



Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Traditionally, approaches to child protection have focussed on children and their families. However, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, Woodventurers Woodland Learning (WWL) consider a range of elements including: The Child's Development Needs, Parenting Capacity and Family and Environmental Factors.

Woodventurers Woodland Learning Safeguarding Policy arises from the following key principle:

Everybody regardless of age, disability, gender or ethnic origin has a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

At Woodventurers we aim to safeguard the welfare of all who participate in Forest School and Woodland Learning sessions. Safeguarding is an overarching umbrella that covers all forms of keeping everyone in our setting safe; children, staff and volunteers alike. We work alongside other agencies to ensure that communication is open and that information sharing is clear and in line with both our GDPR policy and also in the interest of pupil wellbeing. We work to prevent harm as far as possible and have robust procedures for assessing risks for settings, activities and individuals.

In order to give protection from potential and actual abuse or harm it is important that all concerned have a basic understanding of the issues involved and that procedures are in place that are understandable and easy to implement by anyone providing a service to schools.

Woodventurers Woodland Learning (WWL) is committed to creating an environment that enables children to learn, develop and express themselves in a safe, understanding and encouraging environment. Parents and settings trust us to look after their young people, to care for them, to give encouragement and to keep them safe.

We need to ensure that we honour their trust. "It is not our responsibility as members of WWL to decide whether or not abuse or harm is occurring, but it is our responsibility to act

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on any concerns and do something about it.”

All WWL staff are responsible for safeguarding and will be required to hold a current certificate in child and adolescent safeguarding. This should be updated at least every other year and alongside this at least annual in-house updates/ training will be held by WWL SLT for all staff and volunteers to attend.

WWL fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 the Education Act 2002, and the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021, to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This responsibility is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges [Keeping children safe in education 2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85421/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2025.pdf) All staff at WWL have been made aware of their duties and responsibilities under Part One of this document.

As an Alternative Provision we also recognise and support the primary setting for our pupils, usually schools, to remain responsible for the safeguarding of the learner. We work in partnership with settings and information share in a timely manner in line with KCSIE 2025, local guidelines and GDPR.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families all staff have a responsibility to:

- Identify concerns early to prevent them from escalating
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- Identify children who may benefit from early help
- Know what to do if a child tells them he/she/they is/are being abused or neglected
- Follow the referral process if they have a concern

All WWL staff and volunteers will be carefully selected and vetted to try to ensure they do not pose a risk to children in line with our safer recruitment policy. Those having contact with children will hold a current enhanced DBS check registered on the government update service and have been through WWL safeguarding checks. In addition Staff sign to say they read and agree to abide by our safeguarding document together with 'Annex B' of [Keeping children safe in education 2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85421/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2025.pdf) and '[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/What-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused-Advice-for-practitioners.pdf)' (March 2015) if they are working directly with children.

If you have any concerns please raise these with our staff who will ensure that they are passed on to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) Nicki Proietti or Toni Rogers.

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole setting protective ethos

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PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are detailed

SUPPORTING CHILDREN particularly those who may have been abused, neglected or exploited and/or witnessed abuse, neglect or exploitation towards others.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN and SAFER RECRUITMENT processes are followed to ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed.

PREVENTION

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

Woodventurers therefore works to establish and maintain an environment where:-

- Children feel safe and are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Children know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate
- Tailor our sessions to be age and stage of development appropriate so that it meets the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Incorporate into sessions, activities and opportunities that enable children to develop their understanding of stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Ensure that all staff challenge instances of prejudice related behaviour, including but not limited to, instances of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.
- We work within the Early Help Framework and be alert to any child who has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit, has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending or is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

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Prevention of Child-on-Child Abuse

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; upskirting part of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act, April 2019) and initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

WWL will therefore: Create a whole setting protective ethos in which child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

Provide training for staff about recognising and responding to child on child abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of peer abuse, with girls more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators.

Ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up.

Include within our sessions, information and materials that support our learners in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers and online.

Provide opportunities, when relevant to the learners in our care for high quality Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), and / or enrichment programmes, including teaching about consent. Additional guidance on sexting can be found in 'Sexting' in schools: advice and support around self-generated images - What to do and how to handle it, published by CEOP.

Ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of child on child abuse, referring any concerns of child-on-child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) in line with safeguarding reporting procedures.

Be clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, offer appropriate support and take the wishes of the victim into account when decision making.

Implement measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and if necessary other children and staff members, safe. Record any risk assessments and keep them under review.

Give consideration to the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak with any other settings when appropriate and refer to the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's Child Sexual Abuse Assessment Tool if there is a concern that a young person may have experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment or other forms of sexual abuse.

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



Liaise closely with external agencies, including police and social care, when required.

Refer to '[Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five, 2025](#)' Also see '[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)' (UKCIS, updated March 2025) 3.0

Prohibited Items:

Being in possession of a prohibited item – especially knives, weapons, illegal drugs or stolen items – may mean that the pupil is involved, or at risk of being involved, in anti social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement, and in some cases may be involved in child criminal exploitation. A search may play a vital role in identifying pupils who may benefit from early help or a referral to the local authority children's social care services.

Therefore, senior Leadership and staff they authorise, reserve the right to search a learner or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item (listed below):

Prohibited items include:

- knives or weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images;
- any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or injure a person or damage property.

PROCEDURES

We will follow the procedures set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board 'Inter-Agency Procedures'. A copy of these procedures can be found on their website: <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board>

DSL

WWL has two appointed DSL's; Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers

The DSL's have the appropriate status and authority within the setting to carry out the duties of the post. They are given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters (See ['Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025, Annex C'](#)).

The DSL's have both undergone the DSL training provided by the Education Child Protection Service. This training will be updated at least every two years.

In addition to the formal training set out above the DSL's refresh their knowledge and skills e.g. via bulletins, meetings or further reading at least annually.

Every member of staff, paid and unpaid, knows who the Designated Safeguarding Personnel are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the point of induction. This involves the use of reporting concerns via My Concern and through immediate conversation when appropriate. Regular updates and shared in newsletters and any change to the DSL's will be informed to all staff immediately.

Keeping Children Safe in Education states "During term time the designated safeguarding lead should always be available for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns and all tutors have immediate phone contact to the DSL's when needed. A contingency plan or cover arrangements in the event of this unavailability has been organised through contact with one of our dedicated coordinators.

All DSL's liaise with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, clinical commissioning group and police) as appropriate and work with other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023](#)

Information Sharing and Record Keeping

DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

All parents and school partners are informed of the responsibility placed on the setting and staff in relation to child protection Where pupils are educated in school or in another alternative provision for part of their day WWL and the other providers have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns between the agencies.

Where a member of staff from a partner agency attends WWL with a pupil then written confirmation that the setting has carried out appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working at the establishment will be sought by WWL. WWL will add DBS details of any additional adults attending sessions with learners to their single central record.

WWL staff working at a different site to our own must be aware of the procedures set out in

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



the host settings' safeguarding policy and follow the procedures for reporting concerns to the setting they are working within.

WWL staff must report concerns to the DSL at the particular setting using the settings logging process and make WWL DSL aware that they have done so by logging the event on My Concern. WWL DSL will also securely log the concerns to best look at any patterns that may emerge and monitor that appropriate follow up has occurred.

Staff will be aware of the DSL at the setting they are working in and who to report to in the event they need to log a concern.

WWL will work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all pupils and will co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups. Notify the relevant Social Care Unit immediately if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there is any change in circumstances to a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan

When a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school/ setting immediately. The Child Protection Chair and Social Work Unit will also be informed.

WWL will keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately.

Disclosures and concerns should be recorded via MyConcern. Tutors will be encouraged to use the TELL, EXPLAIN, DESCRIBE process when listening to a learner and when recording concerns. Tutors will be given a login to access the My Concern system on joining the team. In addition, tutors should alert the DSL by phone of the disclosure or record if it is an immediate cause for concern.

All subsequent concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing through MyConcern.

Records must :

- Be a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern checking descriptions for unconscious bias including victim blaming, adultification and preconceived ideas
- Include the child's wishes and feelings
- Include details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- Note any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Confidentiality

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



Information about children and their families is defined as 'special category data', i.e. information that identifies a living individual. Collection, storage and sharing of personal data is governed by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

WWL will ensure staff and volunteers adhere to confidentiality protocols and that information is shared appropriately. Ensure staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, (as set out in 'Information sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,')

Ensure that if a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (under the Data Protection Act 2018) from a pupil or parent they will refer the request to the DSL.

Ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputies will disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis. Parental consent may be required.

DSL's will aim to gain consent to share information and be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent if a person believes that there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner.

Record when decisions are made to share or withhold information, who information has been shared with and why. (See 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' July 2018)

In cases where the 'serious harm test' is met, WWL must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. Where in doubt WWL will seek independent legal advice.

WWL will undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action.

Training

All staff and volunteers will receive information and basic training in safe conduct and what to do if they have concerns about a child. They will be required to read the WWL and any other setting different to our own safeguarding policies. They must attend regular safeguarding update training. This will include information on recognising where there are concerns about a child, where to get advice and what to do if no one seems to have taken their concerns seriously.

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



WWL employees and volunteers SHOULD ALWAYS:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage those, including reporting any potential to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Plan and organise work and the workplace so as to minimise risks in line with WWL policies and procedures.
- As far as possible, be visible when working with young people in your care. Do not spend time alone with children away from or hidden from others. Tutors must follow all safety measures outlined in intimate care plans and associated risk assessments.
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised or discussed.
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

WWL employees and volunteers must NEVER:

- Use physical force against a child/adult unless deemed absolutely necessary as identified in [Woodventurers Restrictive Physical Intervention guidance](#).
- Develop relationships with child/adult which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Act in any way that may be abusive or may place a person at risk of abuse.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive or abusive.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative. There may be rare occasions when a child is distressed and needs physical comforting – discretion must be used to ensure that this is appropriate and any contact is necessary and justified.
- Do things for a child of a personal nature that they can do for themselves (e.g. taking them to the toilet). In the case of very young children it may be necessary for them to be offered assistance in using the toilet – this assistance should, wherever possible, be provided by someone of the same sex and discretion should be used so that any assistance is appropriate and any contact is necessary and justified.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child/adult or otherwise engage in any form of emotional abuse.

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



- Discriminate against, show deferential treatment, or favour particular students to the exclusion of others.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The underlying principle is that actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour should be avoided and that action will be taken if concerns are raised.

Lone working

Please refer to [Woodventurers Lone Working Policy](#)

Online safety.

At WWL we believe that children should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times. The online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges. We recognise our duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.

Online harm may include learners being unduly influenced by content they access online which may lead to further harm such as belief patterns which impact on mental health and physical health and content which may lead to behaviour which is harmful to others.

Tutors must be vigilant to signs that a young person is being led by misinformation or disinformation and seek guidance from DSLs if they are concerned.

Please refer to [Woodventurers Online Safety Policy document](#) for guidance.

Online Safety in Sessions:

To ensure the safety of children engaging in online sessions with a WWL tutor we will make Parents/carers will be made aware of exactly how and when the online tutoring will take place and the risks/benefits of online sessions taking place. Parents/carers at the child's home will be aware and have agreed their responsibility to stay within earshot and never leave the child/children alone with the tutor(s).

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



The location of the sessions will have been discussed and agreed in advance with the family to ensure that both the tutors and learners are not put in a vulnerable position.

Online safety for live stream tutoring:

If delivering teaching through digital means, WWL tutors will use a secure platform appropriate to the age and development stage of the learners.

Parents will ensure the internet access being used by the learner has parental controls switched on and inappropriate sites blocked.

Parents will be aware of these expectations and have given consent to carrying these measures prior to online learning taking place.

WWL tutors must adhere to the following guidelines when working with digital devices:

Any digital device used for online learning and internet access must have firewalls in place to protect users from malware and inappropriate content.

Be aware of what a child might see on your screen, always close all screens other than the one being used to deliver the teaching and ensure you are in a neutral, non-personal location.

Always maintain a professional relationship with the child/parent you are working for. Tutors should not allow the working relationship to become informal or too familiar.

Only use the chat function for communication directly related to the session eg to share a weblink to resources. Never engage in private chat with any child/parent.

If a child/parent is unexpectedly reticent to turn on their camera, consider whether further communication may be appropriate to ensure it is not to hide something going on at home.

Continue to be vigilant to signs of abuse or safeguarding indicators that may be harder to spot via online learning

Online safety/digital devices in the woodland setting.

During woodland learning or Forest School sessions, children are not permitted to use personal mobile phones, unless it is part of an agreed Individual Learning Plan or safety plan. Phones must be kept out of sight in their bag or handed to the tutor on arrival.

The lead Woodland Tutor will have a mobile phone about their person for emergency use only and for recording images to the secure drive.

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



The child/children/parents may use digital devices such as cameras or tablets not connected to the internet to take photographs of their work, themselves or items of interest to include in their Learning Journey. With signed parental consent, the tutor may take photos of the child/children during the session for use in their Learning Journey. Tutors must ensure the content of photos taken at a Woodland Learning or Forest School session are appropriate to the learning taking place.

Tutors must ensure the person has given consent for and feels comfortable with being photographed.

Any inappropriate behaviour with regards to taking photographs or being photographed during a session must be dealt with at the moment and reported to the WWL co-ordinator following the session/ reported to My concern. If appropriate, this information will be shared with the relevant staff at the child/children's setting.

Ongoing Safeguarding implication from covid pandemic 2020:

The impacts and changes in lifestyle resulting from covid have for some created stress and changes in behaviour of both children and adults. It is important that we support those we work with in the best way possible. WWL will ensure they are aware of how covid may have impacted/be impacting on children/parents/carers and how they can best support them.

When liaising with settings or parents/carer WWL programme co-ordinators will find out about how children they will be working with are being cared for and any significant changes to their lives as a result of covid eg. financial impact, bereavement. Also, if the home setting is receiving the support, access to medication or provisions they need. When appropriate, this information will be shared with the tutors to enable them to best support the learners in their care. Co-ordinators will maintain open communication with the child/children's setting to be aware of changes as they happen.

During covid children spent more time at home than ever before where abuse may have been taking place but not noticed. It is therefore important that WWL staff are extra vigilant to signs of abuse that may present.

Tutors should try to find out about how life is for the child/children with open-ended questions like 'how has your day been so far?'

Tutors may also become aware of how covid and associated lockdowns impacted on home life and domestic arrangements. eg the challenges of being locked down in a cramped space without access to outside space. Any disclosure of this kind must be logged and reported to the programme co-ordinator. The programme co-ordinator will ensure this information is passed to the relevant staff at the child/children's setting.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We recognise that any child may be subject to abuse and neglect, and that mental health

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation and as such WWL will support all children by:

Providing curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation

Creating an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community.

Applying WWL behaviour policy and student code of conduct effectively to support vulnerable pupils in the setting.

All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. WWL will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

Liaise with the coordinator of the programme who will liaise with other settings where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health

Liaise with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Cambridgeshire Sexual Behaviour Service, Addiction or Locality or Early Help Teams.

Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances

WWL recognises that whilst any child may benefit from early help, staff are encouraged to consider the wider environmental factors present in a child's life which could pose a threat to their welfare or safety, (contextual safeguarding). Staff are required to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children in particular circumstances. Please see pages 9 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025](#) for the complete list.

We recognise that, statistically, children with additional needs, special educational needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. As the majority of our learners present with complex disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems staff must be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse.

WWL has pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or challenging behaviours. Staff and coordinators will work with other settings, parents, YP and as a team to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan

As an integral part of our session tutors will teach learners personal safety skills commensurate with their age, ability and needs. Learners will be taught personal safety skills such as how to recognise if they are feeling unsafe including within family relationships and friendships; how to ask for help; the difference between safe and unsafe secrets; the difference between safe and unsafe physical contact; and how to recognise and manage risk including in a digital context. Where appropriate this will also be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



be supported at home.

Supervision by coordinators will be vigilant to create a protective ethos around the child.

Young carers:

WWL recognises that children who are living in a home environment which requires them to act as a young carer for a family member or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection. WWL will seek to identify young carers; offer additional support internally; signpost to external agencies; be particularly vigilant to the welfare of young carers and follow the procedures outlined in this policy, referring to Early Help or Social Care as required if concerns arise.

Risks Outside the Home / Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm outside of the family home. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Risks outside the home may include:

- Peer group identity;
- Peer group dynamics and known risky associations;
- Risk of harm outside the family home;
- Risk relating to specific locations;
- Risk relating to online contexts including the 'dark web', social media, gaming addiction and online relationships.
- Parenting capacity to ensure safety outside the family home;
- Guardianship capacity of School/Trusted adults/Community.

WWL will be vigilant in recognising any contextual risks which may put a young person at harm including seeking information regarding a home situation, family dynamics at the start of a programme and putting risk assessments in place where appropriate. WWL will inform tutors of a learners situation in order that they can support needs if they arise.

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation or Radicalisation

Criminal exploitation of children is a form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. Drug networks or gangs exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas. Exploitation can occur even if activity appears to be consensual. All staff will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations within or outside their families and be aware of children who go missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from home.

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. WWL works to support the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism or extreme acts of violence. WWL staff will be mindful of learners who have been the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), as well as the victim. WWL will ensure that the DSL has undertaken Prevent Lead Awareness training and that all staff receive training about the Prevent Duty. All staff will have access and knowledge of DFE guidance on [managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#).

Staff are required to be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate they need help or protection. Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation are referred to the DSL in the usual way. WWL's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Attendance and Children Frequently Missing Education

WWL recognises that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, modern slavery, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM or forced marriage. WWL monitors attendance of individual pupils closely, and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence feeding back to referrers on a daily basis about attendance to form part of a full picture

WWL endeavours to hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil to provide additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a learner is not in attendance and has not been contacted with a reason

In addition WWL hold and maintain attendance registers for all learners and these are shared with partner settings in line with our attendance policy. We support and work with our settings, learners and parents towards the model of Expect - Monitor - Listen and Understand - Facilitate Support - Formalise support - Enforce

[Attendance Policy 2025](#)

Substance Misuse of Drugs or Alcohol

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence

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of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the academy will consider such action in the following situations: When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- to believe the pupil's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
- where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.
- Where the misuse indicates an urgent health or safeguarding concern
- Where the child is perceived to be at risk of harm through any substance associated criminality

Children living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence. When WWL receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures. This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers
- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
- Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency
- Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment
- Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child.

Children at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears

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consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Potential indicators of sexual exploitation will be addressed within staff training, including raising awareness with staff that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of child sexual exploitation arise.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with any other settings to ensure joined up working and together will complete Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's Exploitation (CSE / Criminal/Gangs) Risk Assessment and Management Tool and refer to Social Care if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of CSE.

Children Living with Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships.

Domestic Abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are 'personally connected' regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour.

WWL recognises that where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Domestic Abuse can also affect children in their personal relationships as well as in the context of home life.

Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of Domestic Abuse arise. WWL will vigilantly monitor the welfare of children living in domestic abuse households, offer support to them and contribute to any Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) safety plan as required.

Children at risk of 'Honour- Based' Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation

So called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including breast ironing, female

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genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. WWL takes these concerns seriously and staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBA through training. Staff are required to treat all forms of HBA as abuse and follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

FGM is a procedure involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK. Any indication that a child is at risk of FGM, where FGM is suspected, or where the woman is over 18, will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. Staff will report concerns to the DSL, who will make appropriate and timely referrals to social care.

In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice and the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the pupil's wishes.

In accordance with the Female Genital Mutilation Act, it is a statutory duty for teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. Tutors should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve social care as appropriate, but the tutor will personally report to the police that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Children who have returned home to their family from care

WWL recognises that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable. Tutors will vigilantly monitor the welfare of previously looked after children, keep records and notify Social Care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Board 'Inter - Agency Procedures.'

Children showing signs of Abuse and/or Neglect

WWL recognises that experiencing abuse or neglect may have an adverse impact on those children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support. School/ AP may be the only stable, secure and predictable elements in the lives of children at risk.

Young people who have experienced abuse or neglect may display this through their own behaviour, which may be challenging and defiant or passive and withdrawn. We recognise that young people may develop abusive behaviours and that they may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse) criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation. 3.11.3 The academy will provide training for staff to ensure that they have the skills to identify and report

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cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A).

Privately Fostered Children

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

WWL will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements and refer to the Specialist Fostering Team.

Children who have Family Members in Prison

WWL is committed to supporting children and young people who have a parent or close relative in prison and will work with the family to find the best ways of supporting the child.

WWL recognises that children with family members in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including: poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health and poor attendance.

WWL will treat information shared by the family in confidence and it will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. However, information will be shared to other settings supporting a young person in coordination with WWL as this is an important part of our cross agency support.

WWL will work with the family and the child to minimise the risk of the child not achieving their full potential.

Children who need to attend court

WWL is aware that at times, young people may need to appear in court as a witness and that both the initial experience and the court experience can require support. All staff are aware of the guidance offered for [5 - 11 year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

WWL will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to part 3 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2025) and WWL Safer Recruitment Policy.

WWL will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

Whistleblowing

At Woodventurers we encourage a culture of open communication and believe in the importance of open lines of communication. If you have any concerns about service provision or the conduct of any staff at Woodventurers that:

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- make you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards;
- are not in keeping with Woodventurers policies and procedures;
- fall below established standards of practice; or
- are improper behaviour

Then please refer to our Whistleblowing policy and follow the guidelines therein.

Allegations against any member of staff:

Any allegations against members of staff will be handled in line with our 'Managing Allegations' policy and the below thresholds will be applied. See Appendix B

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold (Part Four Section One)

Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) that meets the harms threshold as set out in [Keeping children safe in education 2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2025), Part Four, Section One will be reported straight away to the programme Coordinator and the DSL's

In cases where the Coordinator is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Directors.

WWL will follow the procedures set out in Part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

WWL will consult with the Local Authority Named Senior Officer / Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025 and will seek help from HR personnel if required.

The Directors will ensure that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. The LADO will advise on all further action to be taken.

Before contacting the LADO, WWL will conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. WWL will use the guidance chart found at Appendix B to support their decision-making.

Where WWL identifies a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, they will immediately contact the police to intervene and to seek guidance on next steps.

WWL will consider:

- Looking after the welfare of the child - the designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.

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- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

WWL will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff, supply staff or volunteers relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff, supply staff or volunteer is no longer employed at WWL and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

Staff (including supply staff and volunteers) who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. However, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (Part Four, Section Two)

Low level concerns that do not meet the harms threshold should still be reported to the coordinators immediately. NB: The term low level does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms test.

In cases where the Coordinator is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported in the first instance to a member of the senior leadership team. Woodventurers would then appoint an independent mediator to manage the allegation until resolution.

WWL will follow the procedures set out in Part Four of [Keeping children safe in education 2025 - GOV.UK](#) and will deal with any such concern, no matter how small, where an adult working in or on behalf of WWL may have acted in a way that:

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

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Any records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

WWL will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This will enable WWL to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school/college are clear about professional

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boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

WWL will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents/carers as advised within the Local Authority's Code of Conduct: ['Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings'](#) (February 2022). As part of the Induction process, all staff, paid and unpaid, will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. All staff have signed to confirm that they have read ['Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings'](#) (February 2022).

WWL will ensure that staff, supply staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).

WWL will ensure that communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

Version Number	4	
Review Cycle	Annual	
Date of ratified policy	September 2025	Ratified by Toni Rogers
Date of Next Review	September 2026	
Related Policies	Behaviour policy Complaints policy Critical Incident plan First Aid policy Health and Safety policy Intimate Care policy Physical Intervention and/or Use of Reasonable Force policy Protocol for children not collected from school at the end of the school day/activity Safer Recruitment policy Staff Code of Conduct/Safer Working Practice/ Tutor Handbook Staff Discipline and Grievance procedures Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy	

Designated safeguarding Leads: Nicki Proietti and Toni Rogers



	Whistleblowing policy
Other Relevant Documents	Appendices to policy Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE): Sept 2025 Working together to safeguard children (2023) Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (May 2019) Guidance from Cambridgeshire Authority: Record Keeping Guidance to take account of GDPR: Sept 2018 Record Keeping Guidance from Cambridgeshire Authority (GDPR): Sept 2018 Working Together to Safeguard Children: July 2018 Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools (July 2018) Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers: July 2018 Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation: April 2016 Advice for practitioners: March 2015 The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers June 2015 Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales: April 2021 Education Child Protection Record Keeping Guidance Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings: Oct 2015 when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners" March 2015 Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners - GOV.UK Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people" published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) – Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS, March 2024) The Equality Act 2010 and 2021 update When to call the Police guidance Responding to Prejudice Related Incidents Policy Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Early Help Strategy April 2021 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board Teaching about relationships, sex and health - GOV.UK Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK

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Appendix A - RECOGNISING AND REPORTING ABUSE - WWL PROCEDURE

What Is Abuse?

Do not ever think that you could never be placed in the position of reporting child abuse or raising a safeguarding concern. The generic term 'child abuse' is used to describe various ways in which children are harmed or mistreated. There are many different ways in which children can be harmed, all with a common factor that the child feels undervalued and worthless. Abuse can happen anywhere, but research indicates that the perpetrators of such abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child. Abuse therefore is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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What are the signs of abuse?

The signs of abuse aren't always obvious, and a child or young person might not feel able to tell anyone what's happening to them. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening to them is abuse.

There are different types of abuse and the signs of abuse may depend on the type. For example, the signs that a child is being neglected may be different from the signs that a child is being abused sexually.

Types of abuse:

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

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse: The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Telling a child they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- A child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying
- Causing a child to frequently feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption of a child

Neglect: Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur:

- During pregnancy as a result of substance abuse
- Failure to provide adequate food and clothing
- Failing to provide shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate

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caregivers)

- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Failure to ensure a child is given an education

Discriminatory Abuse: Discriminatory Abuse includes racist, religious and sexist abuse including FGM, plus abuse based on a person's disability.

- Treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.
- Violate someone's dignity or create a hostile environment for them on account of a protected characteristic.
- Putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.

Domestic Abuse: Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Witnessing Domestic abuse can cause serious harm and is a form of child abuse.

Grooming/ Child Trafficking: Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them either in person or online.

Anybody can be a groomer. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time and can take many forms.

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse and occur when children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

FGM: Female genital mutilation is illegal in the UK. It can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life. "Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. " (KCSiE 2025)

Online Abuse and Digital Abuse: Online/ Digital abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet or via a mobile device. It can happen across any device connected to the web or with messaging service. Abuse can be from known people or strangers. This includes cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation

Child on child Abuse: It is important to recognise that abuse isn't always perpetrated by

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adults; children can abuse other children and it can happen both inside and outside of educational settings and online. All Woodventurers staff will challenge and respond to inappropriate behaviours between peers and work to create a culture where this is unacceptable and addressed to ensure all learners feel safe onsite.

Criminal Exploitation and Gangs: Criminal Exploitation involves manipulating/ coercing children and young people into committing crimes. This could include becoming involved in 'gang activity' that is linked to illegal activity. It is important to be aware of County Lines and exploitation and that CCE and CSE may involve an exchange for something the victim wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Prevent: All Woodventurers staff are expected to have up to date PREVENT training and are also provided with regular updates from the DSL's. All staff have due regard to preventing people being drawn into terrorism or radicalisation.

Radicalisation can be difficult to spot. Signs that may indicate that a child is being radicalised may include:

- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if speech is scripted
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- Sudden negative change in attitude to others
- Increased levels of anger, secretiveness and/or internet use
- Low self esteem

Whilst these behaviours may also be signs that something else is wrong, or simply teenage behaviours, they should be observed and noted to ensure early identification and patterns are explored.

Gender Questioning

Woodventurers recognise that some of our young people may be gender questioning. We work to create a culture where learners can speak out or share any concerns with staff.

In line with KCSIE 2025 we take a cautious approach to supporting a gender questioning child and:

- Consider the broad range of the individual's needs
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and any other professionals or settings involved (except in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers could bring a significant risk of harm to the child)
- Include any clinical advice that is available
- Consider how to address wider vulnerabilities, such as the risk of bullying

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Common signs that may raise a concern

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour – but we can help you to assess the situation.

Other signs could be:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts
- You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children's safety and wellbeing.

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What should you do if you suspect abuse/ radicalisation is taking place?

If any member of an organisation is concerned that abuse/ radicalisation may occur, or has occurred they must refer the matter immediately to the WWL Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide whether or not to report the matter further. If it is felt that further investigation is necessary in order to protect the young person, the matter must be referred to the relevant local safeguarding hub.

Due attention will be paid to ['Managing risk of radicalisation in your educational setting \(Sept 2023\)](#)

Staff working with children/young people with SEND also need to be aware of additional needs that may result in those people not speaking out if something is wrong. This might result in them being more vulnerable. Some may be more vulnerable because:

- have additional communication needs
- they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- need intimate care or are isolated from others
- are dependent on adults for care.
- may be 'overheard' if engaging through online media



Appendix B

What to do if a child or adult discloses sensitive information to you:

If you are informed about abuse you must take the following steps:

- Always place the child or adult's welfare and interests as the paramount consideration.
- Listen carefully and actively to the person
- Let the person guide the pace and remember their ability to recount an allegation will depend on age, culture, language and communication skills, and disability.
- Do not show shock at what is being said. This may discourage the child or adult from talking, as they may feel you are unable to cope with what they're saying, or perhaps that you're thinking badly of them.
- Do not investigate. If anything needs to be clarified in order to understand the safeguarding risk, **ask clear, open questions:**
 - ask 'what, when, who, how, where' questions
 - ask 'do you want to tell me anything else?'
 - do not ask any 'why' questions as these can suggest guilt or responsibility.
- Remain calm and reassure the person that they have done the right thing by talking to a responsible adult.
- Never promise to keep a secret or confidentiality.
- It is important that this fact, and its implications of transparency and reporting, are emphasised in early and ongoing conversations.
- Ensure the child or adult at risk understands what will happen next – you will log the

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concern and pass it on to the Safeguarding Lead.

Record Keeping and Information Sharing

Woodventurers tutors will record any concerns using the My Concern system which stores records safely in line with UK GDPR. DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding concerns should be recorded as soon as possible after any disclosure has taken place and ideally within less than 24 hours. In the event you are unable to access My Concern, write a log and contact the DSL for next steps. Ensure the log is kept securely in the interim.

When logging a concern you must transcribe as true and accurate a picture as you can in a direct way without supposition, modification or embellishment. Most importantly to the best of your knowledge you should log the direct words used by the child/adult disclosing the concerning information.

Records will be shared with partner settings in line with KCSIE 2025 and [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(May 2025\)](#) .

The DSL's will maintain the My Concern system and keep written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions, including the rationale for those decisions. This will include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program.

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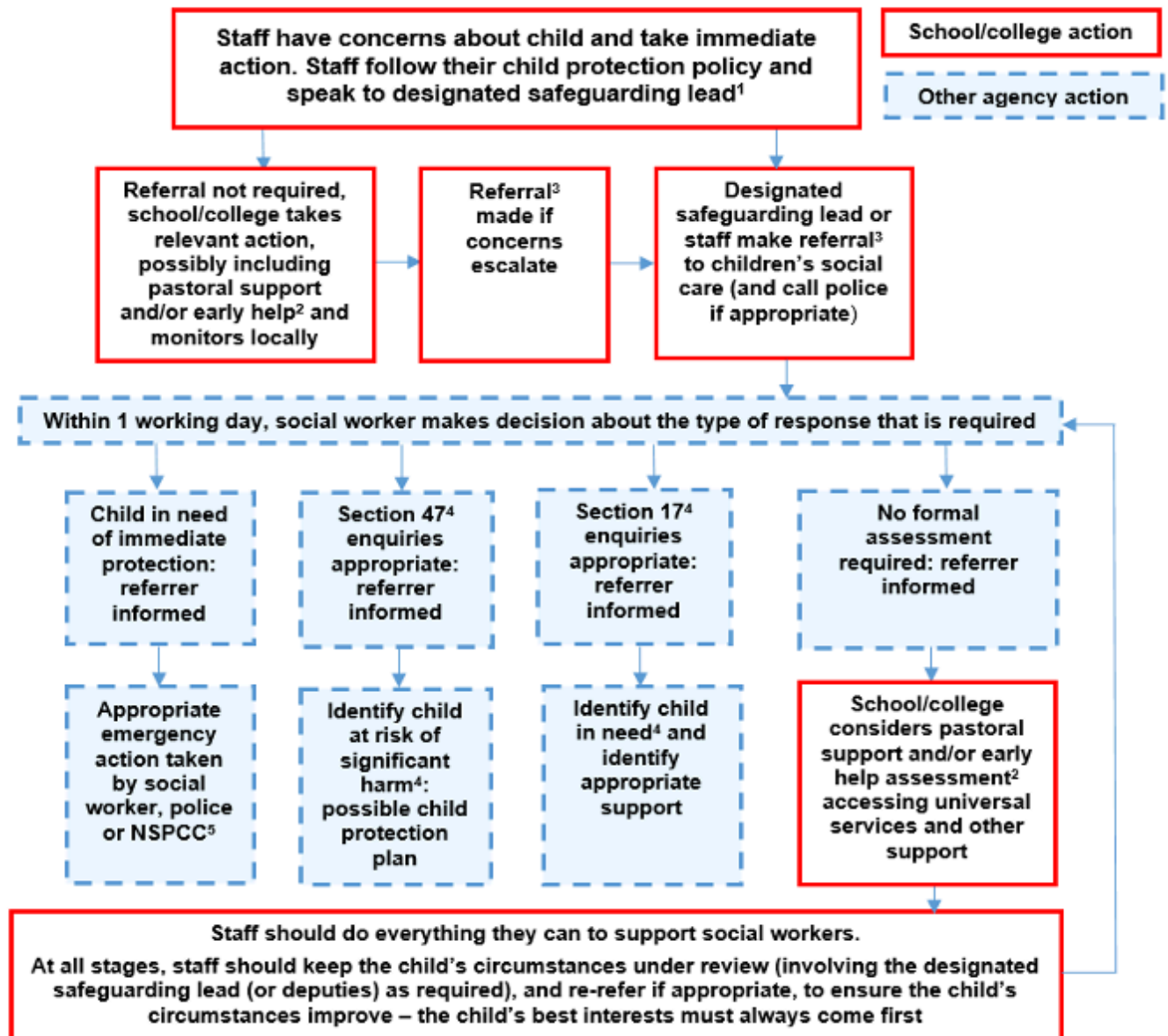


Appendix C

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A flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns about a child

Figure 1



Appendix D: Managing an Allegation or Concern about an Adult working with Children

Allegation or concern raised about a member of staff or adult

Does it meet the harm threshold?

The harm threshold is met where it is alleged that an adult working (or volunteering) in the school has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or

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- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (see KCSIE Part 4)

You may wish to consider these questions to help you decide the answer to this question.

- How long has the adult or member of staff worked for you?
- Have there been any previous concerns raised?
- Is this a one-off or part of a pattern of behaviour?
- Has the member of staff previously been given advice in this area?
- Would an associated pattern of behaviour (if it exists) be seen by others? (How closely do they work with other colleagues?)
- Might this have been a planned action or event?
- Could this behaviour be inadvertent? What is the likelihood of this?
- Could this be the precursor to more concerning behaviour?
- Did it occur in a 'public' or 'private' place? Was this in school or out of school?
- If electronic devices are involved, have any relevant files been deleted and is there any evidence of this?
- If this relates to inappropriate language, what is the precise nature of the language used? How inappropriate is it? What was the context – where was this, and who were the listeners? Could this be seen as 'banter' or might it have more serious undertones?

