15 – Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

School Name: The Minster School

Approving Body	Trust Board and LGB
Date Approved	September 2026
Version	3
Supersedes Version	Autumn 2025
Review Date	Autumn 2027

The following assessments have been completed in relation to this policy

Workload impact ☐ Equality impact ☑ Trust virtues ☑

Table of Contents

A. POLICY PURPOSE, SCOPE AND SAFEGUARDING ETHOS 4
B. STATUTORY AND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK 7
C. SAFEGUARDING LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES 8
D. RECOGNISING, REPORTING AND RECORDING CONCERNS 12
E. EARLY SUPPORT, FAMILY HELP AND CHILD PROTECTION 16
F. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE AT GREATER RISK OF HARM 20
G SAFEGUARDING AND EXTRA-FAMILIAL HARM 25
H. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE AND HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR 29
I. ONLINE SAFETY 33
J. SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENTATIVE EDUCATION 37
K. CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS ABOUT ADULTS 41
L. SAFER WORKING ARRANGEMENTS 48
M. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION 52

This policy sets out the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures for Minster Trust for Education and for The Minster School.

Important Contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Head Teacher	Ben Chaloner	Headteacher@minsterschool.org.uk
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Laura Goodhead	DSL@minsterschool.org.uk
Deputy DSLs	James Edwards and Rhod Price	DSL@minsterschool.org.uk
Additional safeguarding leads	Derrick Dring (Head of Junior School) Joe Brookes (Head of KS3) Karen Crone (Head of KS4) Justin Samuels Director of Post 16 Louise Wilmot (6th Form Academic Mentor) Helen Sanderson (Year Leader) Shauna Batchelor (Year Leader) Ian Roberts (Year Leader) Margaret McAteer (Year Leader)	DSL@minsterschool.org.uk
Designated teacher for children in care	Laura Goodhead	DSL@minsterschool.org.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Eva Callaghan	0115 8041272 LADO@nottscc.gov.uk
LA safeguarding children in education officer	Zain Iqbal	SCEIO@nottscc.gov.uk
MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)		0300 500 80 90 0300 456 4546 (out of hours)
Chair of governors/Designated Governor for Child Protection	David Shannon Fi Thompson Mike Johnson	david.shannon@minsterschool.org.uk Fi.Thompson@minsterschool.org.uk Mike.Johnson@minsterschool.org.uk
Lead safeguarding Trustee	Moira Hepworth	Moira.hepworth@mitretrust.org.uk

Policy purpose, scope and safeguarding ethos

The purpose of this policy is to explain how The Minster School, as part of Minster Trust for Education (MITRE), safeguards and promotes the welfare of children, protects them from harm and responds to safeguarding and child protection concerns.

This policy applies to all staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, governors, trustees, volunteers and contractors. Visitors and external providers are expected to follow the safeguarding arrangements relevant to their role while on the premises or working with children on behalf of our school.

This policy is informed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and other legislation and statutory guidance applicable to our school. It should be read alongside the related policies and procedures identified below. The Nottinghamshire County Council Model Safeguarding Policy has been used to draft this policy.

MITRE's Mission and Safeguarding Commitment

Minster Trust for Education's stated mission is **"Together we help every child to flourish, opening doors to fulfilling futures"**. Flourishing can only happen if children are protected from harm and are safe and well cared for. We insist that every school has a strong and well-established culture of safeguarding and take an overarching responsibility to ensure this is the case through the consistent implementation of this policy.

Safeguarding Ethos and Commitment

In every MITRE school we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment in which every child feels valued, respected and able to seek help.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is central to leadership, governance, teaching, pastoral care, recruitment, staff conduct and activities taking place on or away from the premises. We maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and promote a culture of vigilance, openness and professional challenge.

We recognise that children may experience harm within or outside their family, within peer groups, in the community or online. We listen to children and consider their needs, wishes, feelings, lived experience and any barriers that may make it more difficult for them to recognise harm, report concerns or access help. Our whole-school approach includes:

- clear leadership, governance and accountability
- accessible systems for reporting concerns
- prompt reporting, recording, referral and escalation
- safer recruitment and appropriate safeguarding arrangements
- staff induction, training and updates
- appropriate online safety, filtering and monitoring
- preventative education and early identification of need
- effective work with parents, carers and safeguarding partners
- regular review of safeguarding information, policies and practice

This commitment underpins our whole-school approach and reflects our belief that every child has the right to feel safe, be heard and receive appropriate help and protection.

All staff must understand their safeguarding responsibilities, follow the procedures set out in this policy and report concerns without delay. The absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy must not prevent or delay appropriate action. Government guidance and advice can be found in What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abuse.

Staff responsibilities are set out in Section C: Responsibilities of All Staff, and procedures for reporting concerns are set out in Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns.

Inclusive and Anti-Discriminatory Safeguarding Culture

The trust board and school leaders will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture in which racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Children will be provided with accessible ways to report prejudice-based and discriminatory harm and will be supported to have confidence that their concerns will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon.

Relevant safeguarding information will be reviewed to identify patterns and inform staff training, preventative education, pastoral support and improvements to practice.

Reporting Systems for Children

Children are provided with well-promoted, accessible and age-appropriate ways to report safeguarding concerns. They are helped to understand:

- who they can speak to
- how they can report a concern
- that they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported
- what may happen after they report a concern
- what support is available.

At The Minster School, students are encouraged to report concerns to any member of staff. We promote a culture in which all adults are approachable, will listen to students, take concerns seriously and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

In addition to speaking with any member of staff, students are encouraged to report concerns directly to their Head of Year, Head of Key Stage, Sixth Form Pastoral Lead, Head of Sixth Form or Head of Junior School. Members of this pastoral leadership team who have received Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) level training are available to provide safeguarding advice and support, and all concerns will be responded to promptly and referred to the safeguarding team as appropriate.

We recognise that some children may experience barriers to reporting concerns or may feel more comfortable speaking with staff who provide additional support for their needs. Students may therefore

also report concerns to the SENCo, Assistant SENCo or Inclusion Unit Lead. Members of this team who have received DSL-level safeguarding training are available to provide additional safeguarding support and guidance. These staff members play a key role in supporting students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those who access inclusion provision and those who may require reasonable adjustments or additional support to communicate concerns effectively.

The Minster School also operates the 'Call It Out' reporting system, which provides students with an additional means of raising concerns. Students can submit concerns at any time by emailing the dedicated service or by completing the associated Microsoft Form. This enables students to seek help, report safeguarding concerns, disclose incidents or raise worries about themselves or others in a way that feels safe and accessible to them.

Information about these reporting routes is regularly promoted across The Minster School through assemblies, tutor time, pastoral support, safeguarding education and school communications. Students are reminded that concerns can be reported at any time, that they will be listened to and taken seriously, and that support will be provided wherever needed.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy forms part of the school's wider safeguarding arrangements and should be read alongside other relevant policies and procedures. The following policies contribute to the whole-trust approach to safeguarding:

- MITRE staff code of conduct
- Behaviour policy
- Child-on-Child abuse policy
- Supporting gender questioning children policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- MITRE recruitment policy
- Complaints policy
- Trustee/governors code of conduct
- Pupil attendance policy
- Data protection and retention policy
- Pupil mental health and well-being policy
- Use of AI policy
- Educational visits policy
- Allergens policy
- Filtering and monitoring procedures
- Allegations and low-level concerns procedures
- Visitors' arrangements
- Relationships and sex education policy
- Positive student management policy
- Physical intervention policy
- Attendance policy

- Mobile phone policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- SEND policy
- Supporting children with medical conditions policy

Review, Approval and Public Availability

This policy is reviewed at least annually and updated sooner where required by changes to legislation, statutory or local guidance, our safeguarding arrangements or learning from practice.

The board of trustees seeks assurance that the policy is understood and effective in practice and does not treat annual review and approval solely as a procedural exercise.

The policy is:

- made available to all staff and included within safeguarding induction
- communicated to staff whenever it is updated
- published on the school's website or made available by other appropriate means
- communicated appropriately to parents and carers

Our school will ensure that superseded versions are removed from staff systems, induction materials and policy collections, while retaining previous versions in accordance with its document-retention arrangements

A. Statutory and Local Safeguarding Framework

Our safeguarding arrangements are informed by national legislation, statutory guidance and Nottinghamshire's local multi-agency safeguarding procedures. Together, these establish the responsibilities and standards that we must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Statutory Guidance

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, where applicable
- Other statutory guidance relevant to our school's legal status, age range and provision

Legal Responsibilities

Our safeguarding responsibilities arise from legislation and regulations which include, where applicable:

- the Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- the Education Act 2002
- the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

- the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
- the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- the Childcare Act 2006 and relevant disqualification regulations
- the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010
- legislation concerning specific safeguarding duties, including female genital mutilation

Other legislation and regulations may apply according to our school's legal status and the services it provides. The trust board is responsible for ensuring that our school's safeguarding arrangements comply with the law and have regard to relevant statutory guidance.

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Arrangements, Local Thresholds and Referrals

All MITRE schools follow the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, procedures and guidance published by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. We use Nottinghamshire's current threshold criteria and referral pathways to consider what help or protection a child may need.

A Family Help assessment is not required before making a referral to children's social care.

Detailed reporting and referral procedures are set out in Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Immediate Danger and Referrals. The continuum of support and protection is explained in Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

We will use Nottinghamshire's professional challenge and escalation procedures where concerns are not adequately addressed, or a child's circumstances are not improving.

Further information: Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, Nottinghamshire Framework for Support and Nottinghamshire MASH referral arrangements

B. Safeguarding Leadership, Governance and Responsibilities

In every MITRE school, safeguarding is a shared responsibility supported by clear leadership and effective governance. Everyone working in or on behalf of our school must act on concerns and must not assume that another person will take action or share information that may be critical to keeping a child safe.

The Board of Trustees

The MITRE Trust Board will:

- Facilitate a whole-trust approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the CEO and the Head Teachers to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

- Ensure that a senior member of staff is appointed as DSL and appropriately trained deputies provide effective cover
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness
- Appoint a Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding to monitor the effectiveness of the policy in conjunction with the standards and effectiveness committee
- Ensure there is an appointed governor on each school's Local Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy at individual school level

Make sure:

- Each DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-trust approach to safeguarding and related policies
- Each DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
- The trust has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors)
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

The Chair of the Board will act as a 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the CEO, where appropriate. (See section K)

All Trustees will read Keeping Children Safe in Education parts 1and 2.

Local Governing Bodies

Governors on local governing bodies will review the school specific elements of the policy after the Trust-level policy has been reviewed and approved. They will hold the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of the policy at school level.

The local governing board will appoint a link governor to act as the governor responsible for safeguarding and monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. They will liaise with the DSL in school.

Governors will ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners. They will ensure records are kept for inspection by the Trust.

All Governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education parts 1 and 2.

CEO and Trust Leaders

The CEO is responsible for the development of this policy and for holding individual schools to account for effectively applying the policy. This includes:

- Updating the policy at least annually to include all statutory elements and ensuring all schools are supported to implement the policy in full in their specific contexts
- Monitoring the single central record for the trust to ensure compliance at all levels

- Developing an annual safeguarding audit tool for use by schools, ensuring this is completed and analysed
- Undertaking safeguarding reviews for schools to ensure trust policy is being implemented well, addressing any concerns or shortcomings
- Ensuring safer recruitment is exercised in all schools and at the trust centrally
- Providing regular review, support, training and guidance to meet the trust's safeguarding aims
- Ensuring children have accessible and well-promoted ways to report concerns
- Ensuring safeguarding arrangements meet the needs of children who may be at greater risk of harm
- Providing sufficient information and assurance to support effective scrutiny and improvement

The CEO (in partnership with the LGB) will act as 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a Head Teacher, where appropriate (see Section K).

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for implementing the safeguarding arrangements agreed by the trust board. They will:

- promote a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- ensure that staff understand and follow this policy
- ensure that concerns are reported, recorded and acted upon promptly
- support the DSL and deputies and maintain effective safeguarding cover
- ensure that staff and other relevant adults receive appropriate safeguarding induction and training
- oversee the implementation of safer recruitment and safeguarding procedures
- keep the governing body and trust leaders informed about safeguarding risks, practice and required improvements

Where the Headteacher or Principal is also the DSL, sufficient time and resources will be provided for both roles and appropriate arrangements must manage any conflict of interest.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL will:

- advise and support staff and coordinate the response to safeguarding concerns
- make or support referrals and liaise with children's social care, police, health and other services
- understand Nottinghamshire's thresholds, referral pathways and escalation procedures
- contribute to Family Help, statutory assessments, child protection processes and multi-agency meetings
- promote lawful and timely information sharing and maintain secure child protection records
- ensure that staff understand how to report concerns and make direct referrals
- consider children's wishes, feelings, lived experiences and additional barriers to receiving help

- work with the Designated Teacher, SENCO, senior mental health lead and other relevant professionals
- advise leaders and governors about safeguarding risks, patterns and required improvements.

The DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Where this is not possible, the agreed safeguarding cover arrangements will apply.

Detailed procedures for responding to concerns, making referrals and coordinating support are set out in Section D: Recognising, Reporting and Recording Concerns and Section E: Early Support, Family Help and Child Protection.

Further information: KCSIE 2026, Annex B – Role of the DSL

Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Cover

Deputies are trained to the same standard as the DSL and may undertake delegated safeguarding activities. When the DSL is unavailable:

- staff should report concerns to a deputy DSL
- concerns must continue to be reviewed and acted upon without delay
- urgent action or referral must not wait for the DSL's return

Any member of staff may make a direct referral or contact the police where necessary. An untrained senior leader does not automatically assume the role of the DSL or a deputy.

Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

For consistency with statutory guidance, this policy will use the terms "Looked-After Children" and "Previously Looked-After Children" to remain in line with KCSIE 2026. Nottinghamshire uses the term, "Children We Care For" for "Looked-After Children". As of publishing, both sets of terminology will be in use until the previous terms are phased out nationally.

The Designated Teacher will work with the DSL, SENCO, Virtual School, social workers, carers and other professionals to promote children's educational achievement, welfare and safety. They will contribute to Personal Education Plans, ensure relevant staff understand the child's needs and support appropriate information sharing during transitions.

Further safeguarding considerations for looked-after and previously looked-after children are set out in Section F: Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children.

Further information: Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff must maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and act in the best interests of the child. They must:

- read and understand KCSIE 2026, this policy and other safeguarding information relevant to their role

- know who the DSL and deputies are and understand the safeguarding cover arrangements
- recognise, report and record concerns without delay
- listen to children and take their concerns, wishes and feelings seriously
- act immediately where a child is in danger or significant harm is suspected
- make a direct referral where necessary and not allow the absence of the DSL to delay action
- share relevant information appropriately and never promise to keep a safeguarding disclosure secret
- report concerns about adults and unsafe safeguarding practice;
- complete safeguarding training and updates appropriate to their role

Multi-Agency Working

All MITRE schools will work with safeguarding partners and other agencies to help, support and protect children. We will share relevant information, contribute to assessments, plans and meetings, complete agreed actions and respond promptly to requests.

Where concerns remain or progress is insufficient, staff will seek feedback and use Nottinghamshire's professional challenge and escalation procedures.

Our contribution to Early Help, Family Help and statutory plans is explained in Section E: Multi-Agency Plans and Review.

C. Recognising, Reporting and Recording Concerns

In MITRE schools, staff must report safeguarding concerns without delay, even where information is limited or they are uncertain whether harm has occurred.

Staff should be alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, wellbeing, attendance, relationships, progress, health, online activity or wider circumstances. Concerns may arise within or outside the family, within peer groups, in the community or online, and different forms of harm may overlap.

Staff must remain professionally curious and avoid assumptions based on a child's characteristics, needs or behaviour.

Responding to a Disclosure

If a child shares a concern or discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation, staff should:

- listen calmly, give the child their full attention and allow them to speak at their own pace
- use open prompts only where clarification is necessary and avoid leading, investigative or repeated questions
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing and explain that information must be shared with those who can help
- never promise confidentiality, make judgements or confront the person alleged to have caused harm
- not ask the child to write a statement, sign notes or repeat their account unnecessarily
- record the child's words, wishes and feelings as accurately as possible
- report the concern to the DSL or a deputy immediately

Staff must not investigate the concern themselves or confront the person alleged to have caused harm.

Where a concern involves nudes or semi-nudes, including AI-generated or altered imagery, staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, forward, save or ask the child to share the imagery. The concern must be reported to the DSL immediately. Where a concern involves harmful digital material, staff must also follow Section H: Reporting Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour.

Further information about recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation is available in What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners and through the NSPCC.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Staff must report concerns to the DSL or a deputy without delay using the school's agreed procedure:

At The Minster School, safeguarding concerns must be recorded on the school's electronic safeguarding system, MyConcern, as soon as possible after the concern has arisen, been disclosed or been observed. Records should be factual, accurate and clearly distinguish between fact, opinion and professional judgement. Where a concern is urgent or a child may be at immediate risk of harm, staff must speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) or the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) without delay, in addition to recording the concern on MyConcern. Staff must not assume that concerns raised with or observed by them have been reported by others and remain responsible for following the school's safeguarding reporting procedures.

An electronic or written record does not replace the need to speak directly to the DSL or a deputy where a concern is urgent.

If the DSL is unavailable, staff must follow Section C: Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Cover. The absence of the DSL or a deputy must not delay action.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care where necessary. Staff should inform the DSL as soon as possible after making a direct referral, unless there is a valid reason not to do so.

Immediate Danger and Referrals

Where a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent protection, staff must contact the police on **999** and make an immediate referral to children's social care where appropriate.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made to Nottinghamshire MASH without delay.

A Family Help assessment is not required before making a referral. Seeking advice, consulting the DSL or attempting to obtain consent must not delay protective action.

The available support and statutory pathways are explained in Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions, actions and outcomes must be recorded promptly using **MyConcern**, our electronic safeguarding recording system. Records should include:

- The child's identifying details and the date, time and context of the concern
- A clear and factual account, including the child's own words, wishes and feelings where possible
- Relevant observations, including the location and appearance of any injury
- The name and role of the person making the record
- When and to whom the concern was reported
- Advice received, action taken and decisions made
- The outcome and arrangements for follow-up or support

Records should distinguish between fact, observation, professional opinion and information provided by another person.

Staff must not photograph a child's injury, mark or physical indicator for safeguarding-recording purposes. A body map must be used only to record the location and observable appearance of an injury. Staff must not attempt to diagnose the injury, estimate its age or speculate about how it occurred. Photographs required for evidential, forensic or medical purposes should normally be taken by appropriately trained police, medical or other authorised professionals.

Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. MASH or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.
Timely and accurate recording will take place on MyConcern, including:

- A clear, comprehensive, factual and evidence-based summary of the concern. Where an opinion or professional judgement is recorded this should be clearly stated as such
- Original notes will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved. This includes, for example, telephone calls to other professionals, email contact and the records of meetings
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached, roles and responsibilities of each agency and the outcome
- Details of any referrals made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme. This will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child.

MyConcern creates a chronology of concerns relating to each child. By assigning permissions in MyConcern to each member of staff, confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Any additional paper-based child protection files are stored securely in the DSL office, which is then indicated within the MyConcern chronology.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the DSL to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. MyConcern records will be available for external scrutiny, for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit.

Highlighting the Most Vulnerable Children

MyConcern keeps electronic records of all concerns raised about children, including where there is no need for further action or referral to external agencies. There are two features of MyConcern which are used to highlight the most vulnerable children's needs, ensuring that staff maintain awareness and attention on an ongoing basis.

The **MITRE Child Protection flag** is used to highlight either a child protection or safeguarding concern or an accumulation of concerns about a child's welfare which are outside of the usual range of concerns which relate to ordinary life events.

A MITRE Child Protection 'flag' is assigned to a child's profile in MyConcern in the event of:

- A referral to MASH/Children's Social Care
- A number of minor concerns on the child's main school file
- Any child open to social care or Early Help
- Involved with a statutory safeguarding agency

Once assigned by the DSL, the MITRE Child Protection flag is not removed, including when there are no active or open concerns regarding the child concerned.

The current safeguarding tier of concern for each child is indicated by a **Level of Need** assigned by the DSL to each child's profile in MyConcern. The Levels of Need are:

- **Level 1:** Universal
- **Level 2:** School support
- **Level 3:** External agency
- **Level 4:** External – Social Care

The Level of Need of each child will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and updated as appropriate in MyConcern by the DSL. Each child's individual circumstances and context will be borne in mind when managing the Level of Need on an ongoing basis. Professional judgement will be an important factor when making this decision and will need clear links between pastoral staff and designated safeguarding leads in school.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Staff must maintain appropriate confidentiality but must never promise to keep safeguarding information secret.

Timely information sharing is essential to identifying need, assessing risk and protecting children. Staff must not assume that another person or agency will share information that may be critical to keeping a child safe.

Information will be shared lawfully, promptly and proportionately where necessary to safeguard or promote a child's welfare. Consent is not always required where another lawful basis applies, and data protection law must not prevent or delay safeguarding action.

Where safe and appropriate, children and parents or carers will be informed about what information will be shared, with whom and why. Information may be shared without their knowledge or consent where seeking consent could increase risk, prejudice an investigation or cause unjustified delay.

Decisions to share or withhold information and the reasons for them will be recorded.

Consent for Early Help and Family Help is addressed in Section E: Consent and Working with Families.

Further guidance: Information sharing advice for practitioners and Data Protection in schools

Referral Feedback and Escalation

Children's social care should acknowledge a referral and decide the next course of action within one working day. The referrer should follow up if appropriate feedback is not received.

Where the response does not address the concern, or the child's circumstances are not improving, we will use Nottinghamshire's professional challenge and escalation procedures. Staff must continue to report new information while awaiting a response.

Referral to another agency does not end our responsibility to safeguard and support the child.

Transfer of Child Protection Records

When a child moves school or college, the DSL will transfer the child protection file securely and separately from the main pupil record within five days of an in-year transfer or; within the first five days of a new term.

Confirmation of receipt must be obtained. Relevant safeguarding and risk information will be shared in advance where necessary to enable the receiving school to assess risk and arrange support.

We will retain a record of the transfer in accordance with our retention procedures.

Support Following a Safeguarding Concern

We recognise that disclosures and safeguarding processes may be distressing. We will consider appropriate pastoral, therapeutic or specialist support, safety planning, reasonable adjustments and staff wellbeing support according to individual need.

Support will be reviewed as circumstances change and will not replace any required referral, investigation or protective action.

D. Early Support, Family Help and Child Protection

All MITRE schools recognise that children and families should receive the right help at the right time. We will identify additional needs early, provide support within our school where appropriate and work with other services when a coordinated or statutory response is required.

Support will be based on the child's needs and circumstances. It will not delay a referral to children's social care where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Immediate safeguarding concerns must be reported in accordance with Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Immediate Danger and Referrals.

Continuum of Help and Protection

The support available to children and families may include:

- pastoral support within our school
- universal services and community-based early help
- targeted support through Nottinghamshire Early Help services or Family Help
- support for a child in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- child protection action under section 47 of the Children Act 1989

The level of support may change as needs increase, reduce or become better understood. Staff must continue to report new or escalating concerns and must not assume that existing support or agency involvement means that further action is unnecessary.

Pastoral and Community-Based Support

Where needs can be met safely within our school or through universal services, support may include:

- pastoral care and regular contact with a trusted adult
- attendance, behaviour, SEND or mental health support
- reasonable adjustments and individual support plans
- help from health, family, community or voluntary services
- advice or support through Nottinghamshire Family Hub Networks
- advice and support from the trust

Support should have clear aims and be reviewed to determine whether it is improving the child's circumstances. Where needs are increasing, support is ineffective or safeguarding concerns arise, the DSL should consider additional help or referral to children's social care.

Early Help and Family Help

Staff should be alert to children and families who may benefit from coordinated help. This may include circumstances involving absence from education, SEND or health needs, mental health, domestic abuse, family difficulties, caring responsibilities, exploitation or several needs which cannot be addressed effectively by one service.

The DSL will use Nottinghamshire's current threshold guidance and may consult the Early Help Unit or other relevant services.

Family Help brings services together through a coordinated assessment and plan. Education staff may be asked to contribute information, attend meetings, complete agreed actions, review progress or act as lead practitioner where appropriate and supported by local arrangements.

A consistent relationship with the child and family should be maintained wherever possible as their needs change.

Further information and local support can be sought through the Family Hub Networks.

Consent and Working with Families

Early Help and targeted Family Help are voluntary and should be undertaken with the family's consent. The child and family should understand:

- what support is being offered and why
- what information will be shared
- which practitioners or services will be involved
- how progress will be reviewed

If consent is refused, the DSL will consider why support has been declined, whether needs can be addressed in another way and whether the level of concern requires referral to children's social care.

Consent is not required before making a child protection referral or where another lawful basis permits information sharing. Refusal of support must not delay action where a child may be at risk of harm.

General information-sharing requirements are set out in Section D: Confidentiality and Information Sharing.

Family Help Assessments and Plans

Where Family Help is appropriate, the assessment and plan should be child-centred, proportionate and informed by the family's strengths and needs. It should:

- reflect the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience
- consider the needs of other children and adults within the family
- identify risks, strengths, needs and desired outcomes
- set out the support to be provided and who is responsible for each action
- include clear review arrangements
- be updated when circumstances or risks change

A Family Help assessment is not required before making a referral to children's social care.

Family Networks and Family Group Decision-Making

Where safe and appropriate, the child's wider family network may be involved in identifying support and developing a plan. This may include family group decision-making or a family group conference.

The child's welfare and best interests remain central. Family involvement must not delay protective action or result in information being shared with a person who may place the child or another person at greater risk.

Children in Need

Under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, a child may be considered in need where they are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without services, or where they are disabled. Where children's social care undertakes a section 17 assessment or provides support, we will:

- share relevant information
- contribute to assessments, plans and reviews
- carry out agreed actions
- monitor the child's attendance, presentation, welfare and progress
- report new or escalating concerns promptly

Subject to local arrangements, an appropriately skilled practitioner who is not a social worker may act as the lead practitioner for support under section 17.

Child Protection

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made to Nottinghamshire MASH without delay. We will cooperate with child protection enquiries and processes by:

- providing relevant information promptly
- attending strategy discussions, child protection conferences, core groups and reviews
- contributing informed reports and professional views
- completing agreed actions within the required timescale
- supporting the child within our school

Section 47 enquiries and child protection plans must be led by a qualified social worker. Our involvement will continue for as long as help or protection is required.

Operation Encompass

We receive Operation Encompass notifications where police have reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. A child may be affected even where they were not present during the incident or normally live elsewhere. Notifications will be:

- received and stored securely
- shared only with staff who need the information to safeguard or support the child
- considered alongside other information known about the child and family
- used to arrange appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support

An Operation Encompass notification does not replace a referral to children's social care. Where the information indicates that a child may be at risk of harm, we will follow our safeguarding and referral procedures.

Further information about supporting children affected by domestic abuse is set out in Section F: Children Affected by Domestic Abuse.

Multi-Agency Plans and Review

The school will contribute fully to Early Help, Family Help, child-in-need and child protection plans. Staff attending meetings should be appropriately informed and able to contribute to decision-making. We will:

- provide clear, accurate and relevant information
- consider the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience
- complete agreed actions within the required timescales
- maintain appropriate records
- monitor whether support is improving the child's circumstances
- report and escalate concerns where risk increases or progress is insufficient

Referral to another service does not end our responsibility to safeguard, support and monitor the child.

Where concerns remain or progress is insufficient, staff must follow Section D: Referral Feedback and Escalation.

Further information: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

E. Children Who May Be at Greater Risk of Harm

In every MITRE school, we recognise that any child may experience abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm. Some children may face additional risks or barriers that make it more difficult for them to recognise harm, report concerns or receive appropriate help.

Staff will consider each child's individual circumstances, needs and lived experience. Membership of a particular group does not mean that a child is experiencing harm, and support will be based on assessment of the individual child rather than assumptions or stereotypes.

Children with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities or Health Conditions

Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions may experience additional safeguarding barriers. These can include:

- assumptions that behaviour, mood or injury relates to the child's needs or condition
- communication difficulties or limited opportunities to report concerns
- difficulty recognising that behaviour towards them is abusive
- increased dependence on adults for care, communication or mobility
- intimate or personal care needs
- social isolation or bullying
- greater exposure to online risks
- a disproportionate impact from harm without outward signs

Staff must remain professionally curious and avoid allowing a child's needs, disability or diagnosis to distract from possible safeguarding concerns. Communication and reporting arrangements will be adapted to the child's needs, and the DSL will work with the SENCO, health professionals, parents or carers and other agencies where appropriate.

Concerns involving a child's medical care, access to essential medication or failure to follow an agreed healthcare plan should be reported to the DSL where they may indicate neglect or another safeguarding concern.

Further information: SEND Code of Practice, Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions and Nottinghamshire SEND local offer

Children with a Social Worker

Children may have a social worker because of safeguarding or welfare needs. Their experiences of abuse, neglect or family adversity may affect their attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, learning and relationships.

The DSL will use relevant information about the child's social worker to inform decisions about safety and support. We will contribute to assessments and plans and report new or escalating concerns promptly.

Staff must not assume that children's social care involvement means that another professional will act.

Further information: Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements

Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

Looked-after and previously looked-after children, also referred locally as children we care for, may have experienced abuse, neglect, loss, disruption or trauma and may require additional safeguarding and pastoral support.

The DSL and Designated Teacher will work with social workers, carers, parents, the Virtual School and other professionals to ensure that educational and safeguarding needs are considered together.

For a looked-after child, the DSL should hold details of the child's social worker and the relevant Virtual School Head.

The responsibilities of the Designated Teacher are set out in Section C: Designated Teacher.

Further information: Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children and Nottinghamshire Virtual School

Children in Kinship Care and Private Fostering Arrangements

Children living in kinship care may require support arising from changes in family relationships, care arrangements or previous experiences. We will respond to individual needs and signpost carers to relevant local support.

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative for 28 days or more.

Staff must report any known or suspected private fostering arrangement to the DSL. We will notify the local authority where required and will not assume that another person has already done so.

Further information: Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements, Nottinghamshire Kinship Support Service, and Private Fostering Procedures

Young Carers

A young carer is a child who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person. Caring responsibilities may affect their wellbeing, attendance, relationships or educational progress.

Staff should report concerns about possible caring responsibilities to the DSL. We will consider appropriate pastoral support, assessment and referral to relevant services.

Further information: Young Carers Notts

Children Absent from Education

Repeated or prolonged absence from education may be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health difficulties, safeguarding risks within the home or other unmet needs. We will:

- monitor attendance and patterns of absence
- respond promptly to unexplained or concerning absence
- make reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and welfare
- consider absence alongside other safeguarding information
- share information and work with parents, carers and relevant agencies
- refer or escalate concerns where the child cannot be located, risk is increasing or circumstances are not improving

Staff must follow our school's attendance and children missing education procedures. Attendance concerns must not be treated solely as an administrative matter where there may be a safeguarding risk. Further details can be found in the MITRE Pupil Attendance Policy.

Further information: Working together to improve school attendance, Children missing education and Nottinghamshire Children Missing Education arrangements

Children Receiving Alternative Provision

The commissioning school retains responsibility for safeguarding a child placed in alternative provision. Before and during a placement, we will:

- obtain written assurance about the provider's safeguarding checks and arrangements
- know where the child is being educated, including any subcontracted or satellite provision
- share relevant safeguarding and risk information
- monitor attendance, welfare, progress and the suitability of the placement
- review the placement at least half-termly
- act immediately where concerns arise, ending the placement if it is no longer safe or suitable

Any change to the provider, location or circumstances of the placement which may increase risk must be considered promptly.

Commissioning, provider-assurance and placement arrangements are set out in Section L: Alternative Provision.

For more information: Alternative Provision - Statutory Guidance

Children Affected by Domestic Abuse

A child may be a victim of domestic abuse where they see, hear or experience its effects, including where they were not present during an incident or normally live elsewhere.

We will consider Operation Encompass notifications alongside other information known about the child and provide appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support. Operation Encompass notification and support arrangements are set out in Section E: Operation Encompass.

For more information: Domestic Abuse Act - Statutory Guidance

Mental Health, Self-Harm and Suicide Risk

Mental health difficulties may indicate that a child has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Concerns involving self-harm, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts or another risk to safety must be reported promptly.

We will consider immediate safety and medical needs, listen to the child, involve parents or carers where safe and appropriate and seek support from relevant health or specialist services.

Where there is an immediate risk to life or serious injury, staff must contact emergency services on **999**. A safeguarding referral will be made where concerns may be linked to abuse, neglect, exploitation or significant harm.

Where there is an immediate safeguarding or child protection concern, staff must follow Section D: Immediate Danger and Referrals.

Further details about our approach can be found in the MITRE Pupil Mental Health and Well-being Policy.

For more information: Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges, Mental health and behaviour in schools and MHST Support

Children at Risk of Exploitation, Modern Slavery or Serious Violence

Children may be harmed through criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, county lines, financial exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery, radicalisation or serious violence. Apparent offending or harmful behaviour may be a sign that a child is being groomed, coerced, controlled or exploited. Staff should be alert to indicators including:

- unexplained money, possessions, travel or changes in relationships

- repeated absence or being found away from home or the school
- association with older individuals or controlling peer groups
- threats, intimidation, debt or fear
- carrying weapons or involvement in serious violence
- unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour
- increased secrecy or use of multiple devices or accounts
- concerning online contact or activity

Concerns must be reported promptly. We will consider risks to the child and others, including risks associated with peer groups, transport routes, locations around our school and online environments.

Wider contextual risks and responses are addressed in Section G: Contextual Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm.

For more information: Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims, Youth Endowment Fund, Prevent Duty Guidance, Nottinghamshire Child Exploitation Procedures, and Nottinghamshire Prevent Referrals

Children with Protected Characteristics

We are committed to safeguarding practice that is inclusive, anti-racist, anti-discriminatory and culturally informed. All staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, sense of safety and willingness to seek help.

Staff will remain alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and will consider concerns within safeguarding practice where appropriate. **Concerns will not be treated solely as behaviour, equality or disciplinary matters where they may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing or safety.** They must be reported and recorded in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must be alert to bias, stereotyping and adultification, including assumptions that a child is older, more resilient or less in need of protection than they are. Cultural or religious considerations must not prevent professional curiosity or delay action.

Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or perceived to be, may face additional bullying, prejudice or abuse. We will provide a safe environment in which concerns can be reported and support accessed.

Children Questioning Their Gender

Children questioning their gender may experience bullying, distress, social isolation or other safeguarding concerns. Staff will respond sensitively, consider the child's individual circumstances and act in their best interests. Requests for support with social transition will be considered in accordance with KCSIE 2026, applicable legislation and the MITRE Supporting Gender Questioning Children Policy. Decisions will:

- consider the child's age, needs, wishes, feelings and circumstances
- involve parents or carers unless there is a safeguarding reason not to do so

- involve the DSL where safeguarding considerations arise
- consider relevant professional advice
- be recorded accurately and shared only where necessary
- be reviewed when needs or circumstances change

We will challenge bullying, harassment and discrimination and provide appropriate support to any child who wishes to reconsider or reverse an earlier request.

Further information: KCSIE 2026, Children who are questioning their gender

Individual Support and Review

Children in our school will be offered tailored support that matches their need and circumstance. Support may include a trusted adult, accessible reporting arrangements, pastoral or communication support, reasonable adjustments, an individual safety plan, work with parents or carers and referral to Early Help, Family Help or specialist services.

Support will be reviewed when circumstances or risks change. Staff must continue to report new concerns where a child already receives support or is known to other services.

The available support pathways are set out in Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

G. Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm

In MITRE schools we recognise that children may experience harm beyond their family home, including within peer groups, education settings, neighbourhoods, public places, transport routes and online.

We will consider the people, places and relationships surrounding a child, understand their lived experience and work with children, families and safeguarding partners to identify and reduce risks.

Contextual and Extra-Familial Harm

Extra-familial harm may include:

- child criminal exploitation
- child sexual exploitation
- county lines
- financial exploitation
- serious violence and weapon-related harm
- trafficking and modern slavery
- radicalisation
- abuse within intimate relationships between children
- child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour
- bullying, harassment and prejudice-based abuse
- grooming, coercion and controlling relationships
- abuse or exploitation facilitated through social media, gaming, generative AI or other technology

Different forms of harm may overlap. A child may experience harm in several contexts or be both harmed by others and involved in behaviour that harms other children. Staff must respond to children as children first. Apparent offending, aggression, absence or other concerning behaviour may indicate that a child is being groomed, coerced, controlled or exploited.

Specific considerations relating to exploitation and serious violence are set out in Section F, and child-on-child abuse is addressed in Section H.

Recognising Contextual Concerns

Staff should be alert to changes or patterns which may indicate extra-familial harm, including:

- repeated or prolonged absence from education or home
- spending time in locations or with people not previously known
- changes in friendships, relationships or peer groups
- unexplained money, clothing, gifts, travel or mobile devices
- unexplained injuries, fear, secrecy or emotional distress
- threats, intimidation, coercion or debt
- carrying or associating with weapons
- concerning use of social media, gaming platforms or multiple accounts
- being collected by unknown adults or travelling unexpectedly
- declining attendance, engagement or educational progress
- concerns affecting several children or linked to the same location, group or individual

These indicators do not confirm that harm has occurred. Staff must report concerns to the DSL so that they can be considered alongside other information known about the child, their peers and the wider context.

Concerns must be reported and recorded in accordance with Section D.

Understanding Our Local Safeguarding Context

Contextual Concerns	How we aim to address it
County Lines	Through the PSHE and safeguarding curriculum, assemblies, tutor programme and targeted interventions. Staff at **The Minster School** receive safeguarding training to recognise the indicators of exploitation and understand reporting procedures. **The Minster School** works closely with safeguarding partners, the police, children's social care and other external agencies to identify risks and provide early support. Information and guidance are also shared with parents and carers to raise awareness of the signs and risks of exploitation.
Online Safety	Through a comprehensive online safety curriculum delivered through Computing, PSHE, assemblies and tutor sessions. **The Minster School** maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems and provides regular staff training on emerging online risks. Students are taught how to keep themselves safe online, report concerns, and access support.

	Parents and carers are supported through guidance and communications to promote safe online behaviours beyond school.
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing	Through the PSHE curriculum, tutor programme, assemblies and wider wellbeing initiatives. Students have access to pastoral, safeguarding, SEND and inclusion support, alongside targeted interventions and referrals to external agencies when appropriate. Staff at **The Minster School** receive training to identify when a student's mental health may be impacting their welfare, wellbeing or safety and to respond appropriately to emerging concerns.
Child-on-Child Abuse	Through a strong safeguarding culture, clear behaviour expectations, preventative education, assemblies, tutor activities, and the PSHE curriculum. Students are encouraged to seek support from trusted adults and through **The Minster School's** reporting systems, including *Call It Out*. Concerns are addressed promptly, with appropriate support and intervention provided for those affected.
Attendance and Persistent Absence	Attendance is monitored closely by pastoral, attendance, and safeguarding teams. **The Minster School** works proactively with students, families and external agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance and reduce associated safeguarding risks, recognising that children who are persistently absent or missing education may be more vulnerable to harm, exploitation and neglect.
Vulnerable Learners and Barriers to Reporting Concerns	**The Minster School** recognises that some students may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation and poor mental health outcomes and may face additional barriers to recognising harm or seeking help. Through a relational and trauma-informed approach, staff work to build trusted relationships, promote a sense of safety and belonging, and support students to communicate their needs and concerns. Staff receive training to understand the impact of trauma and adverse experiences on learning, behaviour and wellbeing. Support is provided through the SEND, inclusion, pastoral and safeguarding teams, alongside reasonable adjustments, targeted interventions and multi-agency working where appropriate.
Protected Characteristics, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Through the curriculum, assemblies, tutor programme and the wider culture of **The Minster School**, students are taught to respect, value and celebrate differences. **The Minster School** promotes an inclusive environment where all students feel safe, respected and able to be themselves. Student voice is supported through inclusion-focused student groups and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Student Leaders, who contribute to raising awareness, celebrating diversity and promoting an inclusive school community. Staff challenge

	discriminatory language, prejudice and harmful behaviours and respond promptly to any concerns relating to protected characteristics, ensuring appropriate support and intervention are provided where needed.

The DSL will consider safeguarding information and patterns to identify:

- locations where children may feel or be unsafe
- peer groups or relationships associated with increased risk
- recurring concerns involving particular times, journeys or activities
- online platforms or technologies associated with harm
- groups of children who may require additional support
- gaps in our school's policies, curriculum, supervision or physical environment

Responding to Extra-Familial Harm

Where extra-familial harm is suspected, we will:

- consider the child's immediate safety and the risk to other children
- listen to the child and consider their wishes, feelings and lived experience
- record and report the concern through our school's safeguarding procedures
- consider the locations, relationships, peer groups and online environments connected to the concern
- share information and make referrals where required
- work with parents or carers where it is safe and appropriate
- contribute to multi-agency assessments, plans and disruption activity
- provide appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support
- review whether changes are required to supervision, transport, timetabling, site arrangements or the curriculum.

We will avoid responses which place responsibility on the child for harm caused through grooming, coercion, exploitation or abuse. Behavioural or disciplinary action will be considered alongside the child's safeguarding needs and must not replace an appropriate safeguarding response.

Reporting and referral procedures are set out in Section D, and support pathways are set out in Section E.

Professional Curiosity and Inclusive Practice

Staff must remain professionally curious and consider whether a child's behaviour or circumstances indicate harm that has not been disclosed.

Staff must be alert to bias, stereotyping and adultification. Cultural awareness should support respectful practice but must not discourage professional challenge or delay safeguarding action.

Children with SEND, communication needs or other additional vulnerabilities may require adapted reporting arrangements and support.

Working with Children, Families and Safeguarding Partners

We will use accessible opportunities for pupil voice to understand where and when children feel safe or unsafe.

Parents and carers will be involved where safe and appropriate, but their involvement must not delay protective action or place a child or another person at greater risk.

We will work with safeguarding partners and other relevant organisations to share information, assess risk, coordinate support and disrupt opportunities for abuse or exploitation.

Review of Contextual Safeguarding Arrangements

DSL and senior leaders will review contextual safeguarding information regularly and after significant incidents. The review will consider whether:

- identified risks have changed
- safeguarding responses are improving children's safety
- children know how and where to seek help
- staff training reflects current risks
- the curriculum addresses relevant local and online concerns
- supervision and environmental arrangements remain appropriate
- further action or multi-agency support is required

Relevant findings will inform the child protection policy, safeguarding training, curriculum planning, pastoral support and wider school procedures.

Identified curriculum needs will inform Section J: Safeguarding and Preventative Education.

H. Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

In MITRE schools we recognise that children can abuse other children and that this can happen inside or outside our school and online. Child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously and responded to as a safeguarding concern. We maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"**, even where no incidents have been reported. Abuse will not be tolerated or dismissed as banter, having a laugh, part of growing up or boys being boys. We will respond in a way that:

- prioritises the safety and best interests of all children involved
- considers the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience
- reflects the children's ages, developmental stages, needs and vulnerabilities
- considers any power imbalance, coercion, discrimination or wider peer-group context
- provides appropriate support alongside any disciplinary response
- involves safeguarding partners and specialist services where required

Forms of Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse may include, but it is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- physical abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse
- controlling or coercive behaviour within peer or intimate relationships
- abuse connected to prejudice, misogyny, misandry or harmful attitudes
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals
- online abuse, harassment, impersonation or manipulation
- the use of technology or generative AI to create, alter or distribute harmful material
- abuse involving threats, intimidation, exploitation or serious violence
- sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual violence

Abuse may be carried out by an individual or a group and may affect children of any age or background. It may occur face to face, online or through a combination of both. Children who cause harm may also have unmet needs or be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or trauma themselves.

When dealing with incidents of Child-on-Child abuse we will follow the guidance in the MITRE Child-on-Child Abuse policy.

Discriminatory Child-on-Child Behaviour

Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents, is recognised as a potential form of child-on-child abuse.
Where appropriate, concerns will be:

- reported and recorded through the setting's safeguarding procedures
- considered alongside any other information known about the children involved
- assessed in relation to the effect on the child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety
- responded to through safeguarding and behaviour procedures
- reviewed to identify patterns, wider risks or additional support needs

The absence of previous reports does not mean that discriminatory or prejudice-based harm is not occurring.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The trust recognises that the definition of sexual abuse in the final September 2026 KCSIE has been revised and expanded to align with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Staff will use the definition contained in the final September 2026 KCSIE when recognising, reporting and responding to concerns. Relevant staff have been informed of the revised wording and the additional clarification contained in the current statutory guidance.

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour must be considered within its context. We will consider:

- the age and developmental stage of each child
- the nature, frequency and seriousness of the behaviour
- whether there is coercion, intimidation or a power imbalance
- the effect on the child who has experienced the behaviour
- whether the behaviour is repeated or escalating
- any SEND, communication needs, trauma or other vulnerabilities
- the online and offline context
- whether other children may be at risk
- whether the behaviour indicates wider safeguarding concerns

Staff must not attempt to make specialist assessments outside their role. Concerns must be reported to the DSL so that appropriate advice, assessment and support can be obtained.

Further information: Sexual Behaviour and Development in Children, Responding to Children who Display Sexualised Behaviour and HSB Toolkit

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and offline and inside and outside of school or college. In this context it specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment. This includes (but not limited to):

- sexual comments, sexual stories, sexual jokes
- sexual remarks about clothing or appearance
- physical behaviour
- displaying pictures, photos or drawing of a sexual nature
- upskirting
- online sexual harassment; making and sharing or nudes or semi-nudes, sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments online, sexual exploitation, coercing others into sharing images of performing acts they're not comfortable with

Sexual Violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes:

- Rape
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault
- Sexual activity without consent

Our school recognises that a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to any sexual activity, the age of consent is 16 and sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Further information: Rape Crisis England & Wales

Nudes and Semi-Nudes

Nudes and Semi-Nudes refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images by children. The term 'images' includes all visual content, such as photographs, videos and livestreams. The term 'nudes' is used as it is the most widely understood term by young people and best captures the full range of image-sharing behaviours that the policy aims to address.

Images may be taken by children themselves or taken or created by another person. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including those described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes.'
Further information: UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: Advice for education settings

Prevention and Education

We seek to prevent child-on-child abuse through clear behaviour expectations, accessible reporting systems, appropriate supervision, staff training and planned safeguarding education.

Children will be taught that abuse, harassment, discrimination and violence are unacceptable and how to recognise unsafe behaviour and seek help. Teaching will be age-appropriate, accessible and adapted where necessary.

Further arrangements are set out in Sections I and J and in our Behaviour and Child-on-Child Abuse policies.

Further support: KCSIE 2026, Annex A

Reporting Child-On-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

All concerns about child-on-child abuse and HSB must be reported to the DSL or a deputy without delay and recorded through our safeguarding procedures.

Staff must follow Section D: Responding to a Disclosure, Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions. They must not investigate the concern or intentionally view, copy, print, save, forward or ask a child to share harmful digital material.

The absence of the DSL or a deputy must not delay protective action. Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care or contact the police where necessary.

Response to cases of Child-on-Child Abuse

This is laid out in detail in the MITRE Child-on-Child Abuse Policy, which should be followed in conjunction with this policy.

I. Online Safety

Online safety is an essential part of our whole-school safeguarding approach. We recognise that technology provides opportunities for learning and communication but may also expose children to abuse, exploitation, harmful content or inappropriate contact. Online and offline concerns will be considered together.

Areas of Online Risk

Our approach considers the four broad areas of online risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; 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:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams

Staff will consider whether online behaviour or content indicates wider abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful peer relationships or risk outside our school.

Whole-School Approach

We will maintain Acceptable Use policies, appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, clear reporting procedures and age-appropriate online safety education. Our arrangements will address personal devices, mobile networks, emerging technology and risks arising away from school.

Online concerns will be managed through our safeguarding procedures. Staff must report concerns to the DSL without delay where a child may be at risk of harm.

Further information: Teaching online safety in schools

Filtering and Monitoring

The trust board will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on school-owned devices and networks. These systems will be proportionate to the children's ages and needs, our provision and identified risks, and will comply with current Department for Education standards.

The Head Teacher, supported by the DSL, IT staff and the IT provider, will ensure that:

- access to illegal and harmful content is restricted
- concerning activity and system failures are identified and acted upon
- filtering does not unreasonably restrict teaching and learning
- staff understand their responsibilities and how to report concerns

Filtering and monitoring do not replace appropriate supervision, education or professional curiosity.

Further information: Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges, Plan technology for your school and Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring

Review of Filtering and Monitoring

Filtering and monitoring systems will be reviewed at least annually and following significant incidents, system failures or changes to technology, provision or identified risk. The review will:

- test filtering across relevant devices, networks and locations
- check that monitoring alerts reach the appropriate staff
- consider how alerts, breaches and system failures have been managed
- identify actions, responsibilities and timescales for improvement

The findings and resulting actions will be recorded and reported to the trust board.

Further information: Verify your Internet is Filtered and Online Safety Self-Review Tool for Schools - 360 safe

Generative Artificial Intelligence

We recognise that generative AI may support education but may also create safeguarding, data protection, ethical, security and intellectual property risks.

The MITRE Use of AI policy gives full details of our approach to the use of AI and expected safeguards to be employed.

Children and staff will receive appropriate guidance about the safe and responsible use of AI. We will consider:

- the age and suitability of AI products
- how personal or sensitive information is processed
- the accuracy, bias and reliability of generated content
- inappropriate or harmful interaction with AI applications
- manipulation, impersonation and misleading content
- whether filtering and monitoring systems apply effectively to AI services
- the potential for AI to facilitate bullying, grooming, exploitation or other harm
- the need for human oversight of decisions affecting children

Staff must not enter confidential, personal or safeguarding information into an AI service unless its use has been formally approved and complies with our data protection and information security arrangements.

Concerns involving AI-generated or altered harmful material must be reported to the DSL and be managed under Section H, where applicable.

More information: Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education

Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

Schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default. Any exceptions will be determined by the school and clearly explained in its policy. Our arrangements will address:

- when and where mobile phones or smart devices may be brought onto the premises
- whether devices must be switched off, stored or surrendered during our school hours
- reasonable exceptions for medical, accessibility, safety or educational needs
- the use of devices by staff, visitors and contractors
- photography, video and audio recording
- responses to policy breaches
- how safeguarding concerns involving a device will be reported and managed

We recognise that personal devices and mobile networks may bypass our filtering and monitoring systems. Staff must remain alert to this risk and follow the agreed supervision and reporting procedures.

More information: Mobile phones in schools and Searching, screening and confiscation in schools

Cybersecurity and Information Security

We will follow current Department for Education cybersecurity standards and maintain appropriate arrangements to protect systems, accounts and personal information.

Cybersecurity incidents may also be safeguarding incidents. Where an incident affects or may place a child at risk, the DSL, senior leaders, data protection lead and technical staff will coordinate the response.

Detailed technical arrangements are set out in our cybersecurity, data protection and acceptable-use procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- follow our Acceptable Use and Staff Code of Conduct policies
- use school technology and accounts only for authorised purposes
- maintain professional boundaries in electronic communication

- supervise children's use of technology appropriately
- report harmful content, concerning contact, system breaches and filtering or monitoring failures
- preserve relevant information without investigating safeguarding concerns themselves

Staff must not ask a child to share harmful digital material or use personal devices or accounts to communicate with children unless expressly authorised.

Concerns involving harmful digital material must be managed in accordance with Section D: Responding to a Disclosure and Section H: Reporting Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour.

More information: Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges and National Cyber Security Centre information for schools

Online Safety Education

Children will receive planned, progressive and age-appropriate education which helps them to:

- recognise online risks and harmful behaviour
- understand privacy, consent, personal information and digital footprints
- use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly
- recognise grooming, manipulation, impersonation and exploitation
- evaluate information critically and recognise misinformation and disinformation
- understand the opportunities and risks associated with generative AI
- report concerns and preserve relevant evidence safely
- know where to seek help within and outside our school

Teaching will be accessible and adapted to children's developmental stages, communication needs and SEND. Further arrangements are set out in Section J: Curriculum Content.

Further information: KCSIE 2026

Working with Parents and Carers

We will explain our online safety expectations and provide parents and carers with relevant information about devices, gaming, social media, parental controls, AI, emerging risks and reporting routes.

Parents and carers should report online safeguarding concerns promptly. Where a child may be at risk of harm, we will follow our safeguarding procedures and share information with statutory services where necessary.

Further information: CEOP Education - Parents and Carers and UK Safer Internet Centre - Parents and Carers

Remote Education and Learning Away from our School

Where children access remote education, we will:

- use approved platforms and accounts
- maintain professional boundaries
- apply appropriate privacy and security settings
- set clear expectations for staff and children
- provide accessible reporting routes

Children and parents or carers will receive appropriate online safety guidance. Concerns will be managed through our safeguarding procedures. Remote education does not reduce our safeguarding responsibilities.

Reporting and Reviewing Online Concerns

All online safeguarding concerns must be reported and recorded in accordance with Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions. Staff must consider:

- the child's immediate safety
- whether other children may be affected
- whether relevant information must be preserved
- whether parents or carers should be informed
- whether specialist advice or referral is required

The DSL, senior leaders and (where relevant) trust leaders and IT providers will review online incidents and patterns to identify any required changes to filtering and monitoring, staff training, curriculum, supervision, policies or support.

J. Safeguarding and Preventative Education

At The Minster School, safeguarding is embedded across the curriculum and wider school culture. We provide planned, progressive and age-appropriate education which helps children recognise risk, develop safe and respectful relationships, report concerns and seek help.

Our approach reflects statutory curriculum requirements, KCSIE 2026, local safeguarding priorities and the needs of our children.

Whole-School Approach

Safeguarding education is delivered through:

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
- Computing and Online safety
- Citizenship and other relevant curriculum subjects
- assemblies, workshops and themed activities

- pastoral support and targeted intervention
- wider school expectations, relationships and routines

Safeguarding messages will be reinforced through the curriculum, pastoral support and the conduct modelled by adults. We will promote respect and make clear that abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence are unacceptable.

Curriculum Content

Children will be taught, in an age-appropriate and accessible way, about matters including (but not limited to):

- healthy and respectful relationships, and consent
- personal boundaries, bodily autonomy and seeking help
- bullying, cyberbullying and prejudice-based behaviour
- child-on-child abuse and harmful behaviour
- domestic abuse and its impact on children
- online safety, digital resilience and responsible use of technology
- privacy, personal information and digital footprints
- harmful online contact, manipulation and exploitation
- generative AI, manipulated content, misinformation and disinformation
- criminal and financial exploitation, county lines and serious violence
- grooming, coercion and controlling behaviour
- radicalisation and extremism
- harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and forced marriage
- mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience
- substance misuse and other risk-taking behaviour
- road, fire, water and personal safety
- how and where to report concerns and obtain support

We will not rely solely on individual lessons or one-off events. Safeguarding knowledge and protective behaviours will be developed and reinforced over time.

Details of the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, together with supporting policies, can be found in The Minster School's Relationships and Sex Education Policy and on the curriculum section of The Minster School website.

Detailed online safety arrangements are set out in Section I, and child-on-child abuse is addressed in Section H.

Local and Emerging Safeguarding Risks

The curriculum will be informed by:

- safeguarding concerns and patterns identified within our school
- children’s views and experiences

- local safeguarding information
- relevant attendance, behaviour and online safety information
- advice from Nottinghamshire safeguarding services
- advice from the trust
- emerging national and online risks
- learning from safeguarding incidents, audits and practice reviews

Content will be updated where safeguarding information identifies new risks or gaps in children's knowledge. Our school-specific contextual concerns and responses are set out in Section G: Understanding Our Local Safeguarding Context.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Safeguarding education will be appropriate to children's ages and developmental stages and accessible to children with SEND, communication needs, health conditions or other additional vulnerabilities.

We will make reasonable adjustments and consider whether individual children require preparation, targeted teaching or additional support. Children will not be unnecessarily excluded from important safeguarding education.

Additional safeguarding barriers are addressed in Section F: Children Who May Be at Greater Risk of Harm.

Safe Delivery

Sensitive safeguarding topics will be taught by staff who have appropriate knowledge, confidence and support. Staff will:

- use accurate, age-appropriate and inclusive language
- establish clear expectations for respectful discussion
- avoid asking children to share personal experiences publicly
- remain alert to distress, questions or possible disclosures
- explain that confidentiality cannot be promised where a safeguarding concern arises
- report concerns without delay in accordance with Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

External speakers and organisations will be checked for suitability. Their materials and intended content will be reviewed in advance, and a member of staff will remain responsible for the session and for responding to any safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding arrangements for visitors and external providers are set out in Section L.

Empowering Children to Seek Help

Children will be helped to understand:

- that abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying and harassment are never their fault
- that unsafe or harmful behaviour should be reported
- who they can speak to at our school and how to report concerns
- what may happen after they raise a concern
- that they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported
- where they can obtain help outside our school

We will use pupil voice and other accessible feedback methods to understand whether children feel safe, know how to report concerns and have confidence in the response they will receive. The school's reporting arrangements are set out in Section A: Reporting Systems for Children.

Working with Parents and Carers

We will provide parents and carers with appropriate information about our safeguarding curriculum and relevant policies and support them to reinforce safeguarding messages at home.

We will consider their views while continuing to meet our statutory curriculum and safeguarding responsibilities. Concerns about curriculum content will be managed through our agreed procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff should reinforce safeguarding messages through their teaching, conduct and interactions with children.

Staff responsible for planning or delivering the curriculum will ensure that content is accurate, progressive, accessible and appropriate to children's needs. They will respond appropriately to questions and disclosures, report concerns without delay and contribute to curriculum review.

Staff will receive appropriate training and guidance to support safe and effective delivery.

Review and Evaluation

We will review safeguarding and preventative education at least annually and sooner where statutory guidance, local or online risks, safeguarding information or learning from practice indicates that change is required. The review will consider whether:

- required content is taught progressively and accessibly
- children can recognise risks and identify sources of help
- staff are confident and appropriately supported
- resources and external providers remain suitable

This review will be included in the trust's annual safeguarding review processes and will be carried out in partnership between school and trust leaders. The findings of the report will be considered by the trustees and by local governors.

K. Concerns and Allegations About Adults

In MITRE schools all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of our school will be reported promptly and managed fairly and consistently in accordance with Part four of KCSIE 2026 and Trust and Nottinghamshire procedures.

This section applies to staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and other adults working in or on behalf of our school. Concerns may meet the harm threshold or may be low-level concerns.

Allegations That May Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation may meet the harm threshold where an adult working in or on behalf of our school 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 they may pose a risk of harm
- behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

The final criterion may apply where behaviour outside our school raises concerns about the adult's suitability to work with children. This is known as transferable risk.

Staff must report allegations immediately and must not investigate the matter, question witnesses or discuss it with colleagues.

Reporting Allegations

Allegations about a member of staff, supply staff, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor must be reported immediately to the Head Teacher who will normally act as the case manager.

Where the allegation concerns the Head Teacher, it must be reported to the CEO. Where the allegation concerns the CEO it must be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Where there is a conflict of interest, the concern must be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The case manager will contact the LADO without delay and before beginning an internal investigation. Where there is an immediate risk to a child, appropriate action must be taken to secure the child's safety and contact the police or children's social care. Any safeguarding concern about a child arising from the allegation must also be managed in accordance with Section D.

For more information: LADO Referral

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the 'case manager' will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts and determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on to the steps below

- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the CEO of the Trust to discuss the process to be followed and possible courses of action. Support for the "case manager" will be provided from the CEO and central HR.
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care.
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. Support is available from the Trust's welfare and counselling provider, trade union representatives, colleagues in school. Any member of staff subject to allegation will be encouraged to seek their support.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the

requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member).
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

In Early Years settings the following also applies: We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the trust is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the Trust will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply staff and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our local authority designated officer to determine a suitable outcome
- The local governing body and Head will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the local authority designated officer as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the Trust will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the Trust will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

For more information: Making barring referrals to DBS, Teacher misconduct (referral form) and Teaching Regulation Agency

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school and trust will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police, children's social care services and the Trust, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and outcome
- A declaration of whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made. These recommendations will be shared with and considered by trust leaders and the board.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern about an adult's behaviour towards a child that:

- is inconsistent with the MITRE Staff Code of Conduct
- does not meet the harm threshold or is not otherwise serious enough to require referral to the LADO
- may arise from conduct inside or outside work

"Low-level" does not mean insignificant. Examples may include overfamiliarity, favouritism, inappropriate communication, unauthorised photography, humiliating language or failure to maintain professional boundaries.

Low-level concerns may arise from suspicion, a complaint, a disclosure, something witnessed by a member of staff or information identified through checks or safeguarding processes.

Professional conduct and ongoing-suitability expectations are addressed in Section L: Ongoing Suitability and the MITRE Staff Code of Conduct.

Reporting Low-Level Concerns

All low-level concerns must be reported promptly to the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher will:

- record the details clearly and confidentially using the MITRE provided log sheet
- determine whether the concern may meet the harm threshold and seek advice from the LADO where there is doubt
- consider whether the Staff Code of Conduct has been breached
- identify any appropriate management, support, training or disciplinary action
- review previous concerns to identify possible patterns

Where a pattern is identified, or the concern becomes more serious, our school will consider whether the harm threshold is met and whether referral to the LADO or another service is required.

Our school encourages staff to share self-referrals where they believe they may have acted in a way that could be misinterpreted, fell below expected professional standards or placed themselves in a situation which could appear compromising.

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the Head Teacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The Head Teacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the MITRE staff code of conduct and disciplinary policy. The Head Teacher of the school will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low level concerns, though they are advised to discuss with MITRE leaders and, where appropriate the DSL in school.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Whistleblowing

Staff who have concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice should use our school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Where staff feel unable to raise a concern internally or believe that a genuine safeguarding concern is not being addressed, they may contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line via telephone at 0800 028 0285 or via email at help@nspcc.org.uk.

Whistleblowing arrangements do not replace the requirement to contact children's social care or the police where a child may be at risk of harm or in immediate danger.

L. Safer Working Arrangements

In MITRE schools, we maintain safer working arrangements to ensure that adults working with children are appropriately selected, checked, inducted and supervised.

These arrangements apply according to the adult's role, responsibilities and contact with children and should be read alongside our recruitment policy, staff code of conduct, visitor, educational visits, alternative provision and reasonable force procedures.

Safer Recruitment

Our school follows Part three of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and will include:

- clear safeguarding expectations in recruitment materials
- scrutiny of applications, employment history, references and any gaps or inconsistencies
- appropriate safeguarding questions and online searches for shortlisted candidates
- all identity, qualification, right-to-work, prohibition, direction, DBS and barred-list checks required for the role
- involvement of at least one person who has completed appropriate safer recruitment training

Required checks will be completed and recorded before an adult begins unsupervised work with children. Recruitment information will be handled securely and retained in accordance with our procedures.

For more information: KCSIE 2026, Part 3

Single Central Record

Our trust will maintain an accurate and up-to-date Single Central Record covering the individuals and checks required by KCSIE 2026. This will be maintained at school level in partnership with the MITRE HR team. All MITRE schools use an online single central record tool which supports the ongoing monitoring of the SCR for compliance.

Responsibility for maintaining the record rests with the Head Teacher and the MITRE HR team. The record will be checked through MITRE safeguarding reviews and audits and by HR link officers at appropriate intervals as part of our school's safeguarding assurance arrangements. The Single Central Record supports assurance but does not replace the underlying evidence, risk assessments or safer recruitment procedures.

For more information: Check a teacher's record and KCSIE 2026, Part 3

Ongoing Suitability

Safer recruitment continues after appointment. Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and disclose any change in circumstances that may affect their suitability in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct.

We will consider further checks or a suitability review where a role changes, an individual moves into regulated activity, there is a significant break in service or relevant information raises concerns.

Concerns about an adult will be managed under Section K: Concerns and Allegations About Adults.

Regulated Activity and Volunteers

We will determine whether a role is regulated activity by considering the nature, frequency and circumstances of the work. The previous supervision exemption must not be relied upon where an activity now falls within the current definition of regulated activity. Before a volunteer begins work, we will assess and record:

- the activity and its frequency
- whether it is regulated activity
- the children's ages and needs
- the level of contact and supervision
- the checks permitted and required by law

An enhanced DBS check, including children's barred-list information where legally required, will be obtained for volunteers engaging in regulated activity. A barred person must not be permitted to undertake regulated activity.

Supply Staff, Agency Staff and Trainee Teachers

We will obtain written confirmation that the required checks have been completed for supply and agency staff and will verify each person's identity on arrival.

Checks for trainee teachers will reflect whether they are employed by the school or placed through a training provider. Responsibility for checks will be confirmed before the placement begins.

Supply staff, agency staff and trainee teachers will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role, including reporting routes, staff behaviour expectations and emergency procedures.

Contractors and Self-Employed Individuals

Contractors and self-employed individuals will be checked and supervised according to their role, whether the work is regulated activity and their opportunity for contact with children.

Contractual arrangements will identify responsibility for checks and written assurance. We will verify identity on arrival and will not permit an individual to have unsupervised access to children unless appropriate checks have been completed.

Where a self-employed person requires a DBS check and cannot obtain one through another organisation, we will arrange the appropriate check where permitted.

Visitors and Visiting Professionals

All visitors must follow our school's visitor procedures.

Visitors will normally report to reception, provide appropriate identification, sign in, wear the identification issued by the school and follow our safeguarding and conduct expectations.

We will determine required checks and supervision according to the purpose and frequency of the visit and the visitor's contact with children. A DBS certificate will not be requested from every visitor. Where an employer has completed the required checks, we may obtain written assurance and verify the visitor's identity.

Visitors who have not been appropriately checked must not have unsupervised access to children. Checking arrangements must not unnecessarily prevent statutory professionals from carrying out their duties.

External Providers and Use of Premises

Where our premises are used by an external provider working with children, we will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place.

Hire, lease or transfer-of-control agreements will identify safeguarding responsibilities, liaison and reporting arrangements. We will act where a provider fails to meet these requirements, including ending the arrangement where necessary.

Safeguarding concerns arising during externally managed activities should be reported to the provider and through our safeguarding procedures where appropriate. Where we arrange or supervise the activity, our child protection procedures apply.

For more information: Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers

Educational Visits, Homestays and Residential Arrangements

Safeguarding will be considered when planning educational visits, exchanges, homestays, residential activities and overnight accommodation.

Risk assessments will consider children's needs and vulnerabilities, staffing and supervision, transport and accommodation, medical needs, personal devices, professional boundaries and procedures for reporting concerns away from school.

Required checks will be completed for adults undertaking regulated activity. Where children stay with host families, we will follow the safeguarding and checking requirements in KCSIE 2026 and private fostering legislation.

Safeguarding concerns arising during an activity must be managed in accordance with Section D.

For more information: Health and safety on educational visits

Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions

Our school does not operate a blanket "no contact" policy, as this could prevent staff from protecting a child, providing appropriate support or managing an immediate risk safely.

In all instances, staff will aim to de-escalate and contain a situation without the use of force. Staff may use reasonable force only where lawful, necessary and proportionate. Any force used must be no more than necessary and for the least amount of time. When considering or using reasonable force, staff will:

- prioritise prevention and de-escalation
- consider the child's age, SEND, health, communication and mental health needs
- use the least restrictive response available
- protect the child's dignity
- seek medical assistance where required
- record and report the incident promptly
- inform parents or carers where appropriate
- review whether safeguarding concerns or further support are required

Restrictive intervention must never be used as punishment, to cause pain or merely to secure compliance. Planned interventions should be reflected in an appropriate support, behaviour or risk-management plan and reviewed regularly.

Further details of our school's approach can be found in the Minster Positive Student management policy and Minster Behaviour - Part B policy

Where an intervention raises a safeguarding concern about a child or adult, staff must follow Section D or Section K, as appropriate.

For more information: Use of reasonable force in schools and Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention

Alternative Provision

Where we commission alternative provision, we retain responsibility for safeguarding the child.

Before placement, we will obtain written assurance about the provider's safeguarding arrangements and required checks, confirm where the child will be educated, share relevant safeguarding information and agree attendance, welfare and reporting arrangements.

We will maintain contact with the child and provider, monitor attendance and suitability and review the placement at least half-termly. We will act immediately where concerns arise and end the placement if it is no longer safe or suitable.

The provider must notify us of changes to staffing, location, ownership or delivery which may affect the child's safety or the placement's suitability. Further safeguarding expectations are set out in Section F: Children Receiving Alternative Provision.

Safeguarding Briefing and Conduct

Adults working in or on behalf of our school will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role, including the identity of the DSL and deputies, reporting routes, conduct expectations and emergency procedures.

All adults must follow our safeguarding arrangements and report concerns without delay. Failure to comply may result in removal from the premises, termination of an activity or contract, disciplinary action or referral to a relevant agency or professional body.

M. Safeguarding Training and Policy Implementation

In MITRE schools, we ensure that staff, governors, trustees and volunteers have the safeguarding knowledge and confidence required for their roles.

Training will reflect KCSIE 2026, Working Together 2026, Nottinghamshire procedures, the needs of our children and relevant local or emerging risks.

Safeguarding Induction

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction. Induction will be appropriate to their role and will include:

- this Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy and all other applicable safeguarding policies and procedures
- the identity and role of the DSL and deputies, and our school's safeguarding cover arrangements

- how to recognise, report and record concerns about a child
- how to report concerns and allegations about adults, low-level concerns and whistleblowing arrangements
- online safety and staff responsibilities for filtering and monitoring
- emergency and direct referral procedures

All MITRE schools follow the MITRE Safeguarding Training Requirements document.

Supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and other adults will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role, responsibilities and contact with children.

Staff are responsible for reading and following the current policy and must seek advice from the DSL where they are unclear about a safeguarding responsibility or procedure.

Induction will direct staff to the responsibilities and procedures in Sections C, D, I and K.

Staff Training and Updates

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated and appropriate to their role. They will also receive safeguarding updates as required and at least annually. Training will include, where relevant:

- recognising and responding to abuse, neglect, exploitation and other concerns
- reporting, referrals, information sharing and confidentiality
- Early Help, Family Help and multi-agency working
- children who may be at greater risk of harm
- child-on-child abuse and domestic abuse
- online safety, generative AI, filtering and monitoring
- children absent from education, mental health and exploitation
- concerns about adults, whistleblowing and professional boundaries
- changes to statutory guidance, local procedures and emerging risks

Training will reflect our local context and learning from incidents, complaints, audits and practice reviews.

DSL and Deputy DSL Training

The DSL and deputies will receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role at least every two years. Their knowledge and skills will be updated at regular intervals, and at least annually, through training, briefings, professional networks including the MITRE DSL network, e-bulletins and other relevant learning. Their training and professional development will support them to:

- understand assessment, referral and child protection processes
- apply Nottinghamshire thresholds and escalation procedures
- contribute effectively to Family Help and multi-agency working
- understand information-sharing and record-keeping responsibilities
- support children who may be at greater risk of harm
- manage child-on-child abuse concerns

- understand online safety and filtering and monitoring systems
- manage safeguarding concerns about adults
- support and advise staff
- keep safeguarding policies and practice under review

The Head Teacher and Trust Board will ensure that DSLs and deputies have the time, funding, resources and support required to maintain their knowledge and carry out their responsibilities effectively.

The responsibilities attached to these roles are set out in Section C: Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Cover.

Governor and Trustee Training

Governors and trustees will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction which is regularly updated. This will support them to understand their strategic responsibilities, provide effective challenge and assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Training will include KCSIE 2026, safer recruitment, concerns about adults, online safety, filtering and monitoring, children who may be at greater risk of harm and oversight of safeguarding practice.

The trustee and school governor with responsibility for safeguarding will receive additional training appropriate to the role. This does not remove responsibility from the trust board as a whole.

Strategic safeguarding responsibilities are set out in Section C.

Training Records and Evaluation

We will maintain an accurate record of safeguarding training, including:

- the participant's name and role
- the training completed and date
- the provider
- any renewal or update date
- action taken where training was missed

Responsibility for maintaining the training record rests with the Head Teacher. Training records will be reviewed by trust leaders to identify gaps, overdue updates and additional learning needs.

We will evaluate whether training is understood and improving practice through the annual MITRE safeguarding audit and review processes.

Where weaknesses are identified, additional training, supervision, guidance or procedural changes will be provided by the trust.

Monitoring Implementation

The Head Teacher, DSL local governing body and trust board will seek assurance that this policy is understood and effective in practice. Monitoring will consider:

- safeguarding concerns, referrals, records and outcomes
- children's understanding of reporting systems
- staff training, confidence and compliance
- DSL availability and safeguarding cover
- online safety, safer recruitment and concerns about adults
- alternative provision and external providers
- actions arising from audits, incidents and practice reviews

An update on safeguarding is included once per term for local governing bodies and at every standards and effectiveness committee of the trust board. The updates are scrutinised and challenged to provide strong assurance of best safeguarding practice.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory guidance, Nottinghamshire procedures, our school's arrangements or learning from practice indicate that changes are required.

Concerned for a child's welfare in and outside of school?
Be alert to signs of abuse, low attendance, unusual behaviour and/or changes to

A child makes a disclosure

- **Listen calmly and attentively**, allow them to speak freely and reassure them that they have made the right choice
- **Use open-ended questions** ("Can you tell me what happened?") and **avoid leading or investigative questions**
- **Reassure them** that they are being taken seriously and will be supported
- **Do not promise confidentiality** — explain that you must share the information to keep them safe
- **Avoid physical comfort gestures** unless **clearly** appropriate.
- **Do not ask the child to write a statement or sign your notes**
- **Record the child's exact words** and any wishes or feelings expressed on paper
- **Report verbally to the DSL** or SLT in DSL's absence and **write up the conversation as soon as possible**
- **Where possible**, manage disclosures with **two staff present**, ideally including the DSL or Deputy DSL

Discussing concerns with DSL

- DSL to consider further actions and make necessary decisions
- If unsure call **MASH Consultation Line** for advice: **0115 977 427** (details not to be shared, this is an advice line)
- Concerns, discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded in writing
- "Confidential concerns" or "Child protection file" should be opened and filed in line with school procedures
- At all stages, the child's circumstance should be kept under review. Re-refer to relevant referral point if

Still concerned in school time?

- Make MASH referral: 0300 500 80 90
- If safe, call Early Help: 0115 804 1248
- Have all child/families

Out of hours concern?

- Out of hours emergency duty team: 0300 456 45 46

Safeguarding concern resolved/no longer held

- Decide on actioned needed to support child
- Implement any actions and support plans
- Record decisions and ensure follow ups take place

Record all decisions and actions, working to agreed outcomes and within timescales.

Escalate any emerging threats/concerns by adopting NSCP procedures

Consult with child and family if necessary

- Agree support and refer to guidance "Pathway to Provision"

Allegations/Concerns regarding adults? (paid or volunteer)

- Call LADO: **0115 804 1272**
- Call NSPCC Whistle Blowing: **0800 028**