at risk of faith abuse as it may make them a target for this type of abuse as they may be considered 'different'.

Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

Honour Based Abuse is a term used to describe abuse inflicted on a child or adult in order to protect the perceived 'honour' of a family or community. It includes female genital mutilation (see below), forced marriage (see below) and other practices such as breast ironing, acid attacks, some domestic violence, deprivation of liberty within the family home.

'Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.' (KCSIE 2023)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is also sometimes known as 'female genital cutting' or 'female circumcision'. However, circumcision is not an appropriate term to use as it does not communicate the extremely violent abuse that FGM is. Communities tend to use local names for referring to this practice including 'Sunna'.

FGM is illegal and considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practiced on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health.

The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For more information on this staff should refer to Gov.Uk "[Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation](#)": [procedural information](#) which was updated in December 2016.

Procedure for non teaching staff

If you have concerns relating to young people possibly affected by FGM, this should be referred using the Child Protection procedures. If a young person reports that she has been subject to FGM we have a mandatory reporting duty to report to the police (this would be done through the safeguarding process and usually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.)

Procedure for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers

The duty is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred. The only exception to this is if you know that another individual from your profession has already made a report; there is no

requirement to make a second. The legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Reports **must** be made within **one working day** of the concern arising. You must inform the DSL that this report has been made immediately and complete a CPOMS record.

All staff at High Close School are expected to complete the Home Office training on FGM. Staff can find further information at [National FGM centre](#) for resources and Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation.

If you are concerned that a child is at risk of FGM or suspect FGM then you must speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately following the usual Child Protection and Safeguarding reporting procedures.

Forced Marriage

Staff should note that as of February 2023 the legal age for marriage in England and Wales is now 18 where previously 16 and 17 years olds could get married with parental consent.

Forced Marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with some learning or physical disabilities or mental incapacity, cannot) consent to the marriage and violence, threats or any other form of coercion is involved. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse can also be a factor. Staff should also refer to '[The Right to Choose: Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with Forced marriage](#)' for further information. There are guidelines for schools set out in [Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of Forced marriage](#).

Staff complete training on Forced Marriage and update this regularly. Staff can also access the [Forced Marriage Resource pack](#) for further information.

Staff should not discuss their concerns with family members if they are worried about Forced Marriage, this should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Leads who will discuss concerns with Social Care and/or the Forced Marriage Unit (02070080151, fmu@fco.gov.uk)

Missing Children

A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation (including county lines, gang violence etc)

It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour' based abuse or risk of forced marriage amongst other concerns. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Each young person placed at the school has an Individual Behaviour Support Plan which highlights the individual procedures if a young person goes missing, including the referral of these concerns to relevant parties. Staff should take note of any young person who repeatedly goes missing to help identify risks. Staff should refer to the school's document on the Missing Children Policy and seek guidance from the flow chart contained within this.

As per guidance staff ensure that parents/carers provide at least two emergency contacts for young people on admissions and follow up parents/carers who are unable to provide this initially.

Children's attendance at school is monitored regularly and our procedures for supporting young people and their families with concerns about attendance are detailed in our Missing children Policy.

The school follows procedures regarding notifying Wokingham Local Authority when children are no longer on roll at the school as well as the individual young person's Local Education Authority.

Whilst going missing may be an indicator of abuse already occurring, young people who go missing are at risk of becoming victims of abuse. Young people at High Close are at higher risk as their additional needs may make it difficult for them to circumnavigate social situations and to be able to recognise inappropriate behaviours or dangerous situations. Young people at High Close often have high levels of supervision whilst at school and at home and without adult intervention could be at risk of being targeted by gangs or individuals who could seek to take advantage of them or abuse them such as being at risk of CCE/CSE or the other types of abuse detailed in this policy. As detailed in our Missing Children policy staff should ensure a return to placement interview is carried out if young people go missing from school to ensure that any concerns can be followed up appropriately.

The above details information about episodes of young people going missing. KCSiE 2023 has updated the definition around children who are absent from education and children who are missing from education. Children who are absent from education refers to young people who are on roll at the school but who are persistently absent. Children missing education refers to young people who are not enrolled at a school at all. Both being absent from education and missing education could be an indicator of a safeguarding concern or of abuse as detailed above and staff should ensure that any concerns of this nature are reported to the DSL's. Staff will work with families and young people where there are issues of persistent absence and will assess whether referrals to external agencies would be appropriate as part of this process. High Close attendance policy details what support is in place to support consistent attendance at school.

Children in the Court System

Young people may be involved in the court system either for crimes against them, crimes they have witnessed or because of crimes they may be accused of. Staff must be aware of how this can impact on them and ensure they have appropriate support, making appropriate referrals if external supports such as Social Care or Youth Offending Services are not in place. Guides are available to help support young people who are witnesses [Witness booklet for 5-7 year olds](#) and [Witness booklet for 12-17 year olds](#), staff should be aware that the age ranges may not be

applicable for our young people dependent on their needs so should see which one would be most supportive.

Young people may also have involvement from the family courts due to issues within the family. The site <https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/> may be useful for families but also for staff to support families that are going through this.

Elective Home Education

Home Education is not a safeguarding and Child Protection concern in itself and many young people have a very positive experience in home education.

Sadly this is not the case in for all young people and home education can be used to make young people less visible to statutory services. Where a parent/carer notifies High Close that they wish to home educate their child it is our duty to notify the young person Local Authority SEN department and also Wokingham's Children Missing Education service to ensure that the appropriate support is in place for the young person and family. If the young person has a social worker or any other external professionals involved then High Close will notify them as well. High Close will work with external professionals and families to ensure that home education is the best choice for a young person and will make recommendations where required/asked for to ensure the right level of support continues for the young person considering their EHCP and additional needs as well as any other wider support needs that have been identified during their time at High Close.

Staff can refer to [Elective Home Education guidance](#) for further information, this is primarily for Local Authorities but gives further information on processes and supports in place.

Children with family members in prison

Young people at High Close may have experience of family members being in prison and will require support to cope with this. Staff within the Family Resource Team are trained in supporting young people dealing with issues around family imprisonment. Staff should refer to the Barnardo's National Information Centre on Children of Offenders site ([NICCO](#)) for further information and also the Invisible Lives service (formerly Essex CAPI) on the same site.

Homelessness

Young people may be affected by homelessness. Staff should be aware that homelessness is not just pertaining to rough sleepers but can be where families have to move in with other family members in unsuitable conditions or where young people have to leave their family home and 'sofa surf'. If staff are concerned that a young person and/or their family are affected by homelessness they should report this to the DSL's so it can be addressed and referrals can be made to the appropriate services i.e. Social Care, Housing.

Further information can be found in Annex B KCSiE 2023. DSL's and the family resource team will make appropriate referrals to the young person's Local Housing Authority but will also make referrals to Social Care if the situation is affecting the young person's wellbeing or is putting them at risk.

Staff can also refer to [Homeless Reduction Act factsheets](#), last updated Feb 2018. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

Young Carers

Young people at High Close may also be young carers for members of their families and/or households. If staff are concerned that a young person is taking responsibility as a young carer they should raise this with Designated Safeguarding Leads as a safeguarding concern. There are resources to support Young Carers and DSL's can make a referral for young people to receive support as a Young Carer. Young people at High Close may have additional needs that may preclude them from attending Young Carer's event so staff and DSL's will work with local Authorities to ensure the young person gets the correct support.

Staff should also be aware that members of young people's household could be considered as young carers for them and should discuss with DSL's about referrals for siblings/household members where relevant. A referral should be made to Early Help if it is felt this is required.

Fabricated or Induced illness (FII)

The fabrication or induction of illness in children is a relatively rare form of child abuse. Where concerns exist about fabricated or induced illness, it requires professionals to work together, evaluating all the available evidence, in order to reach an understanding of the reasons for the child's signs and symptoms of illness.

If making a referral regarding suspected FII, staff (on direction of the DSL) should check that Social Care have consulted with the relevant medical authorities.

Staff can also refer to this site [Overview - Fabricated or induced illness - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) for further information.

Substance Misuse (including Alcohol)

Substance misuse can be a concern for young people at High Close and staff are vigilant to the indicators and must report any concerns through the safeguarding procedures. Staff should also be aware of the impact of familial substance misuse on young people and again must report any concerns through the safeguarding procedures.

All children and young people need to be able to make safe, healthy and responsible decisions about drugs, both legal and illegal. Schools play a central role in helping them make such decisions by providing education about the risk and effects of drugs; by developing their confidence and skills to manage situations involving substance misuse; by creating a safe and supportive learning environment; and ensuring those for whom the misuse of substances is a concern, receive appropriate support. Further information can be found in the school's 'Responses to Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Misuse' policy.

Where required staff/DSL's may make a referral to the young person's Local Drug and Alcohol Team.

Families with Multiple/Complex needs

Staff should consider that some families may have multiple or complex needs which may cover a wide range of experiences and circumstances each of which may be experienced by families from time to time and pose difficulties for them but may not represent long-term damaging effects for their children.

Staff should be aware of the impact this may have on young people at the school and should seek advice from the DSL's if they are concerned. Staff and the DSL's may offer support and advice to parents and carers and will ensure these issues are referred to the appropriate external agencies when required. (Please see Domestic abuse section for further information on this). In some cases several different agencies may be involved to support families and High Close will ensure that they liaise with all appropriate professionals.

Children in Care (Looked After Children/LAC) /Care Leavers/Children with Social Workers

Young people may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Young people in care or who are Looked After or who have been Looked After may be more vulnerable and therefore staff should remain vigilant to any concerns, and school will work closely with the other professionals/ agencies involved with this young person.

High Close's Designated Teacher **for High Close is Lucy Filsell**. The Designated Teacher oversees Child in Care (LAC) meetings, PEP meetings and take the lead in promoting the educational achievement of all young people who are Looked After or previously Looked After, in consultation with the Virtual schools Heads. Staff can refer to Gov.Uk for further information [on The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#). Designated Teacher meets with the DSL's on a half termly basis to discuss safeguarding issues and progress in education for Children in Care.

The Designated Teacher is automatically notified of any safeguarding reports regarding Looked After Children (where appropriate) so they have an awareness of any emerging concerns and can discuss with DSL's and key staff involved with the young person where necessary. The Designated Teacher works with the Virtual School Head of each child to ensure appropriate plans and funding is in place for the best outcomes of each young person.

Staff should be aware that not all vulnerable young people have a social worker and should take the same care for all young people regardless of whether they currently have a social worker.

Local Authorities should share the fact that a young person has a social worker and staff should routinely liaise with the social worker regarding any concerns about the young person and regarding any decisions made about the young person's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. Staff will also liaise with the young person's Personal Advisor if they are preparing to leave care.

Young People who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans or Questioning (LGBTQ+)

Staff should be aware that young people who are LGBTQ+ may suffer bullying or be targeted by others due to being LGBTQ+, this includes young people who may be perceived by others as LGBTQ+. Staff should also be aware that risks for young people can increase if they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can be open with. Staff ensure that they provide safe spaces for all young people at High Close and young people are educated about different relationships and how to support others or where to find support in RSE lessons. In addition there is a LGBTQ+ group that provides a safe space for young people to speak out and also to raise awareness for young people across the school. Staff should be aware that young people who are targeted may be victims of Hate Crime and should seek advice from the police where appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY/INFORMATION SHARING

Staff and volunteers have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly investigating agencies. All recording and information sharing regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns are completed in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR). Staff should be aware that GDPR **does not** prevent us sharing or withholding information when it is regarding Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns and that schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. Staff should refer to [Information advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) and [Data Protection: toolkit for schools](#) for further information. Staff must be aware of who we can and cannot share information with and should seek clarification if they are unsure **before** sharing any information.

Information Sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes.

If a young person confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the young person sensitively that they have a responsibility to refer the matter in order to keep the young person safe. At the same time, the young person should be reassured that the matter will only be disclosed to the relevant person/s who will then decide on an appropriate course of action. Staff should feedback to the young person where appropriate regarding concerns they have raised.

Staff and volunteers who receive information about children and families in the course of their work should have the information only within a professional context. Personal information about all young people and their families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All records relating to Child Protection incidents will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Leads team and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children. Staff should be aware that if a child says they are being abused this can only be shared with the DSL/Deputy DSLs and/or the social worker.

Privacy in the residential setting

Living in a residential group setting could at times lead to a lack of privacy for the young people. Staff should ensure that their practice is balanced with awareness of safeguarding and the wellbeing of young people without being overly intrusive, affording young people with as much privacy as is reasonably practical. Staff should take particular care when entering bedrooms, asking permission to enter. It is important that if young people visit each other's bedrooms that staff have been asked first, and that doors are open to ensure the safety and welfare of all concerned. No visitor should be allowed unsupervised access to young people's bedrooms with the exception of parents/carers.

To support in the safety and wellbeing of all young people, staff and visitors, the school has a CCTV system covering various public areas within the campus. At night, the images from the cameras which are positioned at either end of the girls and boys corridors are monitored by the Night Monitor team so that the member of staff sleeping-in can be contacted if there is a problem. The CCTV cameras do not monitor inside bedrooms or bathrooms. Staff should refer to the Schools CCTV policy for further guidance.

DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY

Deprivation of liberty refers to taking a person liberty away under the Mental Capacity Act. There is specific legislation regarding this and it has to be applied for through the Court of Protection or through Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) which can be used by healthcare professionals. Deprivation of Liberty is usually only for young people over 16 however young people under 16 who are cared for by the Local Authority (Children in Care) may require a Deprivation of Liberty order if they are not allowed the usual freedoms that most teenagers would be allowed. This is because the Local Authority are unable to agree to certain restrictions as the 'corporate parent' that parents could agree for a young person.

Deprivation can take many forms, not allowing young people unsupervised access to a mobile phone/internet, not allowing them unsupervised time independently or not allowing young people to leave a building/campus. These are not practices that are regularly used for young people at High Close however there may be instances where a young person lacks the ability to make safe decisions and the level of supervision they require means they are being subjected to a deprivation of liberty. If restrictions are necessary staff should discuss this with the DSL's and discuss whether an application for a Deprivation of Liberty needs to be pursued with the Local Authority.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards are due to be replaced by Liberty Protection Safeguards – when this changed is implemented this policy will be updated **however there has been a significant delay to this process and it is not clear if or when this may happen.**

For further information staff can refer to [gov.uk Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards](https://www.gov.uk/mental-capacity-act-and-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards)

SAFER RECRUITMENT

At High Close School, we implement the guidance set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023', and follow the procedures laid out in this document.

High Close completes recruitment in line with Barnardo's Recruitment and Selection policy and Procedure. There are occasions where High Close policy takes precedence due to High Close's obligations under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 which is not relevant to all Barnardo's projects. Staff should ensure all requirements under this policy are completed when recruiting staff.

In order to ensure that young people are protected whilst at school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

High Close's recruitment processes ensure:

- Standardised recruitment procedures to ensure consistency
- Application forms and adverts state clearly that it is an offence to apply for a role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.
- Candidates are required to provide a full employment history since leaving school and information on qualifications they have attained
- Requirement for two suitable references prior to commencing in post and references are taken up prior to interview for all shortlisted candidates where possible. All references are followed up and verified and clarification on answers sought where appropriate. (please see Barnardo's school reference policy for further information)
- Identity checks including requesting applicants to provide their birth certificate
- Requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service Checks at an appropriate level
- DBS Children's barred list check if the post is in regulated activity (see Appendix B for definitions of regulated activity whilst at High Close). Staff will not start at High Close without their DBS to work directly with young people so separate Children's Barred List Checks are not required. If in exceptional circumstances a member of staff started without their DBS a separate Children's Barred List would be obtained and the member of staff would be supervised at all times with young people. This would have to be agreed by the region director and a risk assessment completed.
- Staff subscribed to the DBS update system must give consent for High Close to perform an update check and provide the original certificate.
- DBS's/copies of DBS's are not retained by the school after the relevant information is entered onto the Single Central Record
- Checks with relevant regulatory bodies; e.g. Teachers Regulation Agency (TRA), Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC), General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) sanctions (prior to its abolition in 2012), European Economic Area (EEA) sanctions and restrictions (prior to the United Kingdom leaving the EU), for teachers this is completed through the Teachers Services web page.
- Overseas criminal records checks where relevant (these should be carried out if staff have lived and worked abroad in the last 10 years). High Close may require overseas checks for staff that have lived and worked abroad further than the last ten years depending on individual circumstances, such as working in a relevant employment over ten years ago in a different country.
- Staff who have worked in a regulated profession overseas in the last 10 years may be required to provide a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country/countries in which they have worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach/work with young people. Applicants can find contact details of

regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the [Regulated Professions database](#). Applicants can also contact the [UK Centre for Professional Qualifications](#) who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body. Further information can be found in [Government guidance 'Recruit teachers from overseas'](#) where not all information above is available

- Right to work in the UK
- Scrutiny of employment history for unexplained gaps
- Online searches are completed as part of the schools due diligence on shortlisted candidates, this includes searching the candidates name through search engines. (Recruiting staff will find a guide to this in HR and Recruitment site).
- Professional advice and support from Human Resources available to Managers throughout the process
- Relevant staff have completed 'Safer Recruitment' training, and at least one member of any interview panel will have completed this (Staff trained in Safer Recruitment will note this on the interview notes). In exceptional circumstances, if an individual is interviewing alone, they will have completed Safer Recruitment training.
- High Close follow Barnardo's Recruitment of Ex-Offenders policy

In line with statutory requirements, the school maintains a record (the Single Central Record) indicating that the required checks have been carried out, and the date on which each such check was completed, or the relevant certificate obtained and by whom. This register also includes data relating to checks for volunteers, governors, consultants, relief and agency staff.

All permanent staff have personnel files where recruitment information is stored; please see Content Server for the pre-employment recruitment checklist that must be completed before any new member of staff starts work. All agency staff have paper files where this information is stored.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 requires the school to obtain written notification from any agency that supplies temporary staff to confirm they have carried out the appropriate checks in line with Safer Recruitment. Agency staff must have an up to date DBS with their agency before completing work at High Close and any disclosures must be shared with High Close by the agency before a placement starts for a member of staff.

Where students have a placement at High Close then the university or college must confirm that they have completed the appropriate checks including an Enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List

The school must confirm the identity of any agency staff/students on arrival (with appropriate photo ID) and that the agency/university have confirmed they have completed the appropriate checks before they commence their placement.

Contractors are required to complete and provide Enhanced DBS (with Children's Barred list if in a regulated activity). The school completes these for self-employed staff where required. They are also required to provide evidence of their professional qualifications where relevant and provide appropriate ID/right to work information.

Volunteers, agency staff, and unsupervised contractors are all entered on the Single Central Record.

Volunteers

Barnardo's highly value the contribution from Volunteers.

Some people, otherwise unsuitable for working with children and young people may attempt to use volunteering to gain access to children. For this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, are given the same consideration as paid staff. This includes the robust recruitment and selection processes, appropriate training and supervision to ensure that we maintain a safe environment for the young people placed at our school.

Although not a statutory requirement for Non-maintained special schools, all governors are checked for section 128 directions.

Alternative provision

Where young people spend time with an alternative provider i.e. attending a local college, High Close ensures they have written confirmation that the alternative provider has completed all appropriate checks on their staff in line with KCSiE 2023 and Alternative Provision – DFE Statutory guidance.

Work Experience

Work experience placements are organised through the school and can take place either in external organisations or on the school site.

Staff from High Close work to ensure that appropriate placements are found for young people in line with their needs. Staff responsible for organising work experience placement review all prospective placements to ensure the appropriate checks have been carried out including the nature of supervision and whether a Children's Barred List check is required due to the nature of the supervision in the placement. A risk assessment will be completed for each placement for each young person to ensure all appropriate measures are put in place.

Disclosure and Barring

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. Further information can be found on the Government website **Disclosure and Barring Service**.

Childcare Regulations

High Close currently has no residential pupils under the age of 8. Should this change we will review our requirements regarding the Childcare regulations and update the policy appropriately.

References

The school provides references for all staff employed by them. References are provided in a timely manner and checked to ensure they have the appropriate information about safeguarding and disciplinary information where required.

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

High Close School strives to ensure all young people are safe whilst at school. We have preventative strategies to ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities (see Responsibilities of staff) and that we have procedures in place to ensure everyone who works at High Close in either a paid or voluntary capacity is suitable and safe to work with vulnerable young people (See Safer Recruitment). **These procedures do not end at the recruitment stage and procedures are in place to ensure ongoing vigilance in order to ensure all adults working at High Close understand safe working practices. This is detailed further in the Staff Code of Conduct.**

When managing allegations it is important to consider a) ensuring that the welfare of the young person is managed and that the child is kept safe and b) investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation.

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer (including supply staff) in an education setting is dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

This applies to allegations where there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer harm. In addition, these allegations might indicate that the staff member is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity.

Barnardo's have clear procedures in place to manage allegations, backed up by disciplinary/criminal code to ensure that the appropriate action on the occurrence, suspicion or allegation of abuse has occurred. Investigations will be conducted in line with this policy.

All allegations should be reported to the Principal and will be dealt with in accordance to Barnardo's policy and procedure on managing allegations and concerns. Staff may refer concerns to the DSL that might include allegations about staff, these will be referred to the Principal by the DSL. Staff should refer to Barnardo's Disciplinary guidance and procedures and the High Close School policy 'Disciplinary, Grievance and Harassment' Policy.

In addition, Berkshire West Safeguarding Children's Partnership Procedures for managing allegations will be followed. (please see their [website](#) for further information).

Before contacting the LADO, basic enquiries will be conducted to establish facts in order to determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation (but with care to ensure any future police investigation is not jeopardised) such as:

- Was the individual on site at the time of the allegation?
- Did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the young person?
- Are there any witnesses?
- Was there any CCTV footage?

This is not an exhaustive list however staff will not investigate the issue and must only gather facts as directed by the Principal or DSL.

Any allegations will be notified to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and actions/investigation will be monitored and reviewed by the LADO. For allegations about staff at High Close we will refer the Designated Officer at Wokingham Local Authority (Nicola Vines,

contacts – 07783 828150, LADO@wokingham.gov.uk). If there are concerns about external professionals these will be discussed with the appropriate Local Authority depending on where they are located. Contact details for LADO's can be found either on the Local Authority website or the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership website. The Wokingham LADO will be notified of any referrals the school makes to LADO's in other authorities. If there are concerns about the welfare of a child as a result of alleged abuse a referral should also be made to Children's Social Care.

Concerns or allegations relating to members of the school's Senior Leadership Team (including the Designated Safeguard Lead/s/Principal), should be referred to Barnardo's Director – South East Children's Services (Emma Bowman emma.bowman@barnardos.org.uk). If the concern relates to the Principal, this allegation would be referred to the relevant authorities to ensure transparency and consistency of management.

If the member of staff is a supply/agency member of staff then the same procedures will apply. The DSL/Principal will liaise with the agency to ensure they are fully involved in the process.

Allegations against staff

This procedure should be applied when there is such an allegation or concern that a person who works with children, has:

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

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect).

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make an individual unsuitable for work. Where, appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the individual works should be undertaken,

Behaviour that is unacceptable and would constitute harm towards a child includes the below

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (see s16-19 Sexual Offences Act 2003);
- 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (see s15 **Sexual Offences Act 2003**);
- Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising etc);
- Possession of indecent photographs / pseudo-photographs of children.

Whistleblowing

If staff feel that action is not being taken or is not sufficient despite their concerns being raised appropriately, they should use the Whistleblowing procedures.

High Close follows. [Barnardo's Whistleblowing Policy](#) Staff should also refer to Barnardo's statement on the Whistleblowing provider (please see Appendix C). Staff should make themselves aware of the procedure within the policy if they have any concerns. Staff receive training in Whistleblowing on induction and subsequently through Safeguarding refreshers.

If all internal avenues have been exhausted or staff feel genuine concerns are not being addressed and are still concerned, they can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline Call **0800 028 0285** or Email **help@nspcc.org.uk**.

Supporting those involved

Support should be available for the child, parents or carers involved as well as support for the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Parents / carers of the young person involved should be informed about the allegation as soon as possible (as directed by the Local Authority Designated Officer) and kept informed about the progress of the case. They should also be told the outcome (if there is not a criminal prosecution), including the result of any disciplinary procedures. If there is cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or Social Care will be convened in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

Young people will be kept informed of any outcomes as appropriate to the young person's additional needs. This may need to be agreed with the LADO and/or the Police and Social Care and the parents/carers of the young people.

If there are concerns from the case manager about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staffs family this will be discussed with the DSL and if necessary a referral to Social Care will be made.

If the decision from LADO/police/social care is that no further action is required then the decision making around this will be reflected in the record.

If the decision is that there is further action required the DSL/Principal will liaise with the LADO and other relevant statutory agencies (Police/Social Care) to ensure appropriate investigation is undertaken and that the case is reviewed regularly. Staff should refer to the Barnardo's [Safeguarding Children Policy](#) and also refer to KCSiE 2023 Part 4. An Allegations Against Adults (AAA) form will be completed and referred to the Barnardo's Head of Corporate Safeguarding within 24 hours of any incident that meets the thresholds so they can have oversight and support and actions that are required.

Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible whilst allowing for the fullest information to be examined. Investigation will be reviewed at minimum every 4 weeks.

Staff rights and sources of support

The member of staff who is the subject of the allegations will be kept informed of the progress of the case as appropriate (and in line with advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer and/or the Police/Social Care), and will receive appropriate support whilst the case is ongoing.

Sources of support and advice for staff who are subject to an allegation investigation include:

- Line manager or line manager's manager (if more appropriate)
- Local People team
- UNISON/other trade union representative
- [Employee Assistance Programme](#) – this is a confidential service, which provides an opportunity to talk through any issues or concerns.
- For supply/agency staff, they should be directed to their Agency support provision and/or their Trade Union.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated and considered.

Suspension will not be necessary in every case and is not an automatic response to any allegations. Suspension is not a judgement but rather the safest way for an investigation to be completed.

Record keeping

High Close School keeps a clear and comprehensive summary of:

- Any allegations made, (unless the allegation is later shown to be malicious)
- Details of how allegations were followed up and resolved
- Any action taken, including rationale and justification for any suspensions that are required (including alternatives considered).
- Decisions reached.

All records are kept on the CPOMS system in a secure manner with restricted access and a copy of the records is added to the staff members file unless the allegation is found to be false or malicious. A declaration is added as to whether this information will be referred to in any future reference in the closing statement. Allegations that are found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious will not be included in references.

Where an investigation finds that an individual has met the harm thresholds and the behaviour is meets the criteria then a referral to the DBS will be made.

Any allegation are considered as part of Child Protection and Safeguarding planning in terms of lessons learned and how to avoid any such concerns occurring in future. Should there be any issues that are relevant to the staff team as a whole or individuals then the DSL and Principal will ensure that relevant training and updates to policy are put in place.

Allegations relating to incidents where other organisations are using school premises

If an allegation is received relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation are using school premises, this will be reported to the LADO and recorded through the High Close system to detail actions taken.

All premises rental for activities involving young people include an agreement to share any concerns with the DSL and organisations are required to provide their Safeguarding policy and procedure in advance. Further guidance is provided in [‘Keeping Children Safe in out of school settings’](#) which details what schools should expect providers to have in place.

Concerns that do not meet the harm thresholds

If staff have concerns that do not meet the thresholds for allegations (please see below)

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

they should raise their concerns with the DSL or Principal.

These concerns (known in KCSiE 2023 as ‘Low Level concerns’) do not mean the concerns are insignificant but that they do not meet the harm thresholds as detailed above.

These concerns may be something observed or somethings that is causing a ‘nagging doubt’, unease or something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

These may include (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Staff behaving in a way that is not consistent with the staff code of conduct including inappropriate behaviour outside of work
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language
- Taking pictures of young people on their phone, contrary to school policy
- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded areas or behind closed doors
- Humiliating pupils
- Concerns raised by parents/carers about inappropriate behaviours

These behaviours can range from staff who have behaved in a thoughtless manner, to behaviour that might look to be inappropriate but might not be in specific circumstance through to behaviour which is ultimately intended to abuse.

Staff should raise these concerns with the DSL or Principal, and it will be recorded through the CPOMS system. The DSL/Principal will undertake basic enquiries to ascertain further facts. If the concern is not found to meet the harm threshold for LADO referral, then appropriate actions will be taken to ensure the individual concerned is aware of how their behaviour did not meet the standards expected at High Close and appropriate training/support/expectations will be put in place. The DSLs will inform the LADO as a consultation or will ask for advice in situations where further investigation may be required.

Staff should not discuss these concerns with anyone other than the Principal/DSL or their line manager as such concerns are confidential. The Principal/DSL will share any concerns with relevant line managers as required.

The low level concerns will be reviewed half termly to enable any patterns of concerning behaviour to be identified and appropriate actions to be put in place by either referral to the LADO or wider training or policy issues need to be addressed for the whole school.

Any low level concerns relating to agency/third party staff will be shared with the member of staffs employers and appropriate action will be discussed in the context of their employment at the school but this will also enable agencies to identify any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour.

Low level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues that would normally be included for example misconduct or poor performance. If a pattern or group of behaviours are identified and referred to the LADO and later substantiated, these would be included in any further references. Low level concerns will be recorded on the appropriate section of CPOMS and will be referred to if further concerns of a similar nature arise.

Staff must be clear that they **must** raise any concerns they have regarding staff practice in order to safeguard the young people at High Close. High Close aims to create an open and transparent working environment where all concerns can be shared and appropriate actions can be put in place to support all involved.

If staff are aware of something that makes them uncomfortable or that is not in line with policy/procedure or training they have a duty to report this to the Lead DSL/Acting Principal (Natalie Potter/Wendy Gosling) to ensure that it is followed up appropriately. Reports should be made within 24 hours of the concern being noted. Staff may speak to their line manager for advice but must make a report to Lead DSL/Acting Principal (Natalie Potter/Wendy Gosling) as well.

SECURITY AND VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

In order to safeguard the welfare of all young people, staff and volunteers to the school, all visitors must report to Main reception (or directly with Primary Provision, if directly visiting primary) and sign in via the electronic system. Visitors should provide ID when they visit so staff can ascertain they are who they say they are. Visitors who attend the school in a professional capacity should provide evidence of appropriate DBS checks or ensure their employer provides this prior to their visit – this should be recorded in the young person's contact record as evidence.

A badge, with the name and date of visit, will be issued to provide identification. These will be kept visible on the visitor's person throughout their visit. Within residential units, visitors are also required to sign in to the unit visitor's book and no person (other than parents/carers/approved external professional's i.e. social worker) will have unsupervised access to young people.

Policies are in place to ensure that staff are supported in raising any concerns which would include visitors to ensure that the safeguarding of young people remains of paramount importance.

All visitors should be able to provide appropriate ID when asked to do so by a staff member. Staff have a clear duty to approach and challenge any visitors present on any part of the school campus without suitable ID visible. The safety of the children is paramount.

Following the exposure of the historical institutional abuse of vulnerable people by visiting high profile celebrities and the resulting investigations that have occurred in the past few years at other schools/projects etc High Close School has procedures in place relating to visiting VIP / Celebrities. There are robust systems in place to ensure that both young people and staff raising any concerns are listened to, that concerns are taken seriously and that an appropriate response is taken. Visiting celebrities / VIP are accompanied by staff at all times during their time at the school and would at no time be allowed unsupervised access to young people.

The school has CCTV positioned in and around the school which is recorded throughout the day. CCTV in the residential unit communal areas is monitored during the night by the Night Monitor team. Night monitors patrol campus regularly through the night and also observe CCTV of the campus grounds (please see the school CCTV policy for more information)

The school is on occasion hired out during period where young people are not on site (weekends and holidays). The school ensure that any organisation who hire out the premises for activities with young people have appropriate Child Protection and Safeguarding policies in place as well as ensuring appropriate risk assessments are in place. The school would not hire out premises whilst young people are on site however may have visitors to join courses that we run where appropriate. In these cases visitors are supervised at all times in line with our visitor risk assessments.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Staff may have to physically intervene with young people to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all concerned.

Due to the behaviours that may be presented by the young people at High Close (as a result of their additional needs) there may be occasions where staff need to intervene physically. (High Close use Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) and only staff trained in this approach are permitted to use TCI physical intervention techniques)

Physical Interventions should only be employed as a safety response to acute physical behaviour and their use is restricted to the following circumstance; the young person, other young people, staff members or others are imminent risk of physical harm or in the case of serious/sustained damage to property.

At High Close School we constantly strive to create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of physical intervention. In addition to this, all have an Individual Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment to ensure that appropriate methods are used to manage challenging behaviour effectively.

Reasonable force/physical intervention will only be used when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using physical interventions. All serious incidents requiring the use of physical intervention by staff are recorded on the school's database, parents are informed, and young people are given the opportunity to talk through the incident. In addition, staff de-briefs take place where practice can be discussed where required. Staff should

refer to the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships policy for further information.

Whilst creating a child's Individual Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment, staff will take into account the impact of physical restraint on the wellbeing of the child, considering their Special Educational Needs, medical and care needs, previous experiences etc.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Staff should be aware that they may be asked to search young people if we have a concern. Staff may only complete searches if they have been trained through their TCI training. Staff must ensure they have read the relevant information in the **Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships** policy about searching which details what staff are permitted to do. Searches completed by staff are not permitted to remove any clothing.

Events that have been reported in the national media has highlighted an incident where staff in a London school allowed a young person to be strip searched on school premises without an appropriate adult. Staff are not permitted to allow any strip searches by the police and this must be stopped and SLT and DSL's informed immediately. Any searches completed by the police whilst young people are under the care of school staff must be recorded on CPOMS under the category of 'Police Search' (under the category of 'Other').

APPROPRIATE TOUCH

High Close does not have a no touch policy. Staff must ensure that any physical contact with young people is in line with policy and training. Staff must ensure that any physical interaction with young people is appropriate in line with their training and the young persons Individual Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment. If staff are unsure then staff must not use physical touch in their interaction with the young person.

TCI training provides staff with a framework of what appropriate touch is in terms of physical intervention in crisis and also caring gestures. Caring gestures can include physical touch such as a 'side hug' or touch on the arm or shoulder to reassure however can be non-physical i.e. communicating we care verbally. Staff must be aware of the young person's BSP's as caring gestures can trigger young people and could escalate a young person into crisis.

Young people can instigate physical interaction by asking for or giving a hug. Staff must ensure they make it clear to young people what is appropriate. Staff can reciprocate a hug to a young person but must ensure this is a hug on the side of the body and is for a short time.

If young people do not respond to staff direction then they must clearly reiterate the boundaries to the young person and if this is not effective seek support from the young person's unit staff or their own line manager. If young people require a specific type of physical interaction i.e. holding a young persons hand to reassure them then this must be detailed in their BSP with information about how this should be implemented.

Occupational Therapy staff provide training to staff in deep pressure touch. Staff may only use this if indicated in the young person's BSP or sensory diet. If staff feel this may be

supportive to the young person then they should discuss with the OT staff. Massage is **not** an accepted form of touch at High Close and staff are not permitted to use massage with young people.

If young people are seeking sensory stimulation they can be directed to use the equipment provided by OT. Staff who work with younger pupils may be trained in using OT equipment to provide appropriate sensory stimulation, this will be detailed in the young persons sensory diet/BSP and will be directed by OT staff. The aim for all young people is to support them to eventually become independent in their ability to manage their sensory needs.

If staff are unsure about what is appropriate touch they should seek advice from their line manager, or the DSLs. Staff must not engage in intimate touch with any young people.

Inappropriate touch can include:

- Hugging young people face to face
- Stroking a young person
- Touching any intimate areas of the body
- Kissing
- Touching a young person underneath their clothing

The above list is not exhaustive and is intended to give examples of inappropriate touch.

MEDICATION, INTIMATE CARE AND FIRST AID.

Relevant staff are trained in the Administration of Medication to ensure that we are meeting the needs of young people with medical conditions. The schools 'Care of boarders who are unwell/ Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions' policy provides more detailed information. At High Close School, staff are not trained to complete intimate care unless this is identified for a specific young person. Further information is available within Barnardo's policy on 'Intimate and Personal Care'. Staff should also refer to the High Close 'Health and Safety policy' and 'Local Safety Rules' for further information.

SAFEGUARDING AND THE WAKING DAY CURRICULUM/EARLY HELP OFFER

At High Close School, promoting the safety and welfare of young people is embedded in the school's waking day curriculum. Every young person placed at the school has an Education, Health and Care Plan (see the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 \(2015\)](#)) and are by the very nature of the need for placement at a Residential and Day Special School, potentially vulnerable. High Close School has a higher than average cohort of young people who are Looked After, adopted, or previously Looked After or have Social Care involvement. It is therefore particularly crucial that education around personal safety is fundamental to the work that we do with young people.

High Close has a high ratio of staff to young people and staff have regular training to support them in safeguarding young people including Child Protection, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, SEN training etc.

Within the educational provision, young people have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and awareness of personal safety through:

- Science – sex education
- Computer Science – Online Safety and cyberbullying
- COPE (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness), PSE (Personal and Social Education) ASDAN and Careers which supports young people in developing key skills, including understanding of dangers, personal safety, anti-bullying and awareness of the procedures in place at the school to support with this.
- Work Experience and College – all young people complete training on health and safety and personal safety to prepare them for the world outside High Close School, including their work experience and college placements.
- PSHE, Relationships Education, Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education lessons include work around:
 - Anti-social behaviour, including ‘the Law and You’, gangs, bullying and knife crime
 - Personal Safety, covering issues such as street safety, safety in the home and ‘stranger danger’
 - Rights and responsibilities
 - Drug and alcohol awareness
 - Relationships and Sex Education (including the below)
 - healthy and respectful relationships
 - boundaries and consent
 - stereotyping, prejudice and equality
 - body confidence and self-esteem
 - how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
 - the concepts of, and laws relating to- sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support, and
 - what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
 - Radicalisation and extremism
 - Online Safety
- Themed Assemblies
- Involvement in national ‘Anti-bullying’ and ‘Safer Internet’ Events
- Health and Safety during activities where they may handle hazardous equipment and materials (i.e. Craft, Home Economics, Science) Staff should refer to the school’s policy on Health and Safety and the Local Safety Rules
- Link workers (for day pupils) provide specific work to identified key young people to help them with areas identified for support, either through safeguarding reports or through emerging behavioural needs including work around Anti-bullying, Relationships Sex Education, Personal Safety / Stranger Danger, Substance Misuse, Healthy Living / Lifestyles, Self-Esteem and Online Safety.

- All young people are supported to understand healthy and positive relationships. Young people are not prevented from having age appropriate relationships or friendships however staff ensure there is support and intervention for them to understand and learn how to do this positively.

Within the residential units:

- Young people take part in the school Independence Programmes where individual issues around personal safety and welfare are identified and addressed.
- Key working relevant to the young person's individual needs including work around Anti-bullying, Relationships Sex Education, Personal Safety / Stranger Danger, Substance Misuse, Healthy Living / Lifestyles, Self-Esteem and Online Safety. Progress on this is recorded through the High Close Outcome's records.
- Group activities regarding relevant topics including Sexual Health, British Values, Fire Safety etc.
- All relevant activities and trips away are thoroughly risk assessed, and the expectations of young people taking part are clearly discussed. This ensures that all trips and educational activities have relevant hazards identified, and the controls that have been put in place to minimise risk.
- Young people are also taught about managing safe consensual sexual relationships. Sexual relationships are not permitted to occur on the school site or whilst under staff supervision however staff will work with young people to understand what is safe and also support parents/carers with advice about this.

We complete an annual questionnaire to assess young people's understanding of Safeguarding and to assess what areas need to be improved. The Family Resource Team Manager completes tutor time sessions with young people annually to ensure they are aware of what Safeguarding means and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and how to report if they are worried about anything that is affecting them.

Family Resource Team

The Family Resource Team offer group work to identified young people on Keeping Safe, sex and relationships, online safety and other relevant topics. They also complete individual work with young people on specific topics identified through safeguarding concerns.

The Family Resource Team also offers parenting groups around various topics in order to support and empower parents and carers to support their young people. Family Resource team workers also complete work with families as a result of safeguarding issues in order to support them in better meeting the needs of their young people. The Family Resource team also signpost to appropriate external professionals who can support families and young people.

The waking day curriculum approach means that young people are supported to keep themselves safe, and encourages them to adopt safe and responsible practices, and to deal sensibly with risk.

Safeguarding within the residential accommodation

High Close recognises the unique safeguarding issues involved in providing residential care and ensures that young people are safeguarded whilst living in the residential units. There are high levels of staff supervision and risk assessments are completed for various aspects of group living. Group impact risk assessments are completed before a young person is offered a place at the school to ensure that we can meet both the new young person's needs and the needs of the existing young people within the unit. Bedroom risk assessments are completed to ensure all possible risks are evaluated and appropriate safeguards are in place for all young people overnight. Night monitors monitor cameras in the corridors of residential units at night and would alert the sleeping in staff if young people attempted to go into each other's rooms or if they leave the unit. Young people may lock their door at night if they wish however this is up to personal choice and is not required for the young people's security.

The referrals and taster process is comprehensive to ensure that we assess thoroughly whether the school is best placed to meet a young person's needs as we recognise the impact of attending a residential special school and want to ensure as far as possible that placements are successful. Part of this process is considering the needs of the individual in terms of being able to have other young people they can get on with and that will be supportive to them and is appropriate that young person's needs.

THE PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Barnardo's Guidance in relation to photography and video specifically states that "photography and video are important methods of recording social contacts and providing a historic record that illustrates and validates important moments in the lives of people. The process is personal and powerful and often supportive in the process of developing an identity and self-esteem". Staff should refer to Barnardo's Guidance on the [Children's Services Recording policy](#).

Photography and video can however be, misused and young people have the right to privacy and to be safeguarded from the inappropriate use of images and video. The Barnardo's guidance has been developed to inform and support good practice. As an agency committed to safeguarding children, we need to ensure that our actions, and those of our staff, are appropriate and cannot be misinterpreted. Recommendations that are relevant to us are:

1. All staff and volunteers must be aware of the reasons why the guidelines have been developed.
2. Staff and volunteers must seek agreement of their line managers before taking photographs or using video.
3. Individuals, who are being photographed or videoed, should understand why the activity is taking place and agree to it.
4. Where individuals do not understand and cannot give consent, consent is obtained in writing from someone who can give this on the person's behalf. At High Close School, Parents / Carers (or those with parental responsibility) are asked to give consent for Photography on admission.

5. If photographs or videos are kept, they are subject to the General Data Protection Regulations and permission must be given for their storage.

Staff should also ensure that:

- They take care that their actions in relation to recording events are not misconstrued
- Digital and video cameras, and memory cards, are kept centrally in a secure place.
- They do not use their own digital or video cameras unless specific authorisation has been given by their Line Manager and agreed with the DSL's and all images are moved immediately to approved storage and deleted from the digital/video camera.
- They are aware that their personal mobile camera phones **cannot** be used to take and share pictures of children.
- **Staff must not** use their phones to take pictures of supporting evidence for safeguarding and/or incident records.

These guidelines and information allow us to still use photographs and video in a positive way, but we must remain aware that it is a powerful medium and can be misused. The above guidelines must be adhered to and updated whenever there is a relevant advance in technology.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection at High Close School is:

Carolyn Hare Contact email: chare@highclose.org.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Governor plays an essential role in ensuring that the young people are kept safe from harm. Their job is to ensure that the Safeguarding agenda is embedded into the ethos of the school.

Their responsibilities include ensuring that the school:

- Is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of the young people placed at High Close School
- Has an effective Safeguarding policy in place and follows local procedures and that this is regularly reviewed. The Safeguarding governor will ensure that the school publishes the Child Protection Safeguarding policy on the school website.
- Keeps safeguarding matters on the agenda at relevant governor meetings
- Recruits staff and volunteers in line with Safer Recruitment processes
- Has an awareness of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff and volunteers and ensures that appropriate disciplinary action is taken when required. In the case of any allegations made against the Principal, the Safeguarding Governor and/or ADCS will liaise with Designated Officer at the Local Authority.
- Has a designated senior member of staff dealing with Safeguarding issues and that they have sufficient time and support to carry out their duties, including accessing relevant training
- Staff access the available safeguarding children training, and that all Inductions include relevant Safeguarding information and guidance
- That the governing body undertake appropriate training regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection

- Keeps up to date with national and local guidance

The Governor works with the Principal and Lead DSL/Leader of Care to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, including how effectively child welfare concerns are identified and responded to. The governor has meetings with the DSL/s and Principal to monitor and oversee Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures.

The Safeguarding Governor is responsible for feeding back to the Governing body regarding Safeguarding.

MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REVIEW

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s will monitor the recording of Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns to ensure that all staff and volunteers remain alert for signs and symptoms of abuse, and that they use the systems in place appropriately to report these concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads review all current safeguarding concerns/incidents weekly ensuring appropriate action and follow up is being completed by staff and external agencies – social care etc. The weekly meetings and actions are documented on safeguarding records to evidence thought process and decision making.

Half termly Safeguarding governor meetings with DSL's ensure that the governor responsible for safeguarding is aware of safeguarding concerns issues for the school and follows a proforma to ensure all areas are monitored. The Safeguarding governor challenges the DSL's where appropriate and requires follow up from these meetings to ensure the school is meeting the requirements.

Key workers/link workers/ care staff complete half termly monitoring of each young person's safeguarding recording to ensure that repeated or persistent concerns are not overlooked and DSL's monitor and review each monitoring record to ensure appropriate referrals/escalations are made as and when required.

Monitoring is completed by Unit managers group half termly to ensure there is oversight of safeguarding issues and the correct procedures are being implemented.

Care staff or the Family Resource Team will attend meetings pertaining to the young person's care and will feedback to DSL's if there are any ongoing concerns or lack of improvement that requires further action; recording is completed through CPOMS system.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and will be updated where required.

The Principal and Governor identified as responsible for Safeguarding will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of Safeguarding Policy and Procedures; including how effectively child welfare concerns are identified and responded to. This process will ensure that any issues, weaknesses or concerns are identified and raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s to ensure that policy and procedures are reviewed and revised immediately.

Appendices

Appendix A : Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

STAFF SHOULD NOT VIEW ANY IMAGES THEY THINK MAY BE INAPPROPRIATE – the below details what actions should be taken if there are concerns about images

2.10 Searching devices, viewing and deleting nudes and semi-nudes

2.10(a) Viewing the imagery

Staff and parents or carers must not intentionally view any nudes and semi-nudes unless there is good and clear reason to do so as outlined below. Wherever possible, responses to incidents should be based on what DSLs (or equivalents) have been told about the content of the imagery.

It is important that all members of staff are clear on what they can and can't do in relation to viewing nudes and semi-nudes and that this is communicated to any child, young person or parent and carer requesting that imagery be viewed.

The decision to view any imagery should be based on the professional judgement of the DSL (or equivalent) and should always comply with the child protection policy and procedures of the education setting. Imagery should never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to any child or young person involved.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL (or equivalent) would need to be satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies because it is not possible to establish the facts from any child or young person involved
- is necessary to report it to a website, app or suitable reporting agency (such as the IWF) to have it taken down, or to support the child or young person or parent or carer in making a report
- is unavoidable because a child or young person has presented it directly to a staff member or nudes or semi-nudes have been found on an education setting's device or network

If it is necessary to view the imagery then the DSL (or equivalent) should:

- never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal. If this has already happened, please contact your local police for advice and to explain the circumstances
- discuss the decision with the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- make sure viewing is undertaken by the DSL (or equivalent) or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- make sure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team. This staff member does not need to view the images.
- wherever possible, make sure viewing takes place on the premises of the education setting, ideally in the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team's office
- make sure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images
- record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions. Ensure this is signed and dated and meets

any appropriate wider standards e.g. such as those set out in statutory safeguarding guidance and local authority policies and procedures.

- if any devices need to be taken and passed onto the police, the device(s) should be confiscated and the police should be called. The device should be disconnected from Wi-Fi and data, and turned off immediately to avoid imagery being removed from the device remotely through a cloud storage service. The device should be placed in a secure place, for example in a locked cupboard or safe until the police are able to come and collect it.

Further details on searching, deleting and confiscating devices can be found in the DfE's [Searching, screening and confiscation advice](#) (note this advice is for schools only). Any procedures for searching, deleting and confiscating devices should be included in the educational setting's safeguarding or child protection procedures. Children and young people, their parent and carers should be made aware of this procedure.

If nudes or semi-nudes have been viewed by a member of staff, either following a disclosure from a child or young person or as a result of a member of staff undertaking their daily role (such as IT staff monitoring school systems), DSLs (or equivalents) should make sure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support. Viewing nudes and semi-nudes can be distressing for both children, young people and adults and appropriate emotional support may be required.

Appendix B : Regulated activity at High Close School

All permanent staff at High Close fall under the definition of regulated activity and therefore all have Enhanced DBS's with Children's barred list checks.

Governors are required to have Enhanced DBS's.

Contractors who work with children (including counsellors and therapists) all have Enhanced DBS's with Children's Barred List due to falling under the regulated activity definition, other than the external cleaning company staff who are not on site when children are in the schools areas they clean.

Contractors who do not work with children (such as maintenance contractors) are all supervised by a member of permanent staff whilst on site and do not have unsupervised access to young people.

All volunteers complete a thorough induction process where their responsibilities for Child Protection and Safeguarding are covered through the volunteer training before they start their volunteering role. A written risk assessment will be completed to determine what level of DBS and checks they require, the vast majority of volunteers will require an Enhanced DBS and Children's Barred list as they will work directly with children and can be unsupervised during these times.

Agency staff are required to have Enhanced DBS checks with Children's Barred List (unless they are agency cleaning staff who do not have contact with young people due to working between the hours of 3am and 7am – these staff all have Enhanced DBS's).

Appendix C – Whistleblowing hotline – Barnardo's statement

At Barnardo's we take whistleblowing very seriously and are committed to investigating any allegations raised. If you see or suspect any malpractice or wrongdoing, please speak up.

Speaking up could mean a conversation with your manager or approaching your manager's manager. You may also want to raise your concern with the People team. If you have tried one of these options, or feel that whistleblowing is the correct route, it may be appropriate to contact our independent whistleblowing service, Safecall.

What can the service be used for?

The Safecall service is primarily for concerns where the interests of others of the charity itself, are at risk, whether these are happening now, took place in the past, or are likely to happen in the future.

You should use **Safecall's independent whistleblowing** service if you see or suspect:

- Fraud
- Security issues
- Health and Safety
- Data Breaches
- Bribery
- Corruption
- Dishonesty (covering up of wrong-doing)
- Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination (where you feel unable to approach your manager or main Barnardo's contact about)
- or any other issue that you feel is unacceptable in the workplace and are unable to approach your manager about.

If your concern is about working with another employee (or volunteer) you should consider using the Grievance Resolution Policy or other applicable policy instead of the Whistleblowing Policy in the first instance, which may be found here:

[Employee Handbook](#)

[Grievance resolution policy](#)

[Prevention of harassment policy](#)

How do I contact Safecall?

You can contact Safecall on **0800 915 1571** or online through the '[Report a Whistleblowing Concern](#)'. Your report won't be traced and Safecall has trained operators to support you.

The service is free, confidential and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

After you have shared your concern

As outlined in our Whistleblowing Policy, the information you provide and agree that Safecall can share will be sent to nominated individuals in our Audit and Assurance team who will decide on the most appropriate course of action.

All reported matters are reviewed diligently and in confidence (as far as possible) and, where appropriate, with feedback to the individual who has made a report.

At Barnardo's, we want a culture where each of us is empowered and encouraged to act in line with our purpose and values. Please be assured that all concerns raised will be taken seriously and will be treated fairly.

For more information on whistleblowing and using Safecall please see the FAQ document.

If you have a whistleblowing concern at work

- Report it to your line manager or HR, or
- Speak to a senior manager, or
- Call Safecall

0800 915 1571

Report online at: www.safecall.co.uk/barnardos

All calls are treated confidentially by Safecall and you may remain anonymous if you wish.



working with



Appendix D: Briefing for Temporary and Supply Staff Re: Safeguarding/Child Protection

For supply staff and those on short contracts who work at High Close School for only a short period, perhaps only a day, this briefing sheet is the most appropriate way of ensuring essential information on safeguarding children and young people is made available.

While working in this school, you have a duty of care towards the children and young people here. This means you should act in a way to ensure their safety and welfare at all times.

In addition, if at any time you have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if you think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share relevant information with a Designated Safeguarding Lead, listed below:

Designated Safeguarding Leads

- Natalie Potter/Baljeet Hodges/Wendy Gosling/Laura Byron/ Gail Wild /Vicky Kinsman/Nathan Belgrave/Matt Lilley
- Pam Gadsby, PA to Leader of Care/DSL admin

Administrative DSL

This is not an exhaustive list but you may have become concerned as a result of:

- Observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental.
- Observing something in appearance of a child or young person which suggests they are not being sufficiently well cared for.
- Observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about a child or young person.
- A child or young person telling you that they have been subjected to some form of abuse.

In any of the circumstances listed above or you are concerned in any way about a young person, you must write down what you saw or heard, date and sign your account, and give it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If you are working at High Close for a longer period of time you will be given a CPOMS account, you must record any safeguarding concerns on this system. This may be the beginning of a legal process – it is important to understand that legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in any way.

If a child talks to you about abuse, you should follow these guidelines:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive.
- **Never** stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than they wish.
- Make it clear that you may need to pass on information to other agencies that may be able to help – do not promise confidentiality. You are obliged to share any information relating to abuse or neglect.
- Write an account of the conversation immediately, as close to verbatim as possible. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it and give your record to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads who should contact children's social care if appropriate.

The school policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People which you can find in the main office. Please confirm that you have read and understood the above by signing below. Please then return this signed form to the main office.

Signed: **Date:**

Please print name: **Agency:**

Appendix E: Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies:

The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s are:

Managing referrals

Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care and (where appropriate):

- Support staff who make referrals to local authority social care
- Refer cases to Prevent/Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff to make referrals where appropriate

- Inform the local authority Designated Officer (LA DO or DO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member/professional);
- Inform the Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child);
- Inform Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).
- Liaise with the Principal to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult (please see [PACE Code C 2019](#) for further information)
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Review and evaluation of safeguarding records to monitor trends in order to tailor proactive work with young people and targeted training for staff
- Weekly DSL meetings to review all current safeguarding concerns and actions to be completed
- Half termly meetings with Governors and relevant staff (including the Designated teacher) where Governors monitor and ensure compliance of Safeguarding procedures and practice.
- To report and record any Serious Safeguarding Incidents or Allegations against staff through the Barnardo's reporting procedures.
- In the case of Multi Agency and Serious Care reviews, the Designated Safeguarding Lead would be responsible for following the protocol as outlined in [Barnardo's Children's Services Safeguarding Policy](#).
- Overseeing online safety in partnership with the Digital Lead and understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place

Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s should receive appropriate refresher training carried out at least every two years – with annual updates - in order to:

- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure electronic/written records of concerns and referrals on CPOMS
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments

- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the schools or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff. Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, young carers and those with special educational needs (all young people at High Close have SEN).
- Promote a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them
- Be aware of issues regarding radicalisation including the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Have an understanding of the additional needs, vulnerabilities and any relevant safeguarding concerns of young people at High Close
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection regulations
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Have understanding, training and relevant knowledge regarding the unique risk of Online safety in order to identify concerns and protect young people from online dangers and the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe online whilst at school.
- As a residential and day Special school training in Special Educational Needs is part of the training programme within the school and all DSL's have up to date knowledge and skills regarding SEND

The DSL and deputies update their knowledge through various updates such as locally offered safeguarding training, CASPAR updates, Wokingham Secondary School DSL meetings, NASS meetings and updates etc.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s should ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately:

- Ensure the school child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies regarding this
- Ensure all staff have access to and understand the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this
- Link with the local Safeguarding Partners/Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) to stay up to date with local issues and to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
- Where children leave the school or college ensure their child protection file is sent to any new school or college within 5 days of the new half term or within 5 days of an in year transfer but transferred separately from the main file for the young person. Confirmation of receipt is required. As part of the transition process information is provided to the next school or college about any safeguarding concerns relevant to the individual young person if required.
- When a young person's Child Protection/Safeguarding file is transferred from a previous school, a summary report will be created on CPOM's highlighting any concerns staff should be aware of. The DSL's and DSL admin will chase up any files that are not transferred for new young people if not received.
- To coordinate Safeguarding training for the staff team and to resource external trainers and deliver training where appropriate. This includes identifying staff knowledge/confidence and tailoring refreshers appropriately.

Appendix F: High Close School – Arrangements for emergency situations

School Name: High Close School

Policy owner: Natalie Potter

Context

The following guidance is to support staff should the school have a full or partial closure due to emergency situations.

The school continues to adhere to the guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
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Designated Safeguarding Lead / Leader of Care	Natalie Potter	01189 740264 /Ext. 117	Npotter@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL / Family resource Team Manager	Baljeet Hodges	01189 740268 / Ext. 123	Bhodes@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL /Acting Principal	Wendy Gosling	01189 740248 / Ext. 105	wgosling@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL/ Deputy Head of Care	Laura Byron	01189 740264 / 117	Lbyron@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL/Senior Practitioner	Gail Wild	01189 740249/ Ext. 132	Gwild@highclose.org.uk
Safeguarding governor	Carolyn Hare		chare@highclose.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Pat Kerton		pkerton@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL/ Unit Manager	Vicky Kinsman	01189 740282 / Ext. 109	Vkinsman@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL/ Unit Manager	Nathan Belgrave	01189 785767 /ext. 107	Nbelgrave@highclose.org.uk
Deputy DSL/Rowan Day Unit Manager	Matt Lilley	01189 740246 /Ext. 133	Milley@highclose.org.uk
Director Children's Services – South East and London regions	Emma Bowman	07768 745617	Emma.bowman@barnardos.org.uk
Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality (To be contacted in the case of Serious Safeguarding Issues)	Richard Simpson	07584 206139	Richard.simpson@barnardos.org.uk

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Young people with Local Authority Early Help support and Young Carers are also categorised as vulnerable.

All vulnerable young people will be offered a place at school in line with the guidelines in place at the time.

Senior leaders, especially the DSL (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are and have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

High Close School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. Young people's link workers/ key workers will liaise with social workers and the Designated Teachers will liaise with the Virtual School Heads to ensure communication regarding plans for young people. The Senior Leadership will have oversight of the young people in school and the DSL will liaise with staff if further action is required in terms of young people attending school.

Attendance monitoring

Should there be a partial closure, High Close School and social workers will agree with families whether children in need should be attending school. High Close will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

To support the above, staff will, when communicating with parents, carers and allocated social workers / placing authorities, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, High Close will notify their social worker and record this via the young person's contact record and on the Individual Risk Assessment.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

High Close school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a number of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – these are named on the front sheet.

We will endeavour to have a trained DSL or Deputy DSL available on site at all times when pupils are present between the hours of 8.30am and 4pm. When young people are resident on site there is a Senior On Call who is also trained as a DSL. We currently have 7 trained DSL's, however in the unlikely occurrence that no DSLs could be on site due to sickness/isolation etc, a trained DSL or deputy will be available to be contacted via phone. All staff will receive the contact details of the DSL should one not be on site.

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This would be a member of SLT.

The safeguarding recording system is on CPOMS and therefore can be accessed remotely by all members of staff to record any concerns and update any actions as required by the DSL/s. DSLs are able to remotely add actions and direct staff to liaise with children's social workers and other professionals as necessary. Staff who are working remotely should ensure that any actions they are completing at home are completed before 3pm each day so they DSL's have the opportunity to review any actions/contacts that are uploaded and take appropriate action where necessary. Staff have been given information about working at home and accessing

CPOMS to ensure they can do this in a safe way (Rule for working at home remotely – please see policies in Sharepoint All Staff Group)

Whatever the scenario, it is important that all staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or deputy. On each day, staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them if there are changes from the normal system.

No young person on roll at High Close will be required to attend a different provision than High Close. Young people may start at High Close during this time, DSL's and staff will follow up appropriate information from their previous schools in relation to safeguarding records.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school safeguarding policy, this includes verbally handing over the concern to the DSL and then making a report via CPOMS which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff has a concern about a child but cannot access the recording system, they should telephone the Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or a deputy DSL. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff must not just leave an answerphone message.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Concerns regarding young people will continue to be referred to relevant Local Authority Social Care teams as detailed in the main Child Protection and Safeguarding policy as required.

All allegations or concerns regarding adults working with children in the school should be reported immediately to the Principal/Lead DSL and will be dealt with in accordance to Barnardo's policy and procedure on managing allegations and concerns. Staff should refer to Barnardo's Disciplinary guidance and procedures and the High Close School policy 'Disciplinary, Grievance and Harassment' Policy as well as the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy (Section – Managing allegation of abuse against staff and volunteers) Staff must ensure that they speak directly to the Principal or DSL and do not leave a message/email etc. Any allegations or concerns regarding adults working with children that pertain to their suitability to work with children or potential harm to children will continue to be referred to the Designated Officer at the Local Authority (Wokingham LADO) as normal.

Concerns or allegations relating to members of the school's Senior Leadership Team (including the Designated Safeguard Lead/s), should be referred to the Chair of Governors (Pat Kerton pkerton@highclose.org.uk) or Barnardo's Director South East – Children's Services (Emma Bowman emma.bowman@barnardos.org.uk). If the concern relates to the Principal, this allegation would be referred to the relevant authorities to ensure transparency and consistency of management.

Safeguarding Training and induction

For the period emergency measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training due to cancellation of courses.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read at least part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022). The Designated Safeguarding Lead should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child. The DSLs will continue to deliver safeguarding refreshers half termly. Small group training will be provided where needed.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers start at High Close, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If an emergency situation were to arise where we required redeployed staff to support the safe running of the school, we will judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. As a minimum, the visiting professional(s) will be provided with a copy of our safeguarding / child protection policy, the Safeguarding briefing sheet and the name and contact details of the DSL and deputy DSLs.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE.

Should we have any staff redeployed to cover emergency situations, all staff will continue to be entered on the SCR as usual and normal recruitment checks would be in place.

Where we are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

High Close School will continue to comply with the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

High Close School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct: advice for making a referral'.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of an emergency environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school or college is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, High Close School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

We will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online monitoring and filtering system.

Where children are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place. Please see the Online Safety policy for further details

Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required the police.

Online safety resources have been shared with parents/carers and young people through parenthub and in contacts with young people and their families. This will continue throughout the emergency measures. Online safety sessions continue to occur for young people who are still in school and appropriate advice is shared with parents and carers if concerns arise.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct. All staff must check any resources they are recommending to young people before they send it out to ensure they are suitable for the individual young people

Staff will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Communication from class teachers/tutors regarding education progress with young people, will be through High Close email system, Microsoft Teams or via Purple mash email system (KS2). For care staff contact with young people will be by phone, Microsoft Teams and/or email (Barnardo's or High Close system).

Staff must ensure they follow the guidance and risk assessment for delivering remote lessons/session with young people.

Staff can also provide pre-recorded lessons in some subjects and have been given guidance on how to complete these appropriately in line with the government guidance and the guidance in appendix A.

Staff may facilitate online chats to young people at home with their tutor and young people who are in school to reduce feelings of isolation for young people who are not attending. These should be conducted following the guidance provided and in line with the school risk assessment. Staff are expected to ensure they are following the boundaries and guideline of the Staff code of conduct, and the schools policies when delivering lessons, whether in person or remotely.

Supporting children not in school

High Close is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for each child, their parent(s) / carers and the allocated social worker or placing authority.

Details of this communication plan must be recorded on the young person's Emergency Individual Risk Assessment which is stored in the Student Fileroom for all young people on O365. Contacts must all be recorded as usual on the young person's contact record.

The communication plan includes; remote contact, and phone contact. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Young people who are not attending school at this time are contacted at minimum once a week and staff are aware if any concerns arise through contact they must follow the safeguarding policy and procedure and report to DSL's. Staff only make contact with parents/carers and young people using school devices

This plan must be reviewed regularly during emergency measures and where concerns arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider any referrals as appropriate, taking into account the local criteria for action.

In addition, the school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances have a significant potential to affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Teachers and pastoral staff at High Close will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

High Close will ensure that if we are unable to care for the child/ren of critical workers, residential pupils and vulnerable children on site due to high levels of staff absence, we will liaise with the placing local authority and the parent / carer to find a suitable alternative; e.g. via a multi-disciplinary package of support. In that situation, the DSL will ensure that the DSL of any other provision young people may attend is informed of any current concerns.

Supporting children in school

High Close School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, maximising safety. Should staff absence increase the Leader of Care will write rotas for campus to ensure safe staffing for young people across all residential units.

We will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement any control measures and to follow the advice from Public Health England.

We will ensure that where we care for young people on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Each young person will continue to have records completed whilst on site and staff are providing a creative curriculum to support young people in school to meet their individual needs.

Supporting young people returning to school

Staff are aware that young people returning to school from a long absence may struggle to adapt to the changes in school and being back in a learning environment. Staff are aware of the

individual young people's needs and will ensure that any support required is provided whilst in school. There will be a focus on providing a safe learning space for young people with familiar routines and boundaries but with flexibility to meet young people's emotional and mental health needs as well. We continue to have onsite and consultant therapists who are providing additional session to young people where required

Staff are completing weekly contacts with parents and carers and will discuss any issues young people may have in returning to school during these contacts. Contacts will focus on the wellbeing of young people and their families and will allow staff and parents/carers and young people to share any concerns or changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing throughout this time. Despite this, there may be an increase in concerns disclosed when young people have returned after a long period away from school. Staff should continue to support young people as normal in terms of safeguarding disclosures and report to the DSL any concerns that arise.

Child on child Abuse

We recognise that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of child on child abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the school's safeguarding & child protection policy.

Staff are maintaining at least weekly contact with parents/carers and/or young people and will report any concerns to the DSL's as normal. The school will listen carefully, and work with the young person, family and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

All concerns and actions taken must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made as directed by the DSL/s.

Information to consider when completing risk assessment for using a virtual classroom/video calls to young people

Below are some simple things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- The DSL, head of department and / or other senior staff must be able to join any virtual lesson at any point.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in quiet, safe and appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred or hidden.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any concerns were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms agreed with SLT and the IT / network manager to communicate with pupils

- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.
- Video calls/remote key working sessions/lessons to young people must have at least two members of staff present throughout the call. All virtual lessons will be planned for class groups, but in the event that only one person signs in, the second adult provides an additional safeguard.
- Expectations must be clearly communicated to young people and parents/carers.
- Parents/carers and young people have been sent the Remote Learning Responsible Usage Agreement (see below)
- See Remote Learning Policy for details on providing remote education
- Video calls from other professionals should be supported by a member of staff. Where young people or professionals request staff do not support the call (for confidentiality reasons) parents/carers and young people must be informed and agree this.
- External professionals requesting video calls should be sent this appendix, so they are aware of our expectations as a school. This should be sent by email and confirmed by the external professional by email and copied to the young person's contact record.

Remote Learning Responsible Usage Agreement

In order to be a good remote learner:

- I understand that a Teams lesson will have the same school rules as face-to-face lessons.
- I understand the teacher will record the lesson on Teams
- I will follow all instructions given by my teacher.
- I will only use technology the way my teacher tells me to.
- I will log in to any Teams lesson at the time my lesson is scheduled to start if I am able to.

In order to show respect to other learners and staff:

- I will make sure my communication with teachers and other pupils is appropriate.
- I will be responsible for my behaviour and actions when using Teams.
- I will not access or share any material which could be illegal or offensive. If I see someone else sharing material which could be illegal or offensive, I will report it to my teacher.
- I understand that my use of Teams will be monitored.
- I will not record or take photos of my teachers or classmates.

In order to keep everyone safe:

- I will try to be in a quiet, safe and appropriate environment with minimal distractions.
- I will not share my log in with anyone else
- I will not let anyone into the Teams meeting that should not be there – unless a parent/carer is supporting with the call.
- I will dress appropriately. I will not wear pyjamas or revealing clothes.
- I will treat others with kindness and patience.
- I will end the session when my teacher tells me to.
- I understand that these rules are designed to keep me safe.

Appendix G: Local Authority Referral numbers

Wokingham Social Care

Phone us: [0118 908 8002](tel:01189088002)

Email us: triage@wokingham.gov.uk

After 5pm or on weekends and bank holidays phone [01344 351 999](tel:01344351999) – for safeguarding emergencies that can't wait until the next working day

Website - <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/children-families-and-young-people/children-and-families/child-protection-and-family-support/report>

Bracknell Social Care

Phone: 01344 352005

Website - <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/keeping-adults-and-children-safe/protecting-children/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash>

Reading Social Care

Using a web form, which is the most secure and effective way of requesting help for a child. The form can be found at: www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org/concerned-about-a-child

Calling the team on 0118 937 3641

EDS out of hours emergency telephone: 01344 351 999

Emailing the team on cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Windsor and Maidenhead Social Care

Phone: 01628 683150 or 01344 786543 (Out of hours- Emergency Duty Team)

Email: MASH@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Website - <https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/social-care/single-point-of-access-spa-and>

Surrey Social Care

Phone: 0300 470 9100

Out of hours phone: 01483 517898 to speak to our [emergency duty team](#).

Email: emails are dealt with during normal office hours

For concerns for a child or young person: cspa@surreycc.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/childrens-social-care/contact-childrens-services>

Hampshire Social Care

Phone: 0300 5551384

Out of hours phone: 0300 5551373

Interagency referral for Childrens service web form:

https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en

Website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/child-protection/mash>

Essex Social Care

Phone: 0345 6037627
Out of hours: 0345 6061212
Online portal: [Request for Support form](#)
Website: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/report-a-concern-about-a-child>

Wiltshire Social Care

Phone: 0300 456 0108
Out of hours: 0300 456 0100
Website: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1433/Contact-children-s-services>

Oxfordshire Social Care

Phone: **0345 050 7666**.
Out of hours: **0800 833 408**
Website: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/keeping-children-and-young-people-safe/report-child-abuse>

West Berkshire Social Care

Phone: 01635 503090
Out of hours: 01344 786 512
Email: child@westberks.gov.uk
Website: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/34606>

Kent Social Care

Phone: 03000 41 11 11
Out of hours: 03000 41 91 91
Email: social.services@kent.gov.uk
Website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/report-abuse>

Enfield Social Care

Phone: 0208 379 5555
Out of hours: 020 8379 1000
Email: ChildrensMASH@enfield.gov.uk
Website: <https://www.enfield.gov.uk/safeguardingenfield>

Barnet Social Care

Phone: 020 8359 4066
Out of hours: 020 8359 2000
Website: <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/worried-about-safety-child>

Bexley Social Care

Phone: 020 3045 5440
Out of hours: 020 8303 7777/020 8303 7171
Website: <https://www.bexley.gov.uk/services/health-and-social-care/social-care-for-children/reporting-concerns-about-child/worried-about-child>

Slough Social Care

Phone: 01753 875362
Out of hours: 01344 786543
Website: <https://www.sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk/first-contact/>