Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff.
It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

Author	Miss E Beer - DSL		
Approved by	FGB	**Signed**	
Reviewed Date	October 2026		
Next Review Date	September 2027		

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures

Key Contacts

	Name	DSTC contact information
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Emma Beer	ebeer@dstc.kent.sch.uk / 01322 224309 x116
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Matthew Allen Cathy Gibbs (Looked after and previously Looked after children)	mallen@dstc.kent.sch.uk x121 cgibbs@dstc.kent.sch.uk
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Revision	Date	Revision Notes
Updates from KCSIE	September 2026	Terminology, definition, updates
Author Update	September 2026	E Beer
Safeguarding Governor	September 2026	Carly Rendell

What to do if you have a concern at DSTC

Why are you concerned?

For example:

- Something a child has said, for example, an allegation of harm.
- A child's appearance, which may include unexplained marks/bruises as well as dress.
- Behaviour change(s).
- Witnessed concerning behaviour.

Act immediately and record your concerns: If urgent, speak to the DSL first

- Follow the DSTC procedure – Report via Bromcom safeguarding (within 24 hours)
- Reassure the child.
- Clarify concerns using open questions, if necessary (TED: Tell, Explain, Describe).
- Record opinions and not just facts and use the child's own words on Bromcom.
- Seek support for yourself as required from the DSL.

Inform DSTC Designated Safeguarding Lead (Miss Emma Beer)

- If a child is at risk of immediate harm and/or is unsafe to go home, make an urgent Request for Support to the Front door portal or call the Police on 999.
- If not an immediate risk of harm, provide parental support and/or refer to other agencies in line with Kent Safeguarding Support level guidance procedures as appropriate. For example, signposting to community services and/or early help open access, a non-urgent call to the Police via 101, reporting allegations against staff to the County LADO Service, or make a Request for Support via the
- Front door Portal
- Where DSTC is unsure, advice can be sought from a Local Authority Social Worker at the Front Door Service via 03000 41 11 11.
- Where support is required out of working hours, contact the Out of Hours Service via 03000 41 91 91.

If you are unhappy with the response:

DSLs/Staff:

Follow DSTC Whistleblowing procedures

Follow Kent Escalation and Professional Challenge Policy

Students or Parents:

Follow DSTC Complaints policy

Record decision making and action taken on the student child protection file (Bromcom)

Monitor - Be clear about: What you are monitoring, for example, behaviour trends, appearance. How long you will monitor. Where, how, and to whom you will give feedback, and how you will record.

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review. The DSL/staff will request further support if required to ensure the child's safety is paramount.

1. Child Focused Approach to Safeguarding

1.1 Introduction

DSTC recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everybody's** responsibility and everyone has a role to play. All members of our community (staff, volunteers, governors, leaders, parents/carers, wider family networks, and students) have an important role in safeguarding children and all have an essential role to play in making our community safe and secure.

DSTC believes that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined in law and in this policy as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, sex (gender), ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity or orientation, have equal rights to protection.

Staff working with children at DSTC will maintain an attitude that it **could happen here** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.

DSTC recognises that effective safeguarding must be anti-discriminatory and anti-racist. Staff will remain alert to how racism, discrimination, disability, ethnicity, culture, economic circumstances and other factors that may affect children and families' experiences of safeguarding and access to support. Staff will challenge racism and discrimination where identified and ensure that safeguarding decisions are child-centre, fair and based on individual circumstances and needs of the child

This policy applies where there are any child protection concerns regarding children who attend the school but may also apply to other children connected to the school, for example, siblings, or younger members of staff (under 18s) or children on student/work placements.

DSTC recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to be safe and to feel safe. In our school children are respected and are encouraged to talk openly. We will ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what safeguarding action to take and what services to provide.

DSTC recognises the importance of adopting a trauma informed approach to safeguarding; we understand there is a need to consider the root cause of children's behaviour and consider any underlying trauma.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- **Prevention**: positive, supportive, safe culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures.
- **Protection**: following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
- **Support**: adopt a child centered approach and provide support for all students, parents/carers and staff, and where appropriate, implement specific interventions for those who may be at risk of harm.
- **Collaboration:** with both parents where possible, and other agencies to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise.

Staff recognise that safeguarding concerns are rarely standalone events and that children may experience multiple and overlapping forms of harm. Safeguarding assessments and responses will consider the wider context of the child's circumstances and any cumulative or overlapping risks.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including governors, temporary or third-party agency staff, trainee teachers and volunteers, and are consistent with those outlined within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2026.

1.2 Policy Context
This policy is implemented in accordance with the current statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE), sets out the legal duties schools must comply with to safeguard children and young people under the age of 18

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related national and local guidance. This includes but is not limited to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (WTSC 2026)
- Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework
- Children's social care National Framework 2026
- Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures
- The Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)
- Department for Education guidance: Mobile phones in school
- Department for Education guidance: Working or volunteering in regulated activity with children.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are students at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

DSTC will follow local or national guidance in response to any emergencies. We will amend this policy and our procedures as necessary but regardless of the action required, our safeguarding principles will always remain the same and the welfare of the child is paramount.

1.3 Definition of Safeguarding
In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- 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
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the child(ren)
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

DSTC acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including, but not limited to:

- Abuse and neglect

- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)
- Children with family members in prison
- Children who are absent or missing from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)
- County lines and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs and alcohol misuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Gender based abuse, misogyny and violence against women and girls
- Hate
- Homelessness
- Human trafficking and modern slavery
- Mental health
- Self-generated intimate images and/or videos, including images and or videos generated or manipulated using artificial intelligence for example deepfakes
- Online safety
- Preventing radicalisation and extremism
- Private fostering
- Relationship abuse
- Serious violence
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- So-called Honour-based abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
- Upskirting
- Artificial Intelligence (AI), including the use of generative AI (e.g., chatbots and image generators)
- Harmful sexual behaviour, including misogyny
- Children questioning their identity

(Also see Part one and relevant sections within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026')

1.4 Related Safeguarding Policies
This policy is one of a series in the school integrated safeguarding portfolio and should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below:

- Anti-bullying
- Artificial Intelligence
- Attendance
- Behaviour for Learning, including behaviour management and use of physical intervention
- Complaints
- Confidentiality
- UK GDPR and Data protection act 2018
- Designated teacher policy - looked-after and previously looked after children
- Emergency procedures, such as evacuations, inevacuations and lockdowns
- Health and safety
- First aid and accidents, including medication and managing illness, safer eating and allergies, health and safety, and infection
- Image use

- Managing allegations against staff
- Mobile phones and smart technology
- Online safety
- Personal and intimate care
- Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)
- Risk assessments, such as school trips, use of technology, school re-opening
- Safer recruitment
- Searching, screening and confiscation
- Social media
- Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, including Acceptable Use of Technology Policies (AUP)
- Supporting children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Supporting Students with medical conditions
- Whistleblowing

Supporting Guidance (to be read and followed alongside this document)

- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings - Safer Recruitment Consortium
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused

1.5 Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review
DSTC will review this policy at least annually (as a minimum) and will update it as needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt. The policy will also be revised following any national or local updates, significant local or national safeguarding events and/or learning, and/or any changes to our own procedures.

All staff including temporary staff, contractors, trainee teachers, volunteers and staff who do not work directly with children will be provided with a copy of this policy and Part One KCSIE 2026 in full. Staff Handbook

Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the school Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and other related policies on request. Additionally, our policies can be viewed via the school website: https://www.dstc.kent.sch.uk/

The policy forms part of our school development plan and will be reviewed annually by the governing body/leadership who has responsibility for oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Principal will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the governing body. The governing body will not receive details of individual student situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

- All concerns will be reported via Bromcom without delay, and must not delay immediate safeguarding action.
- All actions assigned to referrals will be updated within 48 hours
- This will be tracked by the DSL

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1 Governance and Leadership
The governing body and leadership team have a strategic responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation. The governing body has regard to the KCSIE guidance and will ensure our policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with statutory requirements

The governing body will facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding which involves everyone. They will ensure that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, so that all systems, processes, and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

The governing body are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements set out by the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP).

- This includes but is not limited to safeguarding all members of the school community (for example, staff, students, parents/carers and other family members) identified with protected characteristics within the Equality Act; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- For further information about our approaches to equality, diversity, and inclusion, please access our schools' policies/website.

The governing body and leadership team will ensure that there are policies and procedures in place to ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

The Principal will ensure that our child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body, are understood, and followed by all staff.

The governing body will ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The governing body and leadership team will ensure that the DSL is supported in their role and is provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.

The school has a nominated governor for safeguarding. The nominated governor will support the DSL and have oversight in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies, that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed, and that the policies are reviewed at least annually and when required.

2.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The school has appointed Emma Beer, a member of the senior leadership team, to act as our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) in school.

The school has also appointed Deputy DSLs who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSLs absence:

- Mr Matthew Allen – Assistant Vice Principal/DDSL
- Miss Cathy Gibbs – Health and Social Care Teacher/DDSL

Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.

The DSL (and any deputies) will be more likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise staff on the response to any safeguarding concerns.

It is the role of the DSL to carry out their functions set out in Annex C of KCSIE. This includes but is not limited to:

- Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

- Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children.
    - When supporting children with a social worker or Children in Care and Children Previously in Care, the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child, with the DSL liaising closely with the designated teacher.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE and WTSC.
- Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) procedures, including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
- Representing, or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences).
- Managing and monitoring the school role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
- Being available during term time (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and any out of hours and/or out of term activities.
- Taking lead responsibility for online safety, including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Helping promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff.
- Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE.
- Liaising with the Principal to inform them of any safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult (PACE Code C 2019).

The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSLs training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated at least annually through a variety of methods at regular intervals.

2.3 Members of Staff

Our staff play a particularly important role in safeguarding as they are in a position to observe changes in a child's behaviour or appearance, identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
- know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, neglected, or exploited and understand the impact this can have upon a child.
- be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
- be prepared to identify children who may benefit from universal services, community-based Early Help or Family Help and understand the relevant local processes and their role in supporting children and families
- understand the school safeguarding policies and systems.
- Report any concerns without delay, recording on Bromcom should be completed as soon as practicable and must not delay immediate safeguarding action.
- Respond to any actions set within 48 hours (DSL/DDSL's)
- undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.

- be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
- know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- act in line with Teachers' Standards 2012 which state that teachers (including headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- be aware of the safeguarding risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI) including inappropriate or harmful content, privacy and data protection risks, online abuse and exploitation, and AI-generated or manipulated material such as deep fakes

Staff at DSTC recognise 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 being abusive or harmful. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to a DSL if they have any concerns about a child.

Staff at DSTC will determine how best to build trusted relationships with children, young people and parents/carers which facilitate appropriate professional communication in line with existing and relevant policies, for example, our staff code of conduct and student behaviour policy.

2.4 Children and Young People
Children and young people have a right to:
- Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
- Confidently report abuse, neglect or exploitation, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Contribute to the development of school safeguarding policies.
- Receive help from a trusted adult.
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Students at DSTC are able to report concerns via DTSC's website Student Safeguarding / Wellbeing Concern Form

2.5 Parents and Carers
Parents/carers have a responsibility to:
- Understand and adhere to the relevant school policies and procedures.
- Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the school in their safeguarding approaches.
- Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm, including online.
- Seek help and support from the school or other agencies.

Parents and carers are able to report concerns via the DSTC's website Student Safeguarding/ Wellbeing Concern Form

3. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

3.1 Recognising Indicators of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
Staff will maintain an attitude that it **could happen here** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child.
All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation as identified by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. This is outlined locally within the Kent Support Levels Guidance.

DSTC recognises the four main categories of abuse as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Staff must also be alert to exploitation and other forms of harm and safeguarding concerns, which may overlap with one or more categories of abuse.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation may occur within or outside the home, online or offline, and may be perpetrated by adults or other children. Children may experience multiple forms of harm at the same time. Staff must therefore consider the child's wider circumstances and lived experience rather than considering safeguarding concerns in isolation.

By understanding the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow the below approach if they are concerned about a child:

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

DSTC recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse, neglect and exploitation can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation do not automatically mean a child is being harmed, however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.

DSTC recognises abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff will always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.

Parental behaviours can indicate child abuse, neglect or exploitation; staff will therefore remain alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.

Children may report abuse, neglect or exploitation happening to themselves, their peers, or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside the School. Children can be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms

including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

DSTC recognises that technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues; children are at risk of abuse or exploitation online from people they know (including other children) and from people they do not know; in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

DSTC recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.

Following a concern about a child's safety or welfare, the searching and screening of children and confiscation of any items, including any electronic devices, will be managed in line with the school behaviour policy and/or 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' policy which is informed by the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' guidance.

- The DSL (or deputy) will be informed of any searching incidents where there were reasonable grounds to suspect a student was in possession of a prohibited item as listed in our behaviour policy. The DSL (or deputy) will then consider the circumstances of the student who has been searched to assess the incident against any potential wider safeguarding concerns.
- Staff will involve the DSL (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

3.2 Responding to Child Protection Concerns

If staff are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, they are expected to:

- listen carefully to the child, reflecting back the concern.
- use the child's language.
- be non-judgmental.
- avoid leading questions; only prompting the child where necessary with open questions to clarify information where necessary. For example, who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED).
- not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children's Services.
- be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
- record the concern using the facts as the child presents them, in line with school record keeping requirements on Bromcom.
- inform the DSL (or deputy), without delay.
- Report via Bromcom as soon as practicable, without delaying the immediate reporting of the concern

All staff are made aware that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to other agencies. Staff will not assume a colleague, or another professional will act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

DSTC will respond to safeguarding concerns in line with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP).
The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: www.kscmp.org.uk

In Kent, Early Help/Family Help and Preventative Services and Children's Social Work Services are part of Integrated Children's Services (ICS) and are accessed via the 'Front Door Service'/Kent Children's Services Portal.

Universal services and community based Early Help Provide support to children and families as soon as a problem emerges. Family Help provides support at the targeted early help level and includes support under section 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 and statutory services delivered under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
DSTC will work with Kent Integrated Children's Services and other relevant agencies in accordance with local arrangements and the Kent safeguarding procedures

- If early help/Family Help support is appropriate, the DSL (or a deputy) will lead on exploring internal resources available and liaising with other universal or additional services available via local agencies.
- Where Intensive Support Early Help/Family Help (provided by ICS, outlined in the KSCMP support levels guidance) is considered to be appropriate, the DSL (or deputy) will make a 'request for support' via the Kent Children's Services Portal.
- Staff, including the DSL, may be required to work with other agencies and professionals in an early help/Family Help assessment.
- The DSL will keep all Early Help/Family Help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to escalating concerns and/or seeking advice from the Front Door Service if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger (for example, under section 17 or 47 of the Children Act), intensive or specialist support is required and a 'request for support' will be made immediately to Kent Integrated Children's Services (via the portal) and/or the police, in line with the Kent Support Level Guidance and KSCMP procedures.

- DSTC recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns for a child as identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency, but to act in line with KSCMP guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making**.**
- The DSL may seek advice or guidance from a social worker via the Front Door Service before deciding next steps.

The DSL, or a deputy DSL in the absence of the DSL, will have the overall responsibility for making referrals. However, all staff are made aware of the local process for making referrals to Integrated Children's Services and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they are expected to act on them immediately and report the concern via bromcom and to the DSL or deputy without delay. If staff are unsure if something is a safeguarding issue, they will speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken by staff.

- Staff will speak to a member of the school senior leadership team, request a consultation with a social worker from the Front Door Service, or make a request for support to the Front Door Service themselves; for contact information, see flowchart on pages 6 & 12.
- In these circumstances, any action taken by staff will be shared with a DSL as soon as possible.

In the event of a request for support to the Front Door Service being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP and ICS. Parents/carers will always be informed in the case of a request for support being submitted by the school, unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if informing them may put a child at risk of harm or could undermine a criminal investigation.

If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, or concerns regarding receiving a decision or the decisions made, staff or the DSL will re-refer (if appropriate) and/or DSLs will follow the Kent Escalation and Professional

Challenge Policy to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

DSLs and staff will be mindful of the need for the school to ensure any activity or support implemented to support children and/or families is recorded. Support provided by the school where families are struggling will be overseen and reviewed by the DSL on a regular basis to ensure activity does not obscure potential safeguarding concerns from the wider professional network.

3.3 Recording Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the school safeguarding system on Bromcom. This will be passed without delay to the DSL or deputy without delay, recording on Bromcom should be completed as soon as practicable and must not delay immediate safeguarding action.

Welfare concern forms are recorded on '*Bromcom Safeguarding'* with limited access and in filing cabinets locked in the Child Protection Officers office.

Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words and will be signed and dated by the member of staff. Child protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if visible injuries to a child have been observed.

If there is an immediate safeguarding concern the member of staff will consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority. If the member of staff believes the student is in danger if they go home, they must contact the DSL or deputy immediately.where there is an immediate risk to life or serious harm, the emergency services should be contacted by calling 999.

Contractors and visitors are able to report concerns via the forms at reception, this will be passed to the DSL or deputy without delay, recording on Bromcom should be completed as soon as practicable and must not delay immediate safeguarding action.

Child protection records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern. The information available, the action taken, decisions reached, the rationale for those decisions, the outcome and any further action required, Records will be clear, accurate, contemporaneous and factual.

Child protection records are kept confidential and stored securely either as a hard copy or electronically. Child protection records will be kept for individual children and will be maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the school. Child protection records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL.

All child protection records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child's subsequent school, under confidential and separate cover as soon as possible; within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. Child protection files will be transferred securely to the new DSL, separately to the child's main file, and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new school or college in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue to provide support.

When the school receives child protection files from another setting, the DSL will ensure key staff such as the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators (SENCOs)/ named person with oversight for SEN, will be made aware of relevant information as required.

Where a student joins the school and no child protection files are received, the DSL will proactively seek to confirm from the previous setting whether any child protections exist for the student, and if so, if the files have been sent.

3.4 Multi-Agency Working

DSTC recognises the pivotal role we have to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and is committed to its responsibility to work within the KSCMP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as identified within 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026'. DSTC will work collaboratively with safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies, recognising that children may experience multiple or overlapping harms and that effective sharing, professional challenge and coordinated assessment and coordinated support are essential.

The School leadership team, governing body and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies, including the safeguarding partners in line with local and national guidance.

DSTC recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to KSCMP processes as required, such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other Early Help/Family Help multi-agency meetings.

The School will allow access for Kent Children's Social Work Service and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

The Principal and DSL are aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult (PACE Code C 2019) where there is a need for detention, treatment and questioning by police officers and will respond to concerns in line with our school 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' policy and/or behaviour policy, which is informed by the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' guidance.

3.5 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

DSTC recognises our duty and powers to hold, use and share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within KCSIE.

Where reasonably possible, the school will hold more than one emergency contact number for each student. There is an expectation that emergency contact information will be held for both parents, unless doing so would put a child at risk of harm.

The Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) places duties on schools/colleges and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK 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.

- DSTC has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required to ensure that our school is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. Mrs Susan Wells – Business Manager / HR
- All staff will be provided with training and information to ensure they have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share and/or withhold personal

information. IHASCO is used to train all staff in GDPR areas. A test is completed and records are kept by the HR Administrator.
- KCSIE 2026, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), DfE Data Protection in schools guidance and DfE 'Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners guidance provides further details regarding information sharing principles and expectations.
- Staff must not allow concerns about data protection to prevent them from sharing information where sharing is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child. Staff should share information lawfully, proportionately and on a need-to-know basis

The Principal and DSL will disclose relevant safeguarding information about a student with staff on a 'need to know' basis.

All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep information confidential, in line with our confidentiality policy (link). Staff also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children; this may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate.

In regard to confidentiality and information sharing, staff will only involve those who need to be involved, such as the DSL (or a deputy) and Kent Integrated Children's Services (or equivalent). All staff are aware they cannot promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may not be in the best interests of the child.

3.6 Complaints
All members of the school community should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children's safety or potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. The school has a complaints procedure available to parents, students and members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns or complaints. This can be found on the school website.

Whilst we encourage members of our community to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse in education can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on 0800 136 663 or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
- Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

The leadership team at DSTC will take all concerns reported to the school seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate process.
- Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 8 of this policy.

4. Specific Safeguarding Issues
DSTC is aware of the range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. In addition to Part one, DSLs, school leaders and staff will ensure they are familiar with the relevant sections of KCSIE 2026 covering specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Staff should follow this policy and speak to the DSL or deputy where they are unsure how to respond to a safeguarding concern.

Where staff are unsure how to respond to specific safeguarding issues, they should follow the processes as identified in part 3 of this policy and speak with the DSL or a deputy.

4.1 Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)
All members of staff at DSTC recognise that children can abuse other children; this is known as child-on-child abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

DSTC recognises that child-on-child abuse **(including harassment and violence** can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and /or videos including those generated or manipulated using artificial intelligence, for example deepfakes
- 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
- Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Harmful sexual behaviour including misogynistic behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment

Any allegations of child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence) will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with this child protection policy and KCSIE (in particular, part two and five).

DSTC adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence). We believe that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or dismissed as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys"; this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and can create an unsafe environment for children and a culture that normalises abuse, which can prevent children from coming forward to report it.

All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between children. Staff recognise that some child-on-child abuse issues (including harassment and violence) may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved. DSTC recognises that patterns of child-on-child abuse may be affected by sex, gender, age, disability, culture, power imbalances and other contextual factors. Staff should consider the individual circumstances of each child.

DSTC recognises that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence), such abuse is still likely to be taking place and it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that staff speak to the DSL (or deputy) about any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence).

In order to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence), DSTC will:

- implement a robust behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- provide an age/ability appropriate PSHE and RSE curriculum
- provide a range of reporting mechanisms; for example, student self referral online
- provide a dedicated email address: safeguarding@dstc.kent.sch.uk monitored by the DSL/DDSL/CPO.

DSTC wants children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence) will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated school policies,

including child protection, anti-bullying, and behaviour. Students who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Concerns about students' behaviour, including child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence) taking place offsite will be responded to as part of a partnership approach with students' and parents/carers. Offsite behaviour concerns will be recorded and responded to in line with existing appropriate policies, for example anti-bullying, acceptable use, behaviour and child protection policies.

Alleged victims, alleged perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence) will be supported by:

- taking reports seriously
- listening carefully
- avoiding victim blaming
- providing appropriate pastoral support
- working with parents/carers
- reviewing educational approaches
- where necessary and appropriate, informing the police and/or ICS

4.2 Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, DSTC will follow the guidance outlined in Part five of KCSIE. Sexual harassment and sexual violence may be part of a wider pattern of harmful behaviour and may be influenced by misogyny, sexist attitudes, pornography, peer pressure, power imbalances and online environments. Staff must challenge inappropriate behaviour and report safeguarding concerns without delay.

DSTC recognises that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. DSTC recognises 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 and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.

All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, 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, or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will not be dismissed or downplayed and will be treated equally seriously and in line with relevant policies/procedures, for example anti-bullying & behaviour, child protection, online safety.

DSTC recognises 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 to students that avoids alarming or distressing them.

DSTC recognises that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse. All staff will be aware certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone, for example because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.

The DSL (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response.

- The DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged

perpetrator, and any other children involved/impacted, in line with part five of KCSIE and relevant local/national guidance and support, for example KSCMP procedures.
- The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
- Any concerns involving an online element will take place in accordance with relevant local/national guidance and advice.

Reports will initially be managed internally by the school and where necessary will be referred to Integrated Children's Services (Early Help/Family Help and/or Children's Social Work Service) via the Children's Portal and/or the police. Important considerations which may influence this decision include:
- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behaviour has been displayed.
- the ages of the children involved.
- the developmental stages of the children involved.
- any power imbalance between the children.
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse - sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature.
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children.
- understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.
- whether there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students, or school.
- any other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

DSTC will in most instances engage with both the victim's and alleged perpetrator's parents/carers when there has been a report of sexual violence; this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and will depend on a case-by-case basis. The exception to this is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent/carer will put a child at additional risk. Any information shared with parents/carers will be in line with information sharing expectations, our confidentiality policy, and any data protection requirements, and where they are involved, will be subject to discussion with other agencies (for example Children's Social Work Service and/or the police) to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

If at any stage the DSL is unsure if a request for support is appropriate, advice may be sought from the Front Door Service.

4.3 Self-generated Intimate Images and/orVideos Including Where Generated or Manipulated by AI. DSTC recognises that the creation, possession, distribution or self-generated intimate images and /or videos, including images and/or videos generated or manipulated using artificial intelligence (AI), including deepfakes by children can create significant safeguarding risk; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL or deputy.

When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of Self-generated intimate images and/or videos, staff are advised:
- to report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
- never intentionally view, copy, print, share, forward, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it. If staff have already inadvertently viewed imagery, this will be immediately reported to the DSL or deputy.
- not to delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
- to avoid saying or doing anything to blame or shame any children involved.

- to reassure the child(ren) involved and explain that the DSL will be informed so they can receive appropriate support and help. Do not promise confidentiality, as other agencies may need to be informed and be involved.
- not to investigate or ask the child(ren) involved to disclose information regarding the imagery
- to not share information about the incident with other members of staff, children/young people, or parents/carers, including the families and child(ren) involved in the incident; this is the responsibility of the DSL.

DSLs will respond to concerns in line with the non-statutory UK Council for Internet Safety guidance: 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' together with KCSIE 2026 and relevant local safeguarding procedures. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos:

- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
- Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
- All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
- A referral will be made to ICS via the Children's Portal and/or the police immediately if:
    - the incident involves an adult (over 18).
    - there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
    - the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of thirteen, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
    - a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos.
- The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.
- If DSLs are unsure if a request for support is appropriate, advice may be sought from the Front Door Service.

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

DSTC recognises that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. DSTC recognises that children may experience more than one form of exploitation or harm simultaneously and that exploitation may overlap with other safeguarding concerns. Including sexual abuse, criminal exploitation, serious violence, missing episodes, online harm and harmful sexual behaviour.

DSTC recognises that children can become trapped in CCE as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves which can mean their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised (particularly older children) and they are not treated as victims, despite the harm they have experienced. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can also be very different to that of boys. We also recognise that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).

DSTC recognises that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities and includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

4.5 Serious Violence
All staff are aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, 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 CCE.

Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns by speaking with a DSL or deputy. The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

4.6 Modern Slavery
Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Statutory Guidance: Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims.

If there are concerns that any member of the community is a victim or involved with modern slavery, concerns should be shared with a DSL or deputy and will and responded to in line with this policy.

4.7 So-Called Honour Based Abuse (HBA)
So-called honour-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. HBA may also involve abuse linked to faith or belief and may include coercion, control, forced marriage, including female genital mutilation (FGM), and practices such as breast ironing.

All forms of HBA are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and concerns will be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy. Staff will report any concerns about HBA to the DSL (or a deputy). If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted.
All staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) if they have any concerns about forced marriage. Staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fcdo.gov.uk

Whilst all staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) if they have any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal reporting duty on teachers.

- Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl.
- It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students, however teachers who do not personally report such concerns may face disciplinary sanctions. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of

female genital mutilation procedural information and FGM Mandatory reporting Duty Fact Sheet.

- Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they are expected to also discuss any FGM concerns with the DSL (or a deputy), and Kent Integrated Childrens Services should be informed as appropriate.

4.8 Preventing Radicalisation
DSTC recognises that children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.

DSTC is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism", also known as the Prevent duty and the specific obligations placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

All staff have received appropriate training to enable them to be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection from radicalisation.

Staff will be supported to use their professional judgment in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and will act proportionately; staff will report concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who, where appropriate, will follow the local procedures in regard to making a Prevent referral. If there is an immediate threat to safety, the police will be contacted via 999.

4.9 Cybercrime
DSTC recognises that children with particular skills and interests in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer/internet enabled device) cybercrime.

If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of becoming involved in cyber-dependent cybercrime, the DSL or a deputy will be informed, and consideration will be given to accessing local support and/or referring into the Cyber Choices programme, which aims to intervene when young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Where there are concerns about 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online, child sexual abuse and exploitation, or other areas of concern such as online bullying or general online safety, they will be responded to in line with the child protection policy and other appropriate policies.

4.10 Domestic Abuse
DSTC recognises that:

- domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.
- domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to, psychological (including coercive control), physical, sexual, economic, or emotional abuse.
- children can be victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse).
- anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.
- domestic abuse can take place within different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members.

- Domestic violence may coexist with other forms of harm and children may experience multiple and overlapping risks
- there is always a potential for domestic abuse to take place when parents/families separate, or for existing domestic abuse to persist or escalate post separation.
- domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on children's health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.
- domestic abuse concerns will not be looked at in isolation and our response will be considered as part of a holistic approach which takes into account children's lived experiences.
- it is important not to use victim blaming language and to adopt a trauma informed approach when responding to concerns relating to domestic abuse.

If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of seeing, hearing, or experiencing the effects of any form of domestic abuse, or in their own intimate relationships, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

DSTC is an Operation Encompass School. This means we work in partnership with Kent Police to provide support to children experiencing the effects of domestic abuse. An Operation Encompass notification is sent to the school when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and there are children in the household; the police are expected to inform schools before the child(ren) arrives the following day.

- Operation Encompass notifications help ensure that we have up to date and relevant information about children's circumstances and enables us to put immediate support in place according to the child's needs.
- Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures and where appropriate, a referral to the Front Door Service will be made if there are any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Where the school is unsure of how to respond to a notification, advice may be sought from the Front Door Service, or the Operation Encompass helpline which is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990.

4.11 Mental Health and Safeguarding
All staff recognise 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.

Staff are aware that children's experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Staff 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.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

5. Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm
Whilst **all** children should be protected, DSTC acknowledges that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm. This can include the following groups.

5.1 Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
DSTC acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse, neglect or exploitation.

DSTC recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

All members of staff are encouraged to appropriately explore potential indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND, or certain medical conditions may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.

To address these additional challenges, our school will always consider implementing extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENCO (Mrs Garrett -Director of SEND) to plan support as required.

5.2 Children Requiring Mental Health Support
DSTC has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students. 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.

Where there are concerns regarding a student's mental health, staff should consider whether there is an underlying safeguarding concern and should

- Report the concern on Bromcom Safeguarding without delay, speaking to the DSL/DDSL if urgent.
- Where appropriate, DSTC will work with parents/carers, health professionals, children's social care and other relevant agencies to ensure that the child receives appropriate support

Age/ability appropriate education will be provided to our students to help promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience through Individual Character Education (ICE) lessons, visiting speakers, assemblies and tutor time.

5.3 Children Who Are Absent From Education
Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can be an important safeguarding warning sign.

DSTC will consider the child's individual circumstances and any known safeguarding vulnerabilities when responding to absence including risks associated with exploitation, neglect, domestic abuse, mental health, serious violence and children going missing.

A robust response to children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions will support the identification of such abuse and may help prevent the risk of children going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging and also where children are already known to Kent Integrated Children's Services and/or have a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Where possible, the school will hold more than one emergency contact number for each student, so we have additional options to make contact with a responsible adult if a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern (see section 3.5).

Where the school has concerns that a child has unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education and/or is missing from education, we will respond in line with our statutory duties (DfE:

Children missing education) and local policies. Local support is available via the Kent PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS).

5.4 Elective Home Education (EHE)
Where a parent/carer expresses their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will respond in line with national Elective Home Education guidance and local Kent guidance.

We will work together with parents/carers and other key professionals and organisations to ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

5.5 Children Who May Benefit From Early Help/Family Help
Any child may benefit from early help/Family Help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help/Family Help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer or has caring responsibilities
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.
- pregnant and/or are parents themselves
- Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable or is at risk of permanent exclusion

Where it is identified a child may need early help/Family Help, staff and DSLs will respond in line with section 3 of this policy.

5.6 Children Who Need a Social Worker (child in need and child protection plans)
The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the school so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where children have a social worker, this will inform school decisions about their safety and promote their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

5.7 Looked After Children, Previously Looked after Children and Care Leavers
DSTC recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.

The school has appointed a 'designated teacher' Miss Emma Beer / Miss Cathy Gibbs who works with local authorities, including the Virtual School Kent (including the virtual school head), to promote the

educational achievement of registered students who are looked after, who have been previously looked after and children in kinship care arrangements including children subject to special guardianship arrangements where relevant.

The designated teacher will work with the DSL to ensure appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.

Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Where the school believe a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) there is a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Local Authority via the Front Door.

Where a child is leaving care, the DSL will hold details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support them and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

5.8 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Questioning their Gender

A child or young person being lesbian, gay or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or who are perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay or bisexual, may be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying, harassment or other forms of prejudice-based harm. The school will take appropriate action to prevent and respond to bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour, in accordance with its Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures.

DSTC recognises that some children may question their gender or how they feel about being a boy or a girl, including their physical sex characteristics and the ways in which they relate to society.

DSTC will not initiate any action regarding a child's gender questioning or social transition. This policy applies where a child or their parent/carer has raised a request relating to social transition and the school is required to consider how to respond.

Where a child or parent/carer requests support relating to social transition, DSTC will take a careful, child-centred and safeguarding-led approach. Staff must not independently adopt changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the school following appropriate consideration and consultation with the child's parents or carers, except where there is a safeguarding reason requiring a different approach.

The school will:

● consider what is in the best interests of the child and other children who may be affected;
● consider the child's wishes and feelings alongside all relevant safeguarding information;
● consider the child's wider circumstances, including their mental health, wellbeing, relationships, family circumstances, peer relationships, SEND or neurodiversity and any concerns regarding bullying, harassment or discrimination;
● involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the decision-making process;
● normally engage with the child's parents or carers as a matter of priority and give their views significant weight;
● consider any relevant clinical evidence or advice and, where appropriate, seek additional professional advice;
● ensure that decisions are properly considered, documented and recorded;
● keep any decision under review, recognising that the circumstances and needs of the child may change over time; and

● comply with the school's safeguarding duties and its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998

In the rare circumstances where involving a child's parents or carers may place the child at greater risk of harm, the DSL will determine what safeguarding action is required before parents or carers are contacted or decisions are made.

The school will not treat a child's disclosure that they are questioning their gender as, in itself, a safeguarding concern requiring information to be shared with others. Where a child has disclosed their feelings but has not asked the school to make changes to how they are treated, staff should respect the child's confidence unless there is a safeguarding or wellbeing concern. Any safeguarding concern arising from such a conversation must be dealt with in accordance with the school's normal safeguarding procedures.

The school will take a particularly careful approach where a child is considering or requesting social transition before puberty. Staff should not provide clinical advice or present social transition as a clinical or therapeutic intervention. Where appropriate, the school will encourage families to seek advice from appropriately qualified health professionals.

DSTC recognises that supporting social transition is an active intervention and that the evidence regarding its long-term impact remains limited. Any decision to support social transition will therefore be approached carefully, with the child's welfare and best interests at its centre.

DSTC will maintain appropriate single-sex facilities and arrangements in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and applicable legislation. Children must not be permitted to use toilets, changing rooms or boarding/residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex. Where appropriate, the school will consider whether an alternative facility can be provided without compromising the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or other students.

Where single-sex participation in sport is necessary for safety reasons, the school will not make exceptions to the relevant single-sex arrangements.

The school will ensure that the biological sex of every child is accurately recorded in school records and that relevant staff have access to accurate information where this is necessary to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

The school will remain alert to the particular vulnerabilities of children who have socially transitioned from an early age and may be living in circumstances where their biological sex is not known to peers or staff. The DSL must be involved where safeguarding concerns arise in such circumstances.

Where a child wishes to reverse or partially reverse a previous decision relating to social transition, the school will work with the child, their parents or carers and, where appropriate, relevant professionals to ensure that the child is appropriately supported.

All staff must challenge bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour. The school will promote an inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory environment in which all students are safeguarded and treated with dignity, while recognising the rights of students and staff in relation to their religion or belief.

Where appropriate, the school may consider practical arrangements such as using a child's name rather than pronouns, taking account of the circumstances of the individual child and the rights and needs of others.

All decisions relating to children who are questioning their gender will be made on an individual basis, recorded appropriately, kept under review and informed by the school's safeguarding duties, the child's best interests, the views of parents/carers and relevant professional advice.

5.9 Children who are Privately Fostered
Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 for children with a disability) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of our staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

Where private fostering arrangements come to the attention of DSTC, we must notify Kent Integrated Children's Services in line with the local KSCMP arrangements in order to allow the local authority to check if the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

5.10 Young Carers
A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 who provides regular, significant care or emotional support to a family member who has a physical or mental illness, a disability, or a substance misuse issue**.**

6. Online Safety
It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. DSTC will adopt a whole school approach to online safety which will empower, protect, and educate our students and staff in their use of technology, and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

DSTC will ensure online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures, and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.

DSTC identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), conspiracy theories, radicalisation and extremism, AI-generatedor manipulated content including deepfakes and other synthetic or altered material that may be harmful, abusive, discriminatory, sexualised or misleading.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- Conduct: Personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm. For example creating, sending, receiving or sharing explicit or harmful material, including self-generated intimate images and/or videos, AL-generated or manipulated intimate images, sexualised content, pornography and online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

DSTC recognises that technology and the risks and harms related to it evolve and change rapidly. The school will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment, which considers and reflects the current risks our children face online.

The Principal will be informed of any online safety concerns by the DSL, as appropriate. The named governor for safeguarding will report on online safety practice and incidents, including outcomes, on a regular basis to the wider governing body.

6.1 Policies and Procedures
The DSL has overall responsibility for online safety within the school but will liaise with other members of staff, for example IT technicians and curriculum leads as necessary.

The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with our child protection and other associated policies.

- Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate.
- Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

DSTC uses a wide range of technology. This includes: computers, laptops, tablets and other digital devices, the internet, our learning platform, intranet and email systems.

- All school owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place.

DSTC recognises that generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools may have many uses which could benefit our school community. However, it is important to recognise that AI tools can also pose risks; this is including, but not limited to, bullying and harassment, abuse and exploitation (including child sexual abuse), privacy and data protection risks, plagiarism and cheating, and inaccurate, harmful and/or biased material, and additionally its use can pose moral, ethical and legal concerns.

- Staff and students will be made aware of the benefits and risks of using AI tools; through IHASCO Online training.
- Staff are required to carry out a risk assessment and seek written approval from the senior leadership team prior to any use of AI in school. DSTC will consider safeguarding implications of generative AI when assessing online risks, including the creation or manipulation of sexual images, deepfakes, bullying, misinformation, privacy risks and other harmful content
- DSTC will respond to any misuse of AI in line with relevant policies, including but not limited to, anti-bullying, behaviour and child protection.
- Where the school believe that AI tools may have facilitated the creation of child sexual abuse material, including the sharing of self-generated intimate images and /or videos by children, including AI-generated or manipulated intimate images of children, the school will respond in line with the UKCIS guidance 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' and the local KSCMP guidance.

DSTC recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile and smart technology, including mobile/smart phones, cameras, wearable technology and any other electronic devices with imaging and/or sharing capabilities. In accordance with KCSIE:

- DSTC has appropriate mobile and smart technology and image use policies in place, which are shared and understood by all members of the community. These policies can be found on the DSTC website.

6.2 Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring on School Devices and Networks
DSTC will do all we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online harms through school provided devices and networks and in line with the requirements of the Prevent Duty and KCSIE, we will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.

When implementing appropriate filtering and monitoring, DSTC will ensure that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.

Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of our online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our approach to online safety and we recognise that we cannot rely on filtering and monitoring alone to safeguard our students; effective safeguarding practice, robust policies, appropriate

classroom/behaviour management and regular education/training about safe and responsible use is essential and expected.

- Students will use appropriate search tools, apps and online resources as identified by staff, following an informed risk assessment.
- Internet use will be supervised by staff as appropriate to students' age, ability and potential risk of harm.

6.2.1 Responsibilities

Our governing body has overall strategic responsibility for our filtering and monitoring approaches, including ensuring that our filtering and monitoring systems are regularly reviewed, and that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the appropriate filtering and monitoring provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

Emma Beer (DSL) and Matthew Allen (DDSL), members of the senior leadership team and Geoff Prout, Carly Rendell governor, are responsible for ensuring that our school has met the DfE Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges.

Our senior leadership team are responsible for

- procuring filtering and monitoring systems.
- documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why.
- reviewing the effectiveness of our provision.
- overseeing reports.
- ensuring that all staff understand their role, are appropriately trained, follow policies, processes and procedures and act on reports and concerns.
- ensuring the DSL and IT service providers/staff have sufficient time and support to manage their filtering and monitoring responsibilities.

The DSL has lead responsibility for overseeing and acting on:

- any filtering and monitoring reports.
- any child protection or safeguarding concerns identified.
- checking the filtering and monitoring system.

The TurnITon have technical responsibility for:

- maintaining filtering and monitoring systems.
- providing filtering and monitoring reports.
- completing technical actions identified following any concerns or checks to systems.
- working with the senior leadership team and DSL to procure systems, identify risks, carry out reviews and carry out checks.

All members of staff are provided with an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as part of our induction process, and in our child protection staff training.

All staff, students and parents/carers have a responsibility to follow this policy to report and record any filtering or monitoring concerns.

6.2.2 Decision Making and Reviewing our Filtering and Monitoring Provision

When procuring and/or making decisions about our filtering and monitoring provision, our senior leadership team works closely with the DSL/DDSL and the IT service providers/staff. Decisions have been recorded and informed by an approach which ensures our systems meet our school specific needs and circumstances, including but not limited to our student risk profile and specific technology use.

Any changes to the filtering and monitoring approaches will be assessed by staff with safeguarding, educational and technical experience and, where appropriate, with consent from the leadership team; all changes to the filtering policy are logged and recorded.

Our school undertakes an at least annual review of our filtering and monitoring systems to ensure we understand the changing needs and potential risks posed to our community.

In addition, our school undertakes regular checks on our filtering and monitoring systems, which are logged and recorded, to ensure our approaches are effective and can provide assurance to the governing body that we are meeting our safeguarding obligations.

- These checks are achieved by:
    - DSTC will use appropriate DfE recommended testing arrangements to assess the effectiveness of its filtering provision
    - Checks are completed by the DSL / DDSL and TurnITOn at least half termly in the DSL Office.
    - The annual review will consider the school's current safeguarding risk profile, including the age and needs of students, online trends, AI-generated content and any other online emerging harms.

6.2.3 Appropriate Filtering

DSTC's education broadband connectivity is provided through London Grid for Learning (LGfL) and DSTC uses SchoolProtect filtering.

- LGfL is a member of Internet Watch Foundation (IWF).
- LGfL have signed up to Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit list (CTIRU)
- https://schoolprotect.lgfl.org.uk/secure/policy/categoriesoverview is blocking access to illegal content including child sexual abuse material (CSAM).
- https://schoolprotect.lgfl.org.uk/secure/policy/categoriesoverview blocks access to sites which could promote or include harmful and/or inappropriate behaviour or material. This includes content which promotes discrimination or extremism, drugs/substance misuse, malware/hacking, gambling, piracy and copyright theft, pro-self-harm, eating disorder and/or suicide content, pornographic content and violent material.

We filter internet use on all school owned, or provided, internet enabled devices and networks. This is achieved by:

- All Devices connected to DSTC's network are subject to our web filtering provided by School Protect from LGfL. SchoolProtect categorises all websites, actively adding them to categories if they have not been processed previously. Categories and descriptions can be found here: https://schoolprotect.lgfl.org.uk/secure/category/categories.
- Filtering Restrictions can be reduced if the authenticated user is a part of a group like staff.
- SchoolProtect can create reports on showing the blocked site activity and more.
- All school devices are subjected to Senso Monitoring, whether on or off the school network. Therefore, although our SchoolProtect web filtering is unable to filter the traffic. Senso is able to monitor activity and notify safeguarding staff is there is cause for concern

Our filtering system is operational, up to date and is applied to all users, including guest accounts, all school owned devices and networks, and all devices using the school broadband connection.

We work with LGfL/School Protect/Senso and TurnITon to ensure that our filtering policy is continually reviewed to reflect our needs and requirements.

If there is failure in the software or abuse of the system, for example if students or staff accidentally or deliberately access, witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed, they are required to:

- Turn off monitor/screen, report the concern immediately to a member of staff, report the URL of the site to technical staff/services.

Filtering breaches will be reported to the DSL (via Bromcom Safeguarding) and technical staff and will be recorded and escalated as appropriate and in line with relevant policies, including our child protection, acceptable use, and behaviour policies.

Parents/carers will be informed of filtering breaches involving their child by a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Any access to material believed to indicate a risk of significant harm, or that could be illegal, will be reported as soon as it is identified to the appropriate agencies, including but not limited to the relevant agencies, which may include the Internet Watch Foundation (where there are concerns about child sexual abuse material), Kent Police, NCA-CEOP or Kent Integrated Children's Services via the Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal according to the nature and seriousness of the concern.

If staff are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering logs, or if staff perceive there to be unreasonable restrictions affecting teaching, learning or administration, they will report this to the DSL and/or leadership team.

6.2.4 Appropriate Monitoring
We will appropriately monitor internet use on all school provided devices and networks. This is achieved by:

- Physical monitoring (supervision) in lessons
- Monitoring internet and web access (reviewing logfile information) and/or active/pro-active technology monitoring services.

All users will be informed that use of our devices and networks can/will be monitored and that all monitoring is in line with data protection, human rights and privacy legislation.

If a concern is identified via our monitoring approaches:

- Where the concern relates to students, it will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded and responded to in line with relevant policies, such as child protection, acceptable use, and behaviour policies
- Where the concern relates to staff, it will be reported to the Principal (or chair of governors if the concern relates to the Principal), in line with our staff code of conduct.

Where our monitoring approaches detect any immediate risk of harm or illegal activity, this will be reported as soon as possible to the appropriate agencies; including but not limited to, the emergency services via 999, Kent Police via 101, NCA-CEOP , Local Authority Designated Officer or Kent Integrated Children's Services via the Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal or other relevant agency.

6.3 Information Security and Access Management
DSTC is responsible for ensuring an appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place, in order to safeguard our systems as well as staff and students. Further information can be found in Acceptable Use Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Student Confidentiality Policy.

DSTC will review the effectiveness of our procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Matthew Allen (DDSL), a member of the senior leadership team and Nick Bungard governor, are responsible for ensuring that our school has met the DfE cyber security standards for schools and colleges.

6.4 Remote/Online Learning
DSTC will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements and any local/national guidance.

All communication with students and parents/carers will take place using school provided or approved communication channels; for example, school provided email accounts and phone numbers and/or agreed systems: Google Classroom.

- Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.

Staff and students will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our school behaviour policy/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policies.

Staff and students will be encouraged to report issues experienced at home and concerns will be responded to in line with our child protection and other relevant policies.

When delivering remote learning, staff will follow our Remote Learning Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

6.5 Online Safety Training for Staff
DSTC will ensure that all staff receive online safety training, which, amongst other things, will include providing them with an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, as part of induction.

Ongoing online safety training and updates for all staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach. See section 7 for more information.

6.6 Educating Students
DSTC will ensure a comprehensive whole school curriculum response is in place to enable all students to learn about and manage online risks effectively as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. See section 9 for more information.

6.7 Working with Parents/Carers
DSTC will build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware and alert of the potential benefits and risks and to reinforce the importance of children being safe online by:

- Providing information on our school website and through existing communication channels (such as official social media, newsletters).

DSTC will ensure parents and carers understand what systems are used to filter and monitor their children's online use at school, what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. This is achieved by:

- Providing information on our school website and relevant policies such as acceptable use, home/school agreements and through existing communication channels.

Where the School is made aware of any potentially harmful risks, challenges and/or hoaxes circulating online, national or locally, we will respond in line with the DfE 'Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes' guidance to ensure we adopt a proportional and helpful response.

6.8 Use of Artificial Intelligence

The school recognises that AI is a powerful tool for learning but also presents unique safeguarding risks. This section should be read in conjunction with the school's standalone Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy.

7. Staff Engagement and Expectations

7.1 Staff Awareness, Induction and Training

All members of staff have been provided with a copy of part one of the current version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026' which covers safeguarding information for staff.

- School leaders, including the DSL and governors/trustees will read KCSIE in its entirety.
- School leaders and all members of staff who work directly with children will read Part one of KCSIE 2026.
- All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood the national guidance shared with them. The Principal's PA holds a tracking document of staff's completion of IHASCO's online Safeguarding Training and test score.

It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents. All staff are expected to re-read this policy at least annually (and following any updates) to ensure they understand our expectations and requirements.

All new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety, which, amongst other things, will include ensuring an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) to ensure they are aware of the school internal safeguarding processes, as part of their induction. This training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the local safeguarding partners and explores the Kent processes to follow. This is through 1:1 or small group training by a DSL/DDSL, leaflets and staff briefing updates.

All staff members including agency and third-party staff, where appropriate, will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) which is updated at least annually, to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues and how to report concerns. This is completed through annual online safeguarding training (the Key) with an assessment, update bulletins, focus briefing and staff meetings.

Online safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning. This is completed through annual online safeguarding training (The Key) with an assessment, update bulletins, focus briefing and staff meetings.

In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This is achieved through email updates, focus briefings and staff meetings.

DSTC recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and from managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis, and staff are encouraged to contribute to and shape school safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies. This is achieved through an annual safeguarding behaviour survey, contribution from members of staff and feedback to the DSL.

All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) training at induction. This training equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to be assured that our safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training is regularly updated. This is completed online annually.

The DSL and Principal will provide an annual report to the governing body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain an up-to-date record of who has been trained.

7.2 Safer Working Practice
Our school takes steps as outlined in this and other relevant policies to ensure processes are in place for staff that promote continuous vigilance, maintain an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour.

All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in the school behaviour policy/code of conduct.

The DSL will ensure that all staff (including contractors) and volunteers are aware of the school expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Staff will be made aware of the school behaviour management and physical intervention policies. Staff will manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and will have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. Any physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force will be in line with our agreed policy and procedures, and national guidance.

All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will adhere to relevant school policies including staff behaviour policy, mobile and smart technology, Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs), and social media.

7.3 Supervision and Support
The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

The school will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff to ensure that:

- All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
- All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.

The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.

8. Safer Recruitment and Allegations Against Staff

8.1 Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding Checks
DSTC is committed to ensure that we develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our students and staff. We recognise that we must ensure that people working with children in our setting are suitable, have the relevant qualifications/training and have passed any required checks to fulfill their roles.

- DSTC will follow Part three, 'Safer recruitment' of Keeping Children Safe in Education and relevant guidance from The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- The governing body and leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes as outlined within guidance.
- The governing body will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

The school maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.

DSTC is committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.

We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, and warnings.

Where the school places a student with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that student and will need to satisfy ourselves that the provider can meet the needs of the student.

- DSTC will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e., those checks that our school would otherwise perform in respect of our own staff.
- DSTC will know where a child is based during school hours. This includes maintaining records of the address of the AP and any sub-contracted provision or satellite sites the child might attend
- DSTC will regularly review alternative provision placements, at least half termly, to provide assurance that the child is attending regularly, the placement remains safe and the placement continues to meet the child's needs.
- Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed and terminated if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed
- Safeguarding information will be shared appropriately between DSTC and the alternative provision provider, and any safeguarding concerns will be acted upon without delay

Where the school organises work experience placements, we will follow the advice and guidance as identified in Part three of KCSIE.

Where the school organises homestays as part of exchange visits, we will follow the advice and guidance as identified in Part three of KCSIE 2026.

8.2 Allegations/Concerns Raised in Relation to Staff, Including Supply Teachers, Trainee Teachers, Volunteers and Contractors

Any concerns or allegations about staff will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with Part Four of KCSIE and the local Kent allegations arrangements, including discussions as necessary with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). In depth information can be found within our Staff Code of Conduct**.** This can be found in the staff handbook. Ensuring concerns are dealt with effectively will protect those working in or on behalf of the school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Where the Principal is unsure how to respond, for example if the school is unsure if a concern meets the harm thresholds, advice will be sought via the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

In all cases where allegations are made against staff or low-level concerns are reported, once proceedings have been concluded, the Principal (and if they have been involved, the LADO) will consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if any improvements can be made.

In the situation that the school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our premises for the purposes of running activities on behalf of DSTC (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

8.2.1 Concerns that Meet the Harm Threshold

DSTC recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, governors, contractors, agency and third-party staff, supply teachers, trainee teachers and visitors to behave in a way that indicates 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. This includes when someone has:

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

Allegations against staff which meet this threshold will be responded to and managed in line with Part four of KCSIE. Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred immediately to the Principal who will contact the LADO to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the chair of governors who will contact the LADO.

8.2.2 Concerns That Do Not Meet the Harm Threshold

DSTC may also need to take action in response to low-level concerns about staff. Additional information regarding low-level concerns is contained with our staff code of conduct – this includes what a low-level concern is, the importance of sharing them and the confidential procedure to follow when sharing them.

DSTC has an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately; this enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about and act within appropriate professional boundaries, and in accordance with our ethos and values.

- A low-level concern does not mean that it is insignificant; a low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
- Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example, suspicion, complaints, or allegations made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation, or as a result of vetting checks.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially and promptly in line with our staff code of conduct to the Principal.

- Where low-level concerns are reported to the school, the Principal will be informed of all low-level concerns and is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns.
- The Principal or a member of staff identified by the Principal will seek advice from and liaise with the LADO where appropriate, including where there is uncertainty about whether a concern meets the harm threshold

- Low-level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be shared with their employers so 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, we will consult with the LADO.

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

- Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) along with any other relevant policies and procedures (for example data retention policies).
- Where a pattern is identified, the school will implement appropriate action, for example consulting with the LADO and following our disciplinary/HR procedures.

8.3 Safe Culture

As part of our approach to safeguarding, DSTC has created and embedded a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer, if they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. This includes where concerns may be felt to be deliberately invented or malicious; such allegations are extremely rare and as such all concerns should be reported and recorded.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. The leadership team at DSTC will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.

All members of staff are made aware of the school Whistleblowing procedure. Staff must report concerns about the conduct of colleagues where that conduct may place a child at risk. Failure to report concerns may be addressed in accordance with the staff code of conduct and relevant disciplinary procedures.

Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

DSTC has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether the individual should be barred from engaging in regulated activity with children.

- If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO.

9. Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

DSTC will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This will include covering relevant issues through Relationships and Sex Education (secondary schools) and Health Education (for all state-funded schools).

We recognise that school plays an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour, what is 'safe,' to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe, and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned. Our curriculum provides opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of age-appropriate contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others.

DSTC recognises the crucial role we have to play in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole school approach which prepares students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny homophobia, biphobia, sexual harassment, sexual violence and other harmful behaviours.

DSTC has a clear set of values and standards, upheld, and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life which are underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Our programme is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate.

DSTC recognise that a one size fits all approach will not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach, tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children might be needed, for example children who are victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and children with SEND.

Our school systems support children to talk to a range of staff. All children will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will always be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

10. Physical Safety and Premises

10.1 Use of 'Reasonable Force'

There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force in order to safeguard children from harm. Further information regarding our approach and expectations can be found in our behaviour policy and is in line with the DfE 'Use of reasonable force in schools' guidance.

The Use of DSTC Premises By Other Organisations

Where our school facilities or premises are rented/hired out to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

- Where those services or activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of our school staff, our existing arrangements for child protection, including this policy, will apply.
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school facilities/premises, the Principal and governing body will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.

Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement (such as a lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. Failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

10.2 Site Security

All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors,volunteers, contractors and other individuals coming into school, in accordance with current statutory guidance and the school's safer recruitment and visitor procedures. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on site.

Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

11. Local Support
All members of staff in DSTC are made aware of local support available.

- **Kent Integrated Children's Services/ Children's Social Work Services**
  - Children's Portal (kent.gov.uk)
  - Front Door Service: 03000 411111
  - Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191

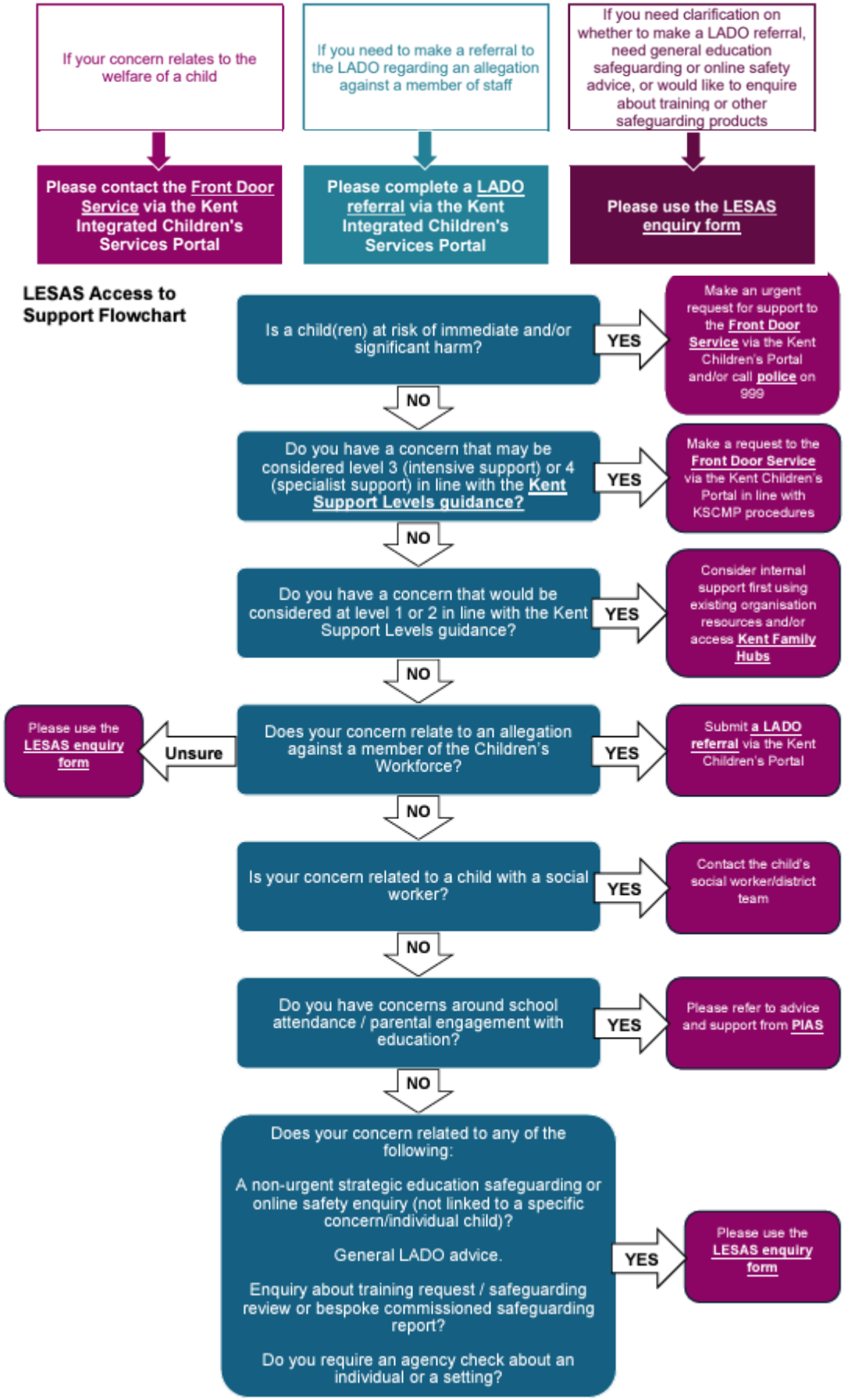
- **Local Early Help/ Family Help and Preventative Services and Family Hubs**
    - Early Help and Preventative Services - KELSI
    - Early Help contacts - KELSI
    - Kent Family Hubs - Kent County Council

- **Kent Police**
  - 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm

- **Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)**
  - www.kscmp.org.uk
  - 03000 421126 or kscmp@kent.gov.uk

- **Adult Safeguarding**
  - Adult Social Care via 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

- **The LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service (LESAS)**


If your concern relates to the welfare of a child
If you need to make a referral to the LADO regarding an allegation against a member of staff
If you need clarification on whether to make a LADO referral, need general education safeguarding or online safety advice, or would like to enquire about training or other safeguarding products
Please contact the Front Door Service via the Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal
Please complete a LADO referral via the Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal
Please use the LESAS enquiry form
LESAS Access to Support Flowchart
Is a child(ren) at risk of immediate and/or significant harm?
YES
Make an urgent request for support to the Front Door Service via the Kent Children's Portal and/or call police on 999
NO
Do you have a concern that may be considered level 3 (intensive support) or 4 (specialist support) in line with the Kent Support Levels guidance?
YES
Make a request to the Front Door Service via the Kent Children's Portal in line with KSCMP procedures
NO
Do you have a concern that would be considered at level 1 or 2 in line with the Kent Support Levels guidance?
YES
Consider internal support first using existing organisation resources and/or access Kent Family Hubs
NO
Does your concern relate to an allegation against a member of the Children's Workforce?
Unsure
Please use the LESAS enquiry form
YES
Submit a LADO referral via the Kent Children's Portal
NO
Is your concern related to a child with a social worker?
YES
Contact the child's social worker/district team
NO
Do you have concerns around school attendance / parental engagement with education?
YES
Please refer to advice and support from PIAS
NO
Does your concern related to any of the following:
A non-urgent strategic education safeguarding or online safety enquiry (not linked to a specific concern/individual child)?
General LADO advice.
Enquiry about training request / safeguarding review or bespoke commissioned safeguarding report?
Do you require an agency check about an individual or a setting?
YES
Please use the LESAS enquiry form

Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, creating, possessing, receiving or sharing sexual images or other sexualised material, including self-generated intimate images and/or videos and AI-generated or manipulated sexual imagery, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour, for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults, for example, anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing, for example for PE
- Secrecy relating to use of technology
- Sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy
- Fire setting

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

Signs that MAY INDICATE Physical Abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries, such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns, such as cigarette burns

- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Inappropriate/harmful medication usage
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries that cannot be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations for an injury, or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

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

Signs that MAY INDICATE Emotional Abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Secrecy relating to use of technology
- Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection

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

Signs that MAY INDICATE Neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 2: Support Organisations

NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline

- 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk

National Organisations

- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- Barnardo's: www.barnardos.org.uk
- Action for Children: www.actionforchildren.org.uk
- Children's Society: www.childrenssociety.org.uk
- Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse: www.csacentre.org.uk

Support for Staff

- Education Support Partnership: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service: https://swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service

Support for students

- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Fearless: www.fearless.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Shorespace: https://shorespace.org.uk/

Support for Adults

- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- CrimeStoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- We Stand https://westand.org.uk/our-services
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Advicenow: www.advicenow.org.uk

Support for Learning Disabilities

- Respond: www.respond.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Council for Disabled Children: https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk

Contextual Safeguarding Network

- https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/

Kent Resilience Hub

- https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/

Prisoners' Families Helpline

- info@prisonersfamilies.org / Telephone: 0808 808 2003

Substance Misuse

- We Are With You : www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/

- Talk to Frank: www.talktofrank.com

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse services: www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
- Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadviceline.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Respect Phoneline: https://respectphoneline.org.uk

Criminal and Sexual Exploitation

- National Crime Agency: www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are
- It's not okay: www.itsnotokay.co.uk
- NWG Network: www.nwgnetwork.org
- County Lines Toolkit for Professionals: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit
- Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm: https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/

Honour Based Abuse

- Karma Nirvana: https://karmanirvana.org.uk
- Forced Marriage Unit: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- FGM https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation
- The right to choose - government guidance on forced marriage: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage

Radicalisation and hate

- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk

Child-on-Child abuse, including bullying, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harrassment, sexual violence andself- generated intimate images and /or videos

- Rape Crisis: https://rapecrisis.org.uk
- Brook: www.brook.org.uk
- Disrespect Nobody: www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
- Upskirting – know your rights: www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Stop it Now! www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Diana Award: www.antibullyingpro.com
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- Centre of expertise on Child Sexual Abuse: www.csacentre.org.uk

Online Safety

- NCA-CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: https://reportharmfulcontent.com

- Marie Collins Foundation: www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety
- Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Cyber Choices: https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices
- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC): www.ncsc.gov.uk

Mental Health

- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Moodspark: https://moodspark.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- We are with you: www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Anna Freud: www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/

Appendix 2: School Counselling Services: Policy & Procedures

Key Personnel:

- Miss E Beer (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Jimmy Thompson (School Counsellor)

1. Overview and Purpose

The School Counselling Service provides short-term, targeted psychological support to students experiencing emotional or psychological distress. The service operates within a strict framework to ensure equitable access, clear boundaries, and seamless integration with the school's overarching safeguarding procedures.

2. Service Scope and Session Limits

- **The 6-Session Model:** The counselling intervention is strictly limited to six (6) consecutive sessions per student referral.

- **Extensions:** Sessions cannot be extended by students, parents or teaching/support staff. Extensions may only be authorised under exceptional circumstances by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), following direct consultation and agreement with the School Counsellor.

3. Referral and Triage Process

Admission to the counselling service follows a strict protocol:

[1. Application Form] —> [2. Triage by SC & DSL] —> [3. Assessment by SC] —> [4. 6-Session Allocation]

(Session reviews will be completed with the DSL and School Counsellor at relevant points throughout the 6 sessions).

- **Application:** A formal referral application must be submitted (via staff nomination, parental request, or student self-referral).

- **Triage:** The DSL and School Counsellor will review the referral to confirm suitability and determine risk.
- **Assessment:** The School Counsellor conducts an initial assessment to determine if short-term counselling is the correct pathway or if external specialist support is required.
- **Allocation:** If appropriate, the student is scheduled for their 6-session block.

4. Safeguarding and Crisis Management

- **Immediate Escalation:** The School Counsellor will immediately raise any safeguarding or child protection concerns directly with the DSL and log the concern on Bromcom without delay.
- **DSL Triage:** All logged concerns will be triaged by the DSL in strict accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy, with actions set within the required statutory timeframes.
- **Drop-In Sessions:** General "drop-ins" are not supported. The counsellor's schedule is reserved for contracted sessions to ensure fairness and consistency.
- **Crisis Exception:** If a student presents in an acute crisis, the School Counsellor will intervene to calm the student, manage immediate safety, and promptly direct them to the DSL or the relevant Pastoral Leader.

5. Communication Boundaries and Operations

To protect the clinical boundary and ensure the School Counsellor can focus entirely on student therapy, strict communication and operational rules apply:

- **Direct Contact Restriction:** Staff and parents must not email or contact the School Counsellor directly regarding any student or parent. All ongoing communication or queries must be routed through the Pastoral Team or the DSL. The School Counsellor will only communicate directly with parents or staff if the counsellor explicitly instigates the contact.
- **Pre-Booked Sessions Only:** The School Counsellor will only conduct sessions that have been pre-booked through the formal referral process. The counsellor will continue to collect students for these scheduled sessions as required.
- **Ad-Hoc/Unbooked Arrivals:** General "drop-ins" are not permitted. If a student arrives for a session without a booking, they will not be seen under any circumstances.
    - The student will be instructed to return to their appropriate destination (lessons or the Pastoral Lead) independently. The counsellor will not accompany them.
    - The School Counsellor will immediately send an email notification regarding the unbooked arrival to the Pastoral Lead, with the DSL and the Attendance Officer copied into the correspondence.
- **Acute Crisis Exception:** If a student arrives without an appointment and is in an acute crisis, this is treated as a safeguarding exception. The School Counsellor will intervene immediately to calm the student and manage their safety, and will promptly escort them directly to the DSL or the relevant Pastoral Leader and an entry is to be made on Bromcom Safeguarding

6. Confidentiality and Its Limits

Students must be informed during their triage session that counselling is confidential except when there is a risk of harm to themselves or others. In such cases, confidentiality is breached immediately to inform the DSL.

7. Attendance and No-Show Policy

- If a student misses a session without a valid reason (e.g., school trip or illness), that session is forfeited and counts toward their 6-session limit.

8. Information Sharing and Record Keeping

While any clinical notes are owned by the School Counsellor they will be stored securely locked by the School Counsellor, general updates regarding engagement should be recorded on Bromcom to ensure wrap-around care.

9. Post-Counselling Pathways

At session 4/5, the School Counsellor will evaluate the student's progress. Upon completion of session 6, the School Counsellor will provide a brief closing summary with recommendations recorded on Bromcom.