

## Plumtree School Safeguarding Policy

*This policy applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)*

*Safeguarding is the responsibility of all who work, volunteer or learn in our school and all are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Head teacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is Laura Dennis, or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) who is Tess Slight in her absence. The Head teacher and DSL/Deputy DSL will immediately liaise. Plumtree School recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation. Any person may make a referral (including whistle blowing) to external agencies such as Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the police, if necessary.*

### HOW TO RESPOND TO CONCERNS RELATING TO A SUSPECTED SAFEGUARDING ISSUE – AN OUTLINE

All cases of suspected child abuse should be given the highest priority, it is everyone's responsibility and anyone can make a referral. The following sequence of events should be adhered to:

Where you think there might be reasonable grounds for suspecting abuse:

- **LISTEN** to what the child has to say. Reassure the child but advise that you cannot promise to keep a secret. Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim 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. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- **REPORT** all suspicions immediately to our Head teacher: Phil Simpson / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Laura Dennis, 0115 9375859 or via Staff Contact details. The Head teacher and DSL will immediately liaise. **In the absence of the Headteacher / DSL inform the Deputy DSL** : Tess Slight at same contact information as DSL. The Head teacher / DSL (or Deputy) will then contact the local authority children's social care team via MASH / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or the Proprietors as appropriate (The Disclosure and Barring Service may also be contacted as appropriate)
- **ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING THE HEADTEACHER** The person making the allegation or having a concern must immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by telephone on: 0115 8041272 or outside of office hours the emergency duty team on: 0300 456 4546 and ask to speak with the LADO, without informing the Head teacher. Concerns can also be reported directly to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by telephone on: 0300 500 80 90. The LADO will liaise with the SLT including DSL or Advisory Board.
- **ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A PROPRIETOR** Plumtree School has four proprietors: Phil Simpson, Lucy Simpson, Jo Howarth and David Howarth. The person making the allegation or having a concern must immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by telephone on: 0115 8041272 or outside of office hours the emergency duty team on: 0300 456 4546 and ask to speak with the LADO, without informing a Proprietor. Contact Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by telephone on: 0300 500 80 90.
- **RECORD** in detail the circumstances (Including the nature and extend of any injuries) and the action taken. **YOU MUST NOT INVESTIGATE THE INCIDENT.**
- **REMEMBER** – speed is essential
- **MORE DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING PROCEDURE MAY BE FOUND IN THE MAIN BODY OF THIS POLICY**

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### OUR SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

In our school we have two key positions in our safeguarding team (inclusive of the EYFS), our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including child protection referrals, raising awareness, training, committing resources and supporting and directing staff. They provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.

Plumtree School DSL and Deputy DSL (who are members of the senior leadership team) with lead responsibility for child protection are:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the whole school and Early Years is:**
  - Laura Dennis
  - 0115 9375859 or via Staff Contact details
  - [lauradennisplumtreeschool@gmail.com](mailto:lauradennisplumtreeschool@gmail.com)
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the whole school and Early Years is:**
  - Tess Slight
  - 0115 9375859 or via Staff Contact details
  - [plumtreeschool@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:plumtreeschool@tiscali.co.uk)

### WHAT OUR STAFF MUST KNOW AND DO

#### The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)

Our LSCP is Nottinghamshire. The LSCP can be contacted as follows:

- email: [info.nscb@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:info.nscb@nottsc.gov.uk)
- address: Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, County Hall, West Bridgford Nottingham, NG2 7QP.
- telephone: 0115 977 3935

#### Concerns about a child

Children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm are immediately reported to Children's Social Care via Nottinghamshire MASH. If at any time there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should also be made to Children's Social Care via Nottinghamshire MASH immediately. The contact details are as follows:

- 0300 500 80 80 (MASH – as member of public) 0300 500 80 90 (MASH – as a professional)
- In an emergency outside of office hours please call the emergency duty team on 0300 456 4546.  
[mash.safeguarding@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:mash.safeguarding@nottsc.gov.uk)  
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/safeguarding/childrens-mash/report-a-new-concern-about-a-child>

#### Children in need of additional support from one or more agencies

Referrals are made to Nottinghamshire Early Help Unit to access inter-agency assessment processes via a referral form, (<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-children-and-families-alliance/pathway-to-provision>) thus utilising the "Team around the Child" (TAC) approaches OR Single Point of Access (SPA) whose contact details are as follows:

- Early Help Unit  
Tel: 0115 8041248  
Email: [early.help@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:early.help@nottsc.gov.uk)

#### Safeguarding Accusation Regarding an Adult.

Allegations and concerns are to be reported straight away to the Head teacher/Proprietor Phil Simpson. If Phil Simpson is absent, the allegation is passed immediately to another proprietor, Lucy Simpson or Jo Howarth. Where the Allegation meets the Harms Threshold there will be two aspects of action. The Head teacher as 'case manager' will investigate and support the person subject to the allegation, whilst the DSL looks after the welfare of the child as detailed above. The Headteacher will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. The contact details for the LADO are as follows:

0115 8041272 or outside of office hours the emergency duty team on: 0300 456 4546  
<https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/contact/>

'Low level' concerns will be dealt with by the Headteacher as appropriate.

### OUR SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED PROPRIETOR FOR SAFEGUARDING

In our school the Proprietor, Phil Simpson, will liaise with the local authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection. Contact Number: 07561602609

*and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential*

## Support and advice regarding extremism

### Allegations and worries can be reported to:

The Prevent team within Nottinghamshire Police.

### Website for Referral/Contact info and guidance:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/>

Email: [prevent@notts.police.uk](mailto:prevent@notts.police.uk) or call 0800 011 3764

DfE dedicated telephone helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice: 020 7340 7264 and [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk).

### Legal Status:

- This policy complies with Part 3, paragraphs 7 (a) and (b) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations in force January 2015, made under sections 94(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, which states the arrangements to safeguard or promote the welfare of pupils made by the proprietors of independent schools.
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Information for all school and college staff* (DfE: 2023)
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (WT)* A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government: 2018; updated 2022))
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. Advice for practitioners* (HM Government: 2015)
- *Information Sharing : Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers* (HM Government: 2018; updated 2023)
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (DfE:2018)
- *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage* (DfE: 2021)
- *Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations for managers* (HM Government: 2019)
- Teachers' Standards (Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies) (DfE: 2011; updated 2021)
- This policy is also in accordance with the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) locally agreed inter-agency procedures, their safeguarding processes and procedures especially Pathway to Provision:  
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-children-and-families-alliance/pathway-to-provision>
- *Behaviour in schools* (DfE: 2022)
- *Child Exploitation and Online Protection (National Crime Agency's CEOP Safety Centre)*  
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- *Cyberbullying: Advice for head teacher and school staff* (DfE: 2014)
- *Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying* (DfE: 2014)
- *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (Home Office: 2015; updated 2021) (Prevent)
- *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers* (DfE: 2015)
- *Channel Duty Guidance Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism* (HM Government: 2020)
- *The use of social media for on-line radicalisation* (DfE and Home Office: 2015)
- *Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges* (DfE: 2022; updated 2023)
- *Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information* (Home Office and DfE: 2015; updated 2020)
- *Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation* (DfE: 2017)
- *Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children* (DfE: 2014; updated 2018)
- *Data Protection in schools* (DfE: 2023)
- *Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition: non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school settings* (DfE: 2022)
- *Children missing education* (DfE: 2013; updated 2016)
- *Working together to improve school attendance* (DfE: 2022; updated 2023)
- *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* (DfE: 2014; updated 2018)
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education* (DfE: 2019; updated 2021)
- *Safeguarding and remote education* (DfE: 2021; updated 2022)
- The policy is consistent with any other relevant and current regulations and any other guidance concerning Safeguarding Children to which schools are obliged to have regard including The Children Act 1989 and 2004 and Section 157/175, Education Act (2002)

### Applies to:

- the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), out of school care and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;

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- all staff (teaching and support staff), the Proprietors and volunteers working in the school. This includes designating a practitioner to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting and liaising with the local authority children's agencies as appropriate.

**In our school the term 'staff', in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and Proprietors.**

#### **Appendices:**

- Appendix C – Quick Referral and Child Protection Flowchart
- Appendix D – Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

#### **Availability**

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils via the School website and a copy may be obtained from the Office.

#### **Monitoring and Review:**

This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head teacher and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). A review of our school's child protection policies takes place at least annually, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation. Proprietors will also ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with WT through effective communication and good co-operation with local agencies. KCSIE indicates that the proprietor should draw on the expertise of staff, including the DSL, in shaping the safeguarding arrangements and policies. Minutes of the review are recorded.

Signed:

Date: August 2023

Phil Simpson

Head teacher

### **Safeguarding Children - Child Protection Policy**

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**Purpose:** Plumtree School fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at school. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and Proprietors with the guidance they need in order to keep children safe and secure in school and to inform parents, guardians and carers how pupils will be safeguarded whilst they are in the school's care.

**Context:** It is recognised that children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so. Parents, guardians, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts or failure to provide proper care or both. Children may suffer neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse. Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests. Our children have the right to respect and protection from abuse, regardless of age, gender, religion, race, nationality, sexuality, culture or disability. Our safeguarding Child Protection Policy is also dove-tailed with the Behaviour Management and Anti-bullying Policies.

**Aims:** These procedures apply to all staff, proprietors and volunteers working in Plumtree School. The aim of these procedures is to prevent children from being abused, and to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at Plumtree School. We raise awareness of child protection and safeguarding roles and responsibilities with staff. This includes implementing and

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reviewing procedures in our school that enable all staff to identify and report suspected cases of abuse. Support is given to pupils who have been abused (in accordance with their agreed Child Protection Plan) and children with additional needs. Our school ensures the practice of safe recruitment in checking and recording the suitability of staff to work with children and establishes a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. Allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidelines and procedures from the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) of the Department for Education (DfE) and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP).

**Transparency:** Plumtree School prides itself on respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/carers have an important role in supporting the School and open communications are essential which is why copies of this policy and others relating to issues of child protection are on our website.

**Our Safeguarding Procedures:** It is not the role of staff to investigate or resolve allegations of abuse. Once an adult has clarified that a concern is present, information must immediately be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. **We will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim 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. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.**

Where a member of staff suspects abuse or a child/young person makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect we will:

- take the child seriously;
- listen carefully and record their concerns;
- tell the child they have done the right thing by telling us;
- clarify if necessary;
- make an accurate record as soon as possible and
- inform the DSL without delay.

We will not:

- promise confidentiality;
- investigate;
- ask leading questions and
- repeatedly question/ask the child to repeat the disclosure over and over.

If staff members have the slightest suspicion that a pupil is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused, they should bring this to the immediate attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that appropriate action can be taken.

The following procedures are also part of the child protection process of our school. We:

- follow-up unexplained absences of any child with a telephone call from the School on the morning of the first day of absence;
- notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child safeguarding register;
- notify the Local Authority when a child moves to a new school at any point during their time at Plumtree School and
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer.

Our School will ensure that all staff, teaching, non-teaching and volunteers, will:

- be aware that they have individual responsibility for referring every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the School, and in all proper circumstances refer to MASH 0300 500 80 80; **In an emergency** outside of office hours **tel:** 0300 456 4546; Email: [mash.safeguarding@secure.nottscg.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mash.safeguarding@secure.nottscg.gcsx.gov.uk) , <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/safeguarding/childrens-mash/report-a-new-concern-about-a-child> ; the police (Tel: 101) or the NSPCC (Tel:0808 800 5000);
- keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event;
- have received a copy of the school's child protection policy and also know where the Nottinghamshire Children Safeguarding Children Partnership are located online <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nsccp> ;
- ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil (for example, in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil, and so on).

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**Safety in the school:** No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas. Entry to our school premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or have constant staff supervision; carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged.

**Visitors to school:** Authorised visitors to the School will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity or school visitor badges. As required by Prevent guidance we ensure that all visiting speakers, are suitable and appropriately supervised. Suitability checks may include an internet search, an assessment of the educational value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether further relevant checks will be required. Visiting speakers will be recordable on the SCR either as checks on staff (eg, if the individual is paid to attend regularly) or on volunteers.

Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff and reported to the Head teacher. The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the school or approaching pupils, will be reported to the Police and the Nottinghamshire MASH with a view to alerting other local schools through appropriate systems. Parents, carers or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of pupils in school or on school-organised activities for private use and with the prior consent of the school and then only in designated areas. If parents do not wish their children to be photographed or filmed and express this view in writing, their rights will be respected. Volunteers will be subject to a close supervision risk assessment, working under the direction of an established member of staff. Volunteers will be subject to the same code of conduct as employees. All computer equipment and internet access within the school is subject to appropriate "parental controls" and Internet safety rules and in line with our e-safety policy and cyber-bullying policies. Internet use is monitored regularly by the DSL. All laptop use by children is logged and checked against the websites visited in browser history.

### **Part One: Safeguarding Information**

**Definition of Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Our School:** This is defined 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.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18. We see it as our duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

**Victims and alleged perpetrator(s):** This policy uses the term 'victim' as it is a widely recognised and understood term but we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. We will be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.

This policy uses the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)' as these are widely used and recognised terms, however, we will consider carefully terminology used, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. We will determine the terminology to be used, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

### **Types of Abuse and Neglect (Please also refer to KCSIE 2023 – Part 1)**

**Types of Abuse and Neglect:** *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2018) defines abuse 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. 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.

*Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2018) further states that threats can take a variety of different forms, including:

- sexual abuse;
- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- neglect;
- exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups;
- trafficking; online abuse;
- sexual exploitation
- influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

We understand that expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools at [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk). The GOV.UK

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website gives guidance on the following issues and others: Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (see also below), bullying including cyberbullying, domestic abuse, drugs, fabricated or induced illness, faith abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM) (see also below), **child marriage**, gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG), mental health, private fostering, radicalisation, child-on-child abuse, so-called *honour-based abuse*, sexting, teenage relationship abuse and trafficking.

We ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place where children are engaged in close one-to-one teaching, such as glass-panelled doors are fitted to all doors and DBS checks for all staff or adults who are working with children in an unsupervised capacity.

All staff are aware that ALL children benefit from Early Help and are particularly alert to the potential needs of children with SEN, mental health needs, young carers, those at risk of being radicalised, those with a family circumstance presenting challenges to the child eg adult mental health issues, drug/alcohol abuse, those at risk of 'honour'-based abuse, those privately fostered and/or persistently absent. **We are aware that children being absent from education for prolonged occasions and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. We monitor persistently absent pupils and work with parents to help prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.**

### **Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect (also refer to KCSIE 2023 -Part 1)**

A child who has been, or may be experiencing abuse and/or neglect may show behavioural, emotional or physical signs of stress and abuse.

#### ***Some general indicators of child abuse include:***

- Personality changes such as showing wariness, nervousness and distrust of adults; regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as rocking, sucking or biting excessively; bedwetting or soiling;
- Change in behaviour patterns - demanding, attention seeking, antisocial or aggressive behaviour; sleeping difficulties, often being tired and falling asleep; low self-esteem;
- being isolated or withdrawn, lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child-minder; difficulty in forming relationships; confusing affectionate displays;
- difficulty relating to adults and peers; abusing alcohol or drugs; being seemingly accident prone;
- having broken bones or unexplained bruising, burns or welts in different stages of healing;
- being unable to explain an injury, or providing explanations that are inconsistent, vague or unbelievable;
- feeling suicidal or attempting suicide; unresponsiveness; having difficulty concentrating; sudden underachievement; being withdrawn or overly obedient; reluctance to change for, or participate in PE;
- children's comments which give cause for concern; running away, stealing/lying; allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse; 'frozen' look; apprehension; poor self-esteem; self-mutilation; extreme anger or sadness; depression, overdoses; anorexia;
- being reluctant to go home; running away; creating stories, poems or artwork about abuse.

#### ***Some indicators of neglect include:***

- malnutrition, under-nourishment; sudden loss of appetite; compulsive eating; begging, stealing or hoarding food; poor hygiene, matted hair, dirty skin or body odour;
- unattended physical or medical problems; comments from a child that no one is home to provide care; repeated infections;
- being constantly tired; frequent lateness or absence from school;
- inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter; frequent illness, infections or sores;
- being left unsupervised for long periods; deterioration in child's well-being.

**Remember** safeguarding children is not just about the formal definitions of abuse. It may also include, for example, self-harm, self-neglect, eating disorders, bullying, or even adverse risk-taking.

***Honour-based Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Marriage:*** All of our staff should speak to the DSL with regards to any concerns of FGM, teachers know that it is mandatory to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss such a case with our DSL and involve Children's Social Care as appropriate. Professionals in all agencies need to be alert to the possibility and indicators of a girl having suffered or being at risk of FGM. Victims are likely to come from a community that practises FGM but girls at risk may not yet be aware of the practices or that it may be conducted on them; sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. **It is a crime to purposefully cause a child to marry before the age of 18, even without violence or coercion. This applies to both legal and non-binding 'marriages'.** Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

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

**Mental Health:** All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We know only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, **attendance and progress**. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action is taken with staff following this child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Jen Billingham is the Mental Health Lead within school. If staff have a mental health concern about a child then they should raise this with the Head teacher and/or Jen Billingham and/or Laura Dennis (DSL or Deputy) who will liaise with regards to the support needed.

**Serious Violent Crime:** All our staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. Staff are aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and its 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance. County Lines is defined in Annex B, KCSIE 2023.

**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. 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. 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. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation. More information include definitions, indicators and specific examples are included in Part 1 KCSIE 2023 and Annex B.

**Child on child abuse:** All our staff are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);

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- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Plumtree School actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by:

- Educating all staff about this issue. This will include training all staff on the nature, prevalence and effect of child-on-child abuse, and how to prevent, identify and respond to it. This includes
  - (a) Contextual Safeguarding;
  - (b) The identification and classification of specific behaviours; and
  - (c) The importance of taking seriously all forms of child-on-child abuse (no matter how low level they may appear) and ensuring that no form of child-on-child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing.
  - (d) recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but that all child on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
- Ensuring that all child-on-child abuse issues are fed back to the School's safeguarding Lead so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify pupils who maybe in need of additional support.
- Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom), we have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse meaning it will never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children;
- Working with all staff and pupils and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the School community;
- Creating conditions in which our pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships;
- Creating a culture in which our pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to; and
- Responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately.

All child-on-child abuse concerns will be reported as a safeguarding concern to the Head teacher and/or DSL. All reports of child on child abuse will be made on a case by case basis with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy taking a leading role using their professional judgement and supported by other agencies such as social care or the police as required. Specific information on concerns of a Sexual Harassment, Physical and/or Online nature are outlined in the Handling Reports section of this policy, support will be offered to victims, perpetrators and other children effected as outlined in that section. All parents will be informed and engagement with the support process encouraged. Support and advice from outside agencies will be sought as required. Any criminal activity will be reported to the police. Children are made aware that any concerns they have with regards to child-on-child abuse (bullying) can be reported to any adult in school. There are posters around school to make children aware that the Well-being officer, DSL and Deputy are 'here to help' should they need someone to speak to. Staff are aware that child on child abuse may be under reported in our School so will speak to the Head teacher/DSL with regards to any concerns. We assume that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening in our setting, even when there are no specific reports, and we have a chronology record of Child-on-child Sexual Harassment.

**Contextual safeguarding:** Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All our staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur meaning assessments of children consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

**Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children:** On the rare occasion that a looked after or previously looked after child is at the school we will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after or were previously looked after by a local authority. This includes ensuring that a designated member of staff has responsibility for their welfare and progress and has up to date assessment information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan, contact arrangements with parents and delegated authority to carers. We are aware of the statutory guidance to local authorities on how they should support our school with the care and education of these pupils.

**Missing Children:** Every precaution is taken, through the use of risk assessments and thorough planning and supervision, to ensure that children are safe both at school and on outings. However, there are limited situations where a child could become lost. Should a child become lost the member of staff in charge is alerted, the safety of other children is paramount and they are sufficiently supervised, the police and parents are informed and the area where the child was last seen is continuously searched. When the situation has been resolved, staff review the reasons for it happening and take measures to ensure that it does not happen again. Plumtree School works closely with parents and agencies and we are alert to the

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potential signs of children going missing. We keep track of children who regularly go missing, become missing for any period of time or who regularly return home late. We listen to young people and take any disclosure seriously, sharing information with agencies. On the first day of absence, class teachers report children absent to the office. Parents are then contacted to identify the reason for absence and teachers log reason. **We are aware that children being absent from education for prolonged occasions and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. We monitor persistently absent pupils and work with parents to help prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.** Regular absence and identified patterns of absence are reported to the Early Help Unit. If a child is absent for more than 10 continuous days without leave, the Early Help Unit is notified and an EHAF is completed.

We would notify Nottinghamshire County Council when a child leaves or starts after the school's first year or before leaving the school's final year. We are constantly monitoring and actively ensuring the school holds more than one emergency contact phone number for each pupil on record.

**Elective Home Education:** Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. We inform the relevant LA when a pupil is removed from the school with the intention of home schooling (as per Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). We aim to assist parents in their decision making taking into consideration what is best for the child and engaging with outside agency support, social workers etc where relevant.

**Private fostering:** We recognise that we play an essential role in identifying privately fostered children which we recognise as being if one of our pupils were being 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 28 days or more. It could be that this arrangement could come to light in the normal course of our interactions with children in school. Close relatives – a grandparent, a brother or sister, an aunt or an uncle, a step parent – are NOT private foster carers. If staff become aware of private fostering arrangements they should notify the DSL who will then notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible.

**Pupils potentially at Greater Risk of Harm:** Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of pupils who are the subjects of Child In Need or Child Protection Plans and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker (and confirmed in writing). The DSL will make decisions that are in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes of any child with a social worker. If a pupil discloses that he/she has witnessed domestic abuse or it is suspected that he/she may be living in a household which is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the DSL as a safeguarding issue. Domestic abuse can impact on children when they witness it at home and/or suffer it in an intimate personal relationship. The School acknowledges the additional needs for support and protection of children who are vulnerable by virtue of SEN, disability, LGBT+, homelessness, refugee/asylum seeker status, the effects of substance abuse within the family, those who are young carers, mid-year admissions and pupils who are excluded from school. We acknowledge that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, school work or other children. We are aware of the additional needs of vulnerable pupils when it comes to the rare use of reasonable force being necessary and make reasonable adjustments if required. The School has a strong commitment to an anti-bullying policy and will consider all coercive acts and inappropriate child on child behaviour and sexual activity within a Child Protection context. In the case of pupils identified as being at risk of radicalisation, we would consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include Channel or Children's Social Care. Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 13 is, or may be, sexually active, this will result in an immediate referral to the Nottinghamshire MASH. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

**Safeguarding Children requiring mental health support:** We have an important role in supporting children requiring mental health support. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Any children in need of mental health support that are identified by staff need to be discussed with the DSL and any child that the DSL becomes aware of needing mental health support with inform relevant staff and put a plan of support in place with the support of parents as appropriate.

**Safeguarding children who are LGBT or perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not):** The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

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**Safeguarding Disabled and SEN children:** Disabled and SEN children have exactly the same human rights as non-disabled children; to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and to achieve the 'Helping Children Achieve More' outcomes. Disabled and SEN experience greater risks, vulnerability and unequal access to services and resources. They may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairments. Our staff receive relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child. Some disabled and SEN children may be more vulnerable to abuse because they may:

- have fewer outside contacts than other children;
- receive intimate, personal care;
- have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse;
- have communication difficulties;
- fear losing services;
- be more vulnerable to child on child abuse (e.g. bullying, sexual assault, intimidation).

### **First Aid**

**First Aid and Medical Plans** (Please also refer to our *First Aid and Medication Policies*): Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment there will be another adult present. All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded and, where significant, will be shared with parents/guardians/carers. Children requiring regular medication or therapies will have a medical plan which is agreed with parents.

### **Parents**

**Parent Contact Information:** Plumtree School does not give out contact information/personal details to other parents, without permission.

**Working in Partnership and Responding to Parents and Carers:** Our school works in partnership with parents/guardians/carers and local authorities communicating as clearly as possible with them (in particular with parents for whom English is not their first language) for the best outcomes for children. We use clear statements in our brochures and correspondence and liaise with agencies (in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors) that are active in supporting families.

The Head teacher/DSL must be notified of a concern before involving parents/guardians/carers in conversations about abuse. Parents/guardians/carers will be informed as soon as possible about any concerns regarding their children. Parents/guardians/carers will usually be told the source of a referral if it comes from a professional agency such as, Plumtree School. However, members of the public can ask to remain anonymous. The parent/guardian/carer will normally be contacted before a referral is made to the Nottinghamshire MASH. However, if the concern involves alleged or suspected sexual abuse, honour based abuse, fabricated or induced illness or the Designated Safeguarding Officer has reason to believe that informing the guardian at this stage might compromise the safety of the child, or a staff member, there will be no contact by the school prior to the referral (although the reasons for this course of action will be documented on the referral). Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement, or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation to the Nottinghamshire MASH. Referrals will be confirmed in writing. The School recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others (including the parents, guardians or carers of any pupils) who may wish to harm children both in and out of School.

Parents/guardians/carers are reminded that in matters of parental contact or residency, the school will not act as a mediator for parents. The school will seek to protect the interests of the child, first and foremost. Parents who expect the school to actively take sides outside the best interests of the child will find that their child is referred to the appropriate relevant agency to protect the child from being at risk of emotional harm. Contact orders (child access) must be given to the school by the parents so that these can be meticulously followed, including any timely revisions, in accordance with our school's terms and conditions. Parents are informed of our safeguarding responsibilities; this policy is available on the schools' website and from the school office

### **Teaching**

**Teaching Children to Keep Safe including Online** (Also please refer to our *Online and cyber-bullying policies*)

**The Curriculum:** As a school we will educate pupils to Keep Safe through our school ethos and curriculum which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued. We acknowledge the important role that the internet and curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of 'our pupils' for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. Our aim is to promote social and moral well-being, to teach pupils to take care of and to value themselves, and to think in terms of making a positive contribution to society as adults for example by taking

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part in charitable activities. We recognise that our senior leadership team need to consider the opportunities that exist in their area of responsibility for promoting the welfare and safety of pupils and ensure that teachers incorporate elements of safeguarding into their lesson objectives, schemes of work and assemblies to entrench it in wider teaching and learning. As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. Our teaching of personal, social, health, economic (PSHE) education, RSHE and citizenship helps to develop appropriate attitudes and decision making skills in our children. Paragraph 129-134 of KCSIE 2023 offers some useful links for teachers.

### **Online Safety**

**Online Safety:** As a school we recognise the four main risk areas of online safety being Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce. Pupils at school do not have unsupervised access to the internet, they are not allowed internet connected devices in school. Online safety teaching opportunities educate pupils in how to stay safe when making use of devices outside of school. Parents are regularly sent information on keeping their children safe online. Any individual concerns staff have with regards to a pupils' use of devices are raised with the DSL, parents and acted on accordingly with regards to safeguarding the child. Remote learning provision online safety guidance is provided to parents and staff when appropriate. School is likely to be in regular contact with parents and we will explain how school filters and monitors online use in school and make parents aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and will be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. The proprietors of the school have ensured that the school has a filtered internet provision. Electronic information is secured via password on laptops and Google Drive folder access. School equipment use by pupils and staff is logged and internet use is monitored regularly by the DSL. Online safety is reviewed annually by the proprietors as per: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>. Online safety links are available paragraph 133 and Annex B of KCSIE 2023.

**Cyber bullying** is the unacceptable face of technology, and we need concerted action across society to address it. All computer equipment and internet access within our school is subject to appropriate controls and Internet safety rules. Use of any ICT equipment is closely supervised, and we expect this level of supervision to be applied at home. Staff are expected not to use any computer for personal reasons during school hours, unless this is essential. Technology can be misused, and this can be very hurtful for both children and teachers who are the targets of cyber bullying. Adults need to help the children and young people prepare for the hazards whilst promoting the many learning and social opportunities available. If staff contribute to internet blogs or access social networking sites such as Facebook, they should neither mention the School nor make any reference to the schools or their employment at them. Staff are also advised not to communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites.

Integral to this, is our policy concerning Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education. We actively and positively support core British values. From time to time staff will base circle time and assemblies on related topics. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, pupils will also be taught to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks by:

- recognising and managing risks in different situations and deciding how to behave responsibly;
- judging what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable;
- recognising when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being; including knowing when and where to get help;
- using assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure and emotional literacy and
- safe use of electronic equipment and access to the internet.

In so doing we promote an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being. We also make use of the resources promoted by the DfE such as the UK Safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)) and also the [National Crime Agency's CEOP Safety Centre's Thinkuknow](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) website ([www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk))

### **School Website Safeguarding Statement:**

The parents of children at Plumtree School should be aware that the school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils. This responsibility necessitates a safeguarding policy and this school may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We operate the following policy on our website regarding the use of photographs, to ensure the privacy and safety of children at the school:

- where a child is named, no photograph of that child is displayed;
- where a photograph is used which shows a child, no name is displayed and
- where children are named, only their first names are given.

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The school follows a policy of seeking parents' permission before using images which show children on the website, social media or in the local press. The list showing pupils who are barred from appearing in the press, or on the website, or on social media is kept in the School Office and known to SLT members responsible for social media, website and press publishing and is available whenever photographers are present. Any photographing of children takes place only via school devices. No other private information about children is ever published on the website such as surnames or contact details. By observing these points, of Plumtree School, ensures that visitors to the website cannot link images of children to the family names of children. When choosing photographs for the website, we are mindful of the way children may appear in them, and will not include images which are in any way inappropriate, such as close-up portrait shots of individual children.

### **Early Years**

The School EYFS Department ensures that the safeguarding policy which applies to the rest of the school also applies to the EYFS. Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

Our Early Years Department in school has:

- a designated practitioner to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children, including liaison with Nottinghamshire County Council children's services as appropriate. The designated practitioner is the school DSL, Laura Dennis. The Deputy DSL is Early Years Leader, Tess Slight.
- We take all the necessary steps to keep children safe and well, as detailed in this whole school policy.
- We ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children, we promote good health, manage behaviour well, maintain very good records, policies and procedures accordingly.
- We report all allegations of serious abuse or harm by any person working or looking after children, including notification to Ofsted, and our local child protection agency, within 14 days of the allegations being made, as well as serious accidents, illnesses and injuries sustained by any child in our care. We are fully aware that not to do so would be committing an offence.
- We allocate a key person to each child (usually the class teacher) to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with our setting and to offer a settled relationship for the child and parent.
- We fully comply with the ratio and qualification requirements applicable to each age range of children in keeping with the Statutory Framework for EYFS September 2021
- We meet our responsibility under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which includes a duty to make a referral to the DBS where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been, had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.
- We will inform Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on our EYFS Plumtree School premises, including any disqualification.
- We ensure that we support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.
- The school and Early Years SENCO is Laura Dennis.
- All our paediatric first aid training is relevant for workers caring for young children.
- We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation including fire safety and hygiene.
- We have a school medical policy and require parental permission before administering medicines.
- Fresh water is always available to children, they are encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunch from home. School dinners are provided by the local council and are healthy and balanced nutritionally. Those staff handling food are appropriately qualified. We notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting 2 or more children cared for on the premises within 14 days as we aware it is an offence not to do so.
- Behaviour of children is managed as per school behaviour policy.
- We ensure that our premises, including floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of our children cared for, and the activities provided on the premises.
- We do **not** allow smoking in or on our premises.
- We ensure that we take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in our care are not exposed to risk and we are able to demonstrate how we are managing risks.

### **Part Two: Safeguarding Management**

#### **Listening to the Child's Wishes**

Plumtree School ensures our children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express

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their views and give feedback proprietors should ensure that staff members do not agree confidentiality and always act in the interests of the child.

**Whole School Responsibilities:** The school proprietors facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. All systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. Here at Plumtree School we recognise that because of our day to day contact with children, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school establishes and maintains an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are heard. Children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems. The school is committed to acting in the best interests of the child. Opportunities are made within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to stay safe from and recognise abuse. Our school follows the procedures set out by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and takes account of guidance issued by the DfE. We treat all disclosures with the strictest confidence and report any disclosures to the Head teacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who then liaise and make the referral to Nottinghamshire MASH.

Plumtree School ensures that parents, guardians and carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection, by setting out its obligations on the school website and offering parents, guardians and carers a copy of this policy on request. We notify parents, guardians and carers of concerns and when appropriate provide them with opportunities to change the situation, where this does not place the child at greater risk. We also notify the allocated social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil with a Child Protection Plan. We co-operate, as required, with the NSCP regarding child protection matters including attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences. Our school liaises with other agencies that support pupils such as Police and the Educational Psychology Service through normal referral routes. We require that:

- all staff and volunteers should know the name of the designated person for child protection and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children;
- each time Part One of KCSIE is updated by the DfE, existing staff are updated and must read, understand and follow the new guidance
- staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them;
- staff and volunteers explicitly and immediately report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Head teacher of the school or the Local Authority any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of staff and volunteers which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm and provide immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against such staff for “Whistleblowing” in good faith is as far as possible guaranteed by the school and
- at all levels, including newly appointed and ancillary, staff have been given briefing or training on responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse and know what action they should take in response to such suspicions or allegations.

### **Human Rights**

Proprietors are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual’s human rights when they make individual decisions about them. Under the Human Rights Act, it is unlawful for us to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific Convention rights applying are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals’ physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, and
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

### **Staff**

#### ***Staff Code of Conduct - Power, Positions of Trust and Staff Behaviour (please refer to- Staff Code of Conduct):***

All staff are aware that they should safeguard children’s well-being and maintain public trust as part of their professional duties. We adhere to this commitment with rigour; applying our school disciplinary procedures, where appropriate, in cases of misconduct. All staff must be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them. Children will be treated with respect and dignity. No restraint, sanctions or rewards are applied outside of those detailed in our Behaviour Management including Discipline and Sanctions Policy.

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A 'no touch' approach is impractical for staff working with young children. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact; staff need to use their professional judgement. At the school we have a wide age range of pupils: staff should be aware that a definition of "appropriate contact" will change as pupils grow and mature. It is important that staff should avoid situations which are open to misinterpretation, particularly being alone with a pupil.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. Other than in formal teaching situations; including musical instrument tuition, the door to the room in which the 1:1 coaching, counselling or meeting is taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting. All teaching rooms will have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors.

Staff should be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact (including inappropriate electronic communication) with pupils inside and outside of the school, conveying a pupil by car and one-to-one sports or performing arts coaching (please refer to School Journey Policy for guidance). Home visits to pupils or private tuition of pupils should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Head teacher. Visits/telephone calls by pupils to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Head teacher. Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations or "crushes" will be reported to the Head teacher. Staff will only use the approved school email or other school approved communication systems with pupils or parents/carers/guardians. Our Staff Code of Conduct covers staff/pupils relationships and communications including the use of social media. Staff will not disclose their personal telephone numbers and home email addresses to pupils or parents. Staff supervising off-site activities or school journeys will be provided with a school mobile telephone as a point of contact for parents and carers.

Our whistleblowing policy is integrated into training and codes of conduct. We make it clear both in induction and other training and in guidance provided for staff that they have a responsibility to speak up about safeguarding and welfare matters within our school and to external agencies where necessary. This is one part of the way in which we establish in our school, a positive safeguarding culture.

It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over, such as a teacher, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

**Mobile Phones:** Plumtree School allows staff to bring in mobile phones for their own personal use. If they need to make an emergency call, they must do so either in the Head teacher's office, an empty class or outside of the school grounds. Staff should provide the school number to family and next of kin so in an emergency the member of staff can be contacted on the school phone. Please refer to Staff Code of Conduct for guidance about mobile phone use.

**Staff Taking Medication or other Substances:** Staff members must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If they are, they should seek medical advice and inform the Head teacher who will review the medical advice. We only allow staff to work with children if medical advice confirms that their ability to look after children is unlikely to be impaired. Should a member of staff need to bring their medication to school with them, it must be securely stored and out of the reach of children.

**Induction and On-Going Training for all staff:** Training enables staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. Nottinghamshire arrangements for role-appropriate training is in accordance with Local Authority procedures and also as required in KCSIE as follows:

- All staff, including temporary staff, volunteers and Proprietors must understand our safeguarding policy and procedures and have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. They are provided with induction and on-going training that includes:
  1. the school's staff code of conduct/behaviour policy;
  2. child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding, children missing education and e-safety policies;
  3. the identity and function of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs);
  4. the whistleblowing policy (which is integrated into both training and codes of conduct);
  5. Part 1 and Annex B of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) (DfE: 2023) which is required reading by all staff which includes those already in post. Staff are required to confirm that they have read, understood and follow Part 1 and Annex B of the most recent KCSIE.
  6. All staff, including our DSL and Deputy DSL, receive training in PREVENT and on-line safety **including an understanding of expectations and applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.**
- We consult with our NSCP to determine the most appropriate schedule, level and focus for our regular child protection training. This enables our staff to follow the school's procedures and to raise concerns appropriately. Within our school

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community e-safety is a relevant factor along with female genital mutilation, radicalisation, cyber bullying and mental health.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) receives updated child protection training at least every two years. Our Deputy DSL is trained to the same level. This training is set out in Annex B of KCSIE and covers inter-agency working, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children. Additionally refresher training is also undertaken for all staff in accordance with the criteria set by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- We make it clear in induction and other training, and in guidance provided for staff that they have a responsibility to speak up about safeguarding and welfare matters within the school and to external agencies where necessary. This is one part of our establishing a positive safeguarding culture in the school.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

#### ***Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the whole school and the EYFS including job specification (KCSIE 2023 - Annex C)***

The designated safeguarding lead takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety **and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place**). This is explicit in the role holder's job description. Our Proprietors ensures that DSLs have the appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, supervision, resources and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively and to provide direction and advice to staff on child protection matters.

The Key responsibilities of the DSL are: (see KCSIE 2023 – Annex C)

- Managing and/or supporting referrals
- Working with others
- Information Sharing and managing the child protection file
- Raising Awareness
- Training, knowledge and skills
- Providing support to staff
- Understanding the views of children
- Holding and sharing information

The DSL is also the first point of contact for external agencies who are pursuing Child Protection investigations and co-ordinates the School's representation at Child Protection conferences and Core Group meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences). All professionals working with children have regular reviews of their own practice and opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have about welfare and safeguarding matters. This includes the personal and professional duty to report welfare and safeguarding concerns to the Head teacher / DSL, or in the absence of action, directly to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, MASH. Our DSL also links with Nottinghamshire to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding. The DSL and SLT will make use of the NPCC – When to call the Police guidance linked here to help understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do. As well as the role of the Appropriate Adult linked here.

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible>

**Availability** During term time and school hours the DSL or deputy is contactable if not in person in school then via phone. Out of school hours eg: clubs before or after school and holiday clubs the DSL or deputy is contactable by phone.

### **Record Keeping**

**Record Keeping:** Brief written notes will be kept of all incidents relating to individual pupils. This information may be shared with other agencies; the views of the child who is the subject of the concern will be taken into account but staff will be alert to the dangers of keeping "secrets". All contact with parents and external agencies will be logged and kept in Child Protection records which are kept separate from educational records and can only be accessed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Head teacher. The content of Child Protection Conference or Review reports prepared by the school will follow the headings recommended by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, MASH and will be shared with the parents/guardians/carers in advance of the meeting. Referrals made to Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, MASH are recorded on the Inter-agency Referral form.

Records will include:

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

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If a pupil is withdrawn from the school, all efforts will be made to identify the school to which the pupil is being admitted; their confidential educational and child protection records will be sent separately. If the parent/guardian/carer fails to provide information regarding the new school, an urgent referral will be made to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. If educational records are sent to our school concerning a child who is not registered by the parent, they will be returned and the school advised to refer to their Local Authority Education Welfare Service. A child's name will only be removed from the School's Admission Register in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations. The school requires documentary identity proof of pupils presented for admission and if this gives cause for any doubt, advice will be sought from the local authority and other statutory agencies. We maintain accurate records of those with Parental Responsibility and have on record at least 2 emergency contacts for each child. Pupils will only be released to the care of those with Parental Responsibility or a person acting with their written consent.

**Transfer of Child Protection Files:** Any child protection file which is transferred to a new school will be transferred separately from the main pupil file. The DSL will make contact with the new school's DSL via email or phone call prior to the child protection file being transferred if appropriate and offer the opportunity given to discuss contents to ensure continued meeting of the pupil's support and needs. Files may be transferred in person during a meeting but are more likely to be posted via recorded, tracked Royal Mail first class delivery marked STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL directly to the named DSL of the new school. Confirmation of receipt is sought via either a return slip, phone call or email. The previous school or nursery of a new child joining the school is sought via letter in order to discover if a child protection file is in existence or confirm that it is not.

**Confidentiality:** We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential and we only pass information on to appropriate persons. Our staff listen to and support children but it must be made clear to the child that the person confided in must tell someone else so that the abuse can be dealt with. Keeping secrets with a child when told about an abusive situation only adds to the abuse. If the child then refuses to talk, staff should ensure that they know of other agencies they can turn to e.g. Child Line: 0800 1111. If an adult who works with the children in our school is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, then guidance must be sought from the DSL and must be in line with locally agreed information sharing protocols.

**GDPR:** We have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow staff to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes understanding:

- how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and Personal which should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- for schools, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harms test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice.

**The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

### **Part Three: Safer Recruitment**

**Safer Recruitment of Staff and Single Central Record (also refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures):** Plumtree School follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff that work with children. The Head teacher is responsible for interviewing and recruiting staff and is trained in Safer Recruitment. The 'Single Central Register' (SCR), often referred to as the 'Centralised Record', is rigorously maintained. All employees and volunteers are checked in accordance with the full requirements of the SCR before starting work. Where appropriate a check is made of the prohibition list. Assurances are obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site (for example, in a separate institution, on educational visits or other offsite activities). The school complies with legislation whereby it is an offence:

- to knowingly employ (or take on as a volunteer), in a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulated activity, someone who is barred from such activity) and
- not refer to the DBS details of anyone who is removed from regulated activity, or who leaves while under investigation for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk of harm.

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**Regulated Activity:** A person will be engaging in regulated activity with children if, as a result of their work, they will be responsible, on a regular basis for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; will be working on a regular basis in a school, for or in connection with the purposes of the establishment, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children; or engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

**Selection and pre-employment vetting (Please also refer to our Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures):** We carefully check the employment history of candidates including verifying references, which are taken up prior to interview, and investigating gaps in employment. Also, where an individual claims qualifications as part of an application for a position, these are checked in advance of employment, via the TRA for QTS. Documentary evidence is retained about employees, usually on their personnel file. We verify identity ideally via a birth certificate, obtain an enhanced DBS certificate or obtain a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available, verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities, verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. We make it obvious when advertising for a role within school that we are committed to Safeguarding children. Shortlisted candidates are asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children and are required to physically sign a hard copy of their declaration. eg if they have a criminal history; whether they are included on the barred list; whether they are prohibited from teaching; whether they are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school; information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted; if they are known to the police and children's social care; have they been disqualified from providing childcare; and, any relevant overseas information. As part of the shortlisting process we will consider conducting an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates **and inform them that we may do so**. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

**Pre-appointment Checks:** The majority of staff employed by school are carrying out regulated activity so have an enhanced DBS check which includes children's barred list information. We also check that anyone we employ to carry out teaching work, inclusive of those who do not have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE. Teaching work, for this purpose is defined in the Teacher's Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 to encompass: planning, delivering and preparing lessons and courses for pupils and assessing and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils. "Delivering" includes delivering lessons through distance learning or computer aided techniques. We check that a person taking up a management position is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State. We ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals employed to work in reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations.

**Agency and third-party staff:** We are responsible for ensuring that individuals are suitable. We require the agency or organisation to provide us with evidence that the relevant checks have been carried out; this includes identity, enhanced disclosure, right to work in the UK, DBS barred list, prohibition order check, site of original qualifications, and overseas checks. We obtain written confirmation from the agency (or other third-party organisation) so that we can see and check all the evidence ourselves. We have an agreement with the agency/organisation that where convictions or soft information exists on a DBS certificate, we have the right to see that information (including the individual's DBS) and make our own decision about whether the individual is suitable for our school. Insisting that we have access to such information ensures that we are satisfied that the right checks are made and only appropriate people are accepted into our school. We also then check that the person who shows up at our school is the person against whom the checks have been made.

**Contractors:** Building contractors engaged by or on behalf of the school and undertaking works on site will be made aware of this policy and expected to adhere to it; their compliance will be monitored. Long-term contractors will be asked to provide their consent for DBS checks to be undertaken if a check is required for them coming into contact with children. Contractors for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children. When large numbers of workers and sub-contractors are on site, Health and Safety risk assessments will include the potential for contractors or their employees to have direct access to pupils. All contractors and sub-contractors will be issued with copies of our code of conduct for staff. We always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival.

**Adults who supervise children on work experience:** We require that barred check lists are obtained for people supervising a child under 16 on a work placement where the conditions for regulated activity are met.

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**Visitors:** Authorised visitors will be asked to wear school visitor or identity badges. Visitors in school for professional services eg Educational Psychologist, Speech and Languages therapist, Physiotherapists etc will have their ID and DBS checked. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Head teacher or SLT.

**Volunteers:** A volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained is under no circumstances left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. We undertake a written risk assessment and use our professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required for volunteers. The risk assessment considers: the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision; what the school knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers; whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability; and whether the role is eligible for a DBS check and if it is, what level is appropriate. Details of the risk assessment are recorded.

**Appointment of Staff from Abroad:** If we appoint staff who have lived or worked abroad we undergo the checks required in the Independent School Standards Regulations and the Single Central Record (Centralised Register).

**Use of school premises for non-school activities eg. After-school club:** Should the proprietors rent or hire out school premises for activities that are non-school related then full checks will be carried out to ensure arrangements are in place to keep children safe eg via appropriate child protection policies and procedures. The body providing activities will be required to liaise with the school on safeguarding matters where appropriate. Any lease or hire contract/agreement will ensure safeguarding requirements are a condition of use of the premises so that any failure would result in termination of the agreement. When activities are provided by the proprietors under the direct supervision or management of school staff then the procedures outlined in this policy to safeguard children will apply.

#### **Part Four: Allegations**

**Arrangements for dealing with concerns, complaints or allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors):** We take seriously all complaints made against members of staff. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and **all staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member staff or volunteer both within, and where it is appropriate, outside of the workplace (including online), which may have implications for the safeguarding of children.** Allegations fall into one of two levels those that may meet the Harms Threshold and those that don't – referred to as 'low level concerns'.

##### **Section One: Allegations that may meet the Harms Threshold**

Procedures for managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college.

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

If staff have behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children outside of school then this is known as transferable risk and this risk will be assessed (with LADO support) with regards to the member of staff working with children in school.

Allegations should be reported to the Headteacher/Proprietor without delay, the Head teacher as 'case manager' will lead any investigation unless the Head teacher is the subject of an allegation in which case the 'case manager' will be decided on by the LADO.

##### **Initial response:**

The following expands on the detail provided on pages 1 and 2 of this policy where contact details (names, telephone numbers, email addresses) are clearly identified. We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. Allegations are to be reported without delay, to the Head teacher / Proprietor, Phil Simpson. If Phil Simpson is absent, the allegation is passed immediately to another proprietor, Lucy Simpson or Jo Howarth.

There are two aspects to be considered when an allegation is made

- looking after the welfare of the child.** The DSL is responsible for contacting MASH to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police.
- investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation** The case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

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When dealing with allegations we apply common sense and judgement; deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently; and provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

Before contacting the LADO, we will conduct basic enquiries to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. For example: was the individual in the school at the time of the allegations? Did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the child? Are there any witnesses?

**No further investigation will be undertaken without consultation with the LADO.** When to inform the individual of the allegation will be considered carefully on a case by case basis, with guidance from the LADO, social care and police if required. If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or children's social care will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children. Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staff's family, they should discuss these concerns with the designated safeguarding lead and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the designated safeguarding lead to make a referral to children's social care. Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial assessment decides that is the case, the next steps will be discussed by the case manager with the LADO.

**The LADO's contact details are stated on page 2 of this policy and repeated here as follows:**

**0115 8041272 or outside of office hours the emergency duty team on: 0300 456 4546**

<https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/contact/>

#### **No further action:**

Where the initial discussion leads to no further action, the case manager and the LADO should:

- record the decision and justification for it; and,
- agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

#### **Further enquiries:**

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision on how to proceed the LADO and case manager will discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. It will usually be a member of the SLT undertaking the investigation. If there is a lack of appropriate staff member or the nature or complexity of the allegation demand it the school will seek an independent investigator. The case manager will monitor the progress of the investigation and conduct fortnightly or monthly reviews. The LADO's advice, guidance and support will continue to be sought.

#### **Suspension:**

The case manager will consider all available options before suspension and it will only be considered in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The case manager will take into account advice from the LADO, police and social care where they have been involved. Police involvement does not make it mandatory to suspend a member of staff; this decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment about whether the person poses a risk of harm to children. All options will be considered to avoid suspension including redeployment or supervision as part of a risk analysis with the LADO. The case manager will consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees that can result from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, malicious, or false. If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the case manager should record the rationale and justification for such a course of action. This should also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected.

Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be given within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. The person will be informed at the point of their suspension who their named support contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details. We recognise that we have a duty of care to members of staff so will offer appropriate support in line with that outlined in the KCSIE.

Where we are made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order, in respect of an individual working at our school, we will take immediate action to ensure that the individual does not carry out work in contravention of the order eg no teaching work.

#### **Confidentiality:**

Parents or carers of the child or children involved will be:

- formally told about the allegation as soon as possible. The case manager will consult the LADO and where involved children's social care and/or the police on what information can be disclosed;
- kept informed about the progress of the case, only in relation to their child - no information can be shared regarding the staff member; and
- made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against

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teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002 (see paragraphs 372-380).

We will make every effort maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. We are aware that under The Education Act 2011 it is an offence (except in the limited circumstance expressly permitted by the legislation), for any person to publish any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher in a school who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a child from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). In circumstances where we need to make parents aware about an allegation, we will make parents and others aware that there are restrictions on publishing information. The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care to agree the following:

- who needs to know and exactly what information can be shared;
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and,
- how to manage press interest if, and when, it should arise.

#### **Allegation outcomes:**

If an allegation is substantiated so the person no longer works for the school, we shall (as we have a legal duty to) make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. In the case of a member of teaching staff we will consider whether we must refer the matter to the TRA to consider prohibiting the person from teaching. Where police investigations are involved, when they are concluded the LADO and case manager will discuss whether any further action is required and how to proceed in terms of disciplinary action if required.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations will be considered with regards to whether the child or person reporting is making 'a cry for help' in which case the DSL will consider a referral to social care. If the report is considered to have been deliberately invented or malicious then the behaviour policy and any appropriate disciplinary action will be considered.

When a staff member will be returning to work after suspension they will be supported in doing so. Consideration will be given to how best to manage contact between the child who made the report and the member of staff going forwards.

Staff should be aware of the school's whistle-blowing procedures and share immediately any disclosure or concern that relates to a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer. Immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against staff for whistle-blowing in good faith, as far as possible, is guaranteed by the school. This refers to any concern or allegation made by a member of staff regarding school practices or actions of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. **If the school was given information that suggested that a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer was abusing a child who is not a pupil at the school, we would immediately pass such information to the LADO at the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, MASH. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 0280285 or visit, [help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk).**

We cooperate entirely with any investigation carried out by the LADO in conjunction with the police. Our policy is to consider the option of suspending the member of staff, supply staff or volunteer for the duration of the investigation or whether alternative arrangements should be in place. We will give due weight to the views of the LADO, KCSIE and WT when making a decision about suspension. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff member as well as children and families throughout the process. Discussions should be recorded in writing, and communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children is agreed with the LADO. If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the school will work with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

If an allegation is made against anyone working with children in our school, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated. We will not undertake our own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO(s), or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. Inspectors may advise that, in borderline cases, discussions with the LADO(s) can often be held informally and without naming our school or individual.

There are restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers, and so we must make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/ Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

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***Allegation of abuse of a child who is not a pupil at the school:*** If Plumtree School was given information that suggested that a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer was abusing a child who is not a pupil at the School, we would immediately pass such information to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership LADO at MASH to handle. We would then formally advise the employee of the allegation, making it clear that the school would not play any part in the investigatory process. The employee would be advised of the possibility of facing suspension, re-assignment to other duties etc. in exactly the same way as if the allegation had involved a pupil at Plumtree School. If the allegation subsequently proved to be unfounded, he or she would be given full support by the school in resuming their career.

***Malicious Allegations:*** Allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records and should not be referred to in employer references. Pupils that are found to have made malicious allegations are likely to have breached our school behaviour policies. The school will therefore consider whether to apply an appropriate sanction, which could include temporary or permanent exclusion (as well as referral to the police if there are grounds for believing a criminal offence may have been committed). At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated.

***Dismissal or Resignation:*** Our school is committed to promptly report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer, proprietor or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child. To this end, we will report a person to the DBS if they are dismissed or leaves due to risk or harm to a child.

We comply with our legal duty to immediately report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) whose contact details for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (telephone: 01325 953 795), any person who is considered unsuitable to work with children. In this context, ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed term contract; no longer engaging/refusing staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. As an independent school, where a dismissal does not meet the threshold for a DBS referral, we give separate consideration to making a referral to the Secretary of State via the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). This also applies where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, because of 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute', or a 'conviction at any time for a relevant offence'.

Referrals will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual and reports will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. We also ensure that 'Compromise Agreements' or 'ACAS Agreements' never apply in such circumstances and appreciate that failure to make a report constitute an offence and that the school may be removed from the DfE register of independent schools. If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the school works with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. The full procedures about dealing with allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff can be found in Part four of the DfE guidance "*Keeping Children Safe in Education*".

In some circumstances we will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by us eg: supply teacher, where our disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly. We will not cease using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. We will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation. Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the school, are under the supervision, direction and control of the proprietor when working in the school. They will be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation. When using an agency we will inform the agency of our process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about policies.

### ***Organisations or Individuals using school premises***

We may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

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### **Record Keeping and References**

Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to have been malicious or false will be removed from personnel records, unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information. However, for all other allegations, the following information is kept on the file of the person accused:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, and decisions reached and the outcome as categorised above;
- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by children's social care or the police; and,
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. We have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry (further information can be found on the IICSA website). All other records will be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Cases in which an allegation was found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references. Any repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious will also not be included in any reference. Substantiated allegations will be included in references, with the information included being factual and not including opinions.

### **Section Two: Concerns that do not meet the Harms Threshold**

Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken. We manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children. We encourage an open and transparent school culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately enabling identification of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimising the risk of abuse; and ensuring that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the school ethos and values.

#### **What is a low level concern?**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out above. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

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

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

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (see Part Four - Section one), are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

#### **Sharing low level concerns**

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All low low-level concerns should be shared with the Headteacher Phil Simpson or in his absence another proprietor Lucy Simpson or Jo Howarth. The Headteacher is the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns although it is recognised that depending on the nature of some low-level concerns the headteacher may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision making approach. Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If the School is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, it will consult with the LADO.

### **Recording low-level concerns**

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns will also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible. If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The information collected will help to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. All of this will be recorded along with the rationale for decisions and action taken.

The Head teacher will store these records confidentially, securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO. Consideration will also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. We will retain such information until the individual leaves our employment.

### **References**

Low level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. A low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) will not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it will be referred to in a reference.

## **Part Five: Handling reports**

### **Child on child Sexual Violence and Harassment reports**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally), inside and outside of school and are never acceptable. All staff working at Plumtree School maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. We address inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) as an important intervention that can help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. We are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, however, staff are aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. All victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. **It will be explained that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.** Abuse that occurs online or outside of school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. Children who are victims will likely find the experience stressful and distressing, which is likely to adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attend(s) the same school.

The starting point regarding any report will always be that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. Sexual violence or sexual harassment will not be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

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Where there is an online element to a report, staff will not view or forward illegal images of a child. Advice contained within <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people> will be followed.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support;
  - The alleged perpetrator; and
  - All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at our school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them or if there have been other victims;
- Risk assessments will be recorded electronically and stored on encrypted USB in the locked Safeguarding filing cabinet and be kept under review.
- The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will ensure they are engaging with MASH.
- Following an incident we will consider
- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment;
  - The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
  - The ages of the children involved;
  - The developmental stages of the children involved;
  - Importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
  - Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
  - If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
  - Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff; and other related issues and wider context?

#### *-Children sharing a classroom:*

Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police:

- The perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- Consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises.

These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

#### *-Options to manage the report*

##### Manage internally

1. In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, we may decide that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising the behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support. This decision will be made based on the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All decisions, and discussions around making these decisions will be recorded and stored by the DSL and stored in the locked Safeguarding filing cabinet.

2. In line with 1 above, we may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions, but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address nonviolent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. Schools will be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. The DSL and deputy will familiarise themselves with the threshold document provided by the Safeguarding partners.

3. Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to the MASH following locally agreed protocols. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy will be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.

-Any report to the police will generally be made through the MASH as above. The designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) will follow local process for referrals. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this will be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. Where a report has been made to the police, the school will consult the police and agree what information

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can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. Where there is a criminal investigation we will work closely with the relevant agencies to support all children involved (especially potential witnesses). Where required, advice from the police will be sought in order to help us. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any sanctions against the alleged perpetrator, we will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

-If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all children. We will consider any suitable action in light of our behaviour policy. If the perpetrator remains in school we will be very clear as to our expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions we think are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator's timetable. Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school. We will ensure all children involved are protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online). Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. We will continue to support all parties in this instance.

-Support for victims of sexual assault is available from a variety of agencies.

We will support the victim of sexual assault to remain in school but if they are unable to do so we will enable them to continue their education elsewhere. This decision will be made only at the request of the child and their family. If they are moved we will ensure the new school is aware of the ongoing support they may need. The DSL will support this move. Where there is a criminal investigation the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any shared classes with the victim and we will also consider how best to keep them a reasonable distance apart on the school premises or on school transport. This is in the best interest of the children concerned and should not be perceived to be a judgement of guilt before any legal proceedings. We will work closely with the police. Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, we may take suitable action, if we have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students). Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, we may, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases. Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support will be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis. All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements will be kept under review.

### **Child-on-child Physical Abuse reports.**

While a clear focus of child on child abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive. These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, will be reported to the police. The principles from the anti-bullying policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority. When dealing with other alleged behaviour which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff can consider how to respond considering, for example, whether it:

- is socially acceptable
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- is socially acceptable within the peer group
- is problematic and concerning

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- involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- involves an element of coercion or pre-planning
- involves a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour
- involves a misuse of power

#### **Child on Child Online Behaviour Reports.**

Many forms of child on child abuse have an element of online behaviour including behaviours such as cyberbullying and sexting. Policies and procedures concerning this type of behaviour can be found in other school policies eg: Anti bullying policy, online safety policy, and child protection policy.

#### **Early Years Reporting**

We inform Ofsted immediately (on the same day), or as soon as is reasonably practicable, but certainly within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). This could include any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. We also inform Ofsted of any serious accidents, illnesses, injuries or death sustained by any child in our care as well as any incidences of food poisoning effecting 2 or more pupils cared for on the premises. We are fully aware that not to do so would be committing an offence.

We meet our responsibility under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which includes a duty to make a referral to the DBS where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been, had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

In accordance with regulations made under Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006, in the event of the disqualification of a registered provider, the provider must not continue as an early years provider – nor be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Where an employer becomes aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, the provider must take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children. In the event of disqualification of a person employed in early years provision, the provider must not continue to employ that person. Ofsted must be given the following information when relevant:

- details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose;
- the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and
- a certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

**Child's Death:** In the event of a death of a child/young person Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the DfE will be informed.

<https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/contact/>

**The Role of the Proprietors:** It is incumbent on the Proprietors to comply with their duties under legislation and ensures the policies, procedures and training in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times. The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children”. The school’s safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). The Proprietors ensure that a senior member of staff, receives appropriate training to act as both the DSL and Deputy DSL. The Headteacher has been trained in Safer Recruitment in order to provide safe employment of staff and is fully abreast of the guidance available for safeguarding. The Proprietors have formally adopted this policy and reviews its contents annually or sooner if any legislative or regulatory changes are notified to Plumtree School. Proprietors ensure that they receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training. This equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is regularly updated.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, proprietors do all that they reasonably can to limit children’s exposure to Safeguarding risks from the school’s IT systems. As part of this process, proprietors ensure their school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns

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when identified. Proprietors consider the age range of their children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

To this end, the Proprietors will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay, once identified. The Proprietors are accountable for ensuring Plumtree School has effective child protection policies and procedures in place that are in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State and Nottinghamshire local authority from which most children are drawn.

**Deficiencies and Weaknesses:** It is the duty of all members of Staff and the Proprietors to draw to the attentions of the DSL any weakness or deficiencies in this policy which should be remedied immediately. The DSL will ensure that this is then followed up without delay, with policies and procedures being updated as needed rather than waiting to any regular review date.

**Complaints and Monitoring:** All complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the School's complaints procedure, with reference to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

**Key Contacts in addition to those stated on pages 1 and 2 of this policy**

**Ofsted**

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,  
Manchester, M1 2WD  
Tel: 03001234234  
Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov)  
Web: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

Address for referrals: PO Box 181,  
Darlington, DL1 9FA  
Telephone for referrals: 01325 953 795  
Email: [customerservices@db.s.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@db.s.gsi.gov.uk)  
Telephone for customer services: 0870 909 08

**Independent Schools Inspectorate**

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane  
London, EC1A 9HA  
Tel: 0207 600 0100  
Email: [info@isi.net](mailto:info@isi.net) Website: [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

**ChildLine**

Tel: 0800 1111 [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)