



Fir Vale School

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Review Date	September 2023
Approved	Full Governors
Ratified	This policy is in place until a new policy is ratified as part of the transition with a new Trust.
To be Reviewed	September 2024
Policy Lead	Ms Montgomery

Our commitment

Part 1: Fir Vale School is committed to ensuring safer lives and greater learning. Academy expectations are outlined in our safeguarding statement to ensure that the welfare of each individual child is paramount. Fir Vale School will deliver this by:

- Ensuring that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Ensuring that staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

Our Safeguarding leaders

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is **Elizabeth Montgomery, Assistant Headteacher.**

- The following colleagues also act as deputy DSLs: **Viv Young, Michelle Saunders, Lisa Bland, Bradie Wild and Dominic Dawkins**
- The governor with responsibility for safeguarding is: **Usma Saeed**

Legislation and statutory guidance

We fully recognise our responsibility under [Working Together 2018](#), Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 [section 157 of the Education Act 2002](#) and [The Governance Handbook](#) to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children.

This policy has been drawn up to comply with statutory and legislative requirements and guidance that seeks to protect children including:

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Equality Act 2010 and the Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: HM Government 2014
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Information Protection Regulations
- We will follow the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.

Initial concerns are all logged on our system in school called 'CPOMS' and staff are thoroughly trained on how to do this. Should they not have access to the 'CPOMS' system, they must speak to one of the named Safeguarding Leads and/or Deputies without delay. We follow the procedures explained in this document:

- Should further support be required, safeguarding staff will contact the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, which means advice from Sheffield Social Care will be sought

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

Child protection is an aspect of safeguarding but is focused on how we respond to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Children in need: A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Where appropriate we will work with Sheffield SSCP and follow Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures. A copy of these procedures can be found on the SSCP website:

<https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/scsp>

Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising it or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. All staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

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

Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, agency staff, governors and external parties within the academy. Our policy and procedures also apply to any on-site extra-curricular activities and off-site activities.

All staff:

- **All staff** have a responsibility to exercise vigilance, to be alert to and to be aware of signs that suggest a child may be in need of help as well as the signs of abuse and neglect
- **All staff** will read and sign to indicate their understanding of Part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2>, and review this guidance at least annually
- **All staff** should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children's Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with a role they might be expected to play in such assessments
- **All staff** will be made aware of our systems, which support safeguarding within the school, which are implemented and monitored by the school's DSL. This includes:
 - The process by which a concern about a pupil should be raised
 - The early help process and their role within it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
 - The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
 - What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or if a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues, such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst liaising with relevant professionals
 - The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), FGM and radicalisation
 - Contextual factors outside of the academy i.e. wider environmental factors that are present in a child's life that are or may be a threat to their safety and or welfare
- The fact that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including the risk of online abuse

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The school's DSL (and deputies) should strive to maintain a complete safeguarding picture. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding concerns.

The Safeguarding Lead can be contacted via this email address emontgomery@firvale.com or staff can call the Safeguarding Lead/s on the main school contact number, via email or by logging concerns on 'CPOMS'.

When the DSL is absent, any of the Designated Safeguarding Deputies who are: **Viv Young, Michelle Saunders, Dominic Dawkins, Bradie Wild and Lisa Bland will cover Elizabeth Montgomery.**

If the DSL and deputy DSLs are not available, **The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher** will act as cover (for example, during out of school hours, out of term activities). If, in exceptional circumstances, the

designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The school's DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and /or support the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Disbarring Service, and/or pole), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Conduct risk and needs assessment as appropriate.
- Report serious safeguarding issues relating to children and in matters relating to staff.
- The school's DSL will keep their Headteacher informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The Governance of safeguarding

The Governing Body (GB) will approve this policy template at each review, to hold senior leaders to account for its implementation.

- The Governing Body will appoint a named governor to monitor the implementation of this policy in conjunction with the full GB. This must be a different person from the DSL. The GB will require the safeguarding link governor and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to provide a report on the measures they are taking to ensure compliance at regular intervals
- The GB performs a vital role in monitoring compliance and challenging the academy to ensure that best practice is followed. Therefore, all governors must recognise their safeguarding duties towards children in the academy. GB are required to sign in acknowledgement of this responsibility upon joining the GB and this is to be reviewed annually at a full meeting of the GB. The chair of the GB will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the principal, where appropriate
- The GB, the Headteacher/ principal and the DSL (and deputies) should be aware of the department advice: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment](#)

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the academy and via the academy website
- Ensuring that the DSL has the appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Monitoring and acting upon notifications from [Smoothwall](#) or delegating this responsibility to the DSL
- Where alternative provision is in place, obtaining written confirmation from that provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working in the provision, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff

Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

If a child makes a disclosure you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told someone sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation immediately in the child's own words. Keep it factual and do not include your own judgement
- Sign and date the written record and pass it on immediately to the academy DSL. The written record will be recorded on CPOMS

If a child is in immediate danger

- Wherever possible, speak to the DSL, first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly and/or the police immediately if a child is *in immediate danger or at risk of harm*. Anyone can make a referral
- Tell the DSL, as soon as possible if you make a referral directly
- You can also contact the charity NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 if you need advice on the appropriate action. The government website <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council> provides information on reporting abuse to local councils

If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger)

- The flowchart in Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022 demonstrates the procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare and the child is not in immediate danger. (KCSIE 2022). The first stage emphasises the need for staff to take **immediate** action where they have a concern about a child. In all cases, the wishes of the child must remain paramount
- The DSL will keep the case under constant review and, if it is appropriate to, refer the case to local authority or the police; the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so
- The local authority will make a decision within one working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not available and ensure outcomes are properly recorded

If you have concerns about extremism

- If a child is not at immediate risk of harm, where possible, always speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively make a referral to Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (SSH) directly if appropriate, but you must inform the DSL of the referral
- Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency this concern should be referred. This could include [Channel guidance](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism
- The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, **020 7340 7264** that school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:
 - i) Think someone is in immediate danger
 - ii) Think someone may be travelling to join an extremist group
 - iii) See or hear something that may be terrorist related

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises 'all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs'. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting, harmful consequences. Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest that a pupil may be at risk are provided.

- Any teacher that discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 **must** immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty under Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet this duty. The above duty does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils
- Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures. Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM, who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the academy DSL and follow their local safeguarding board guidance or that of their local police

Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

Allegations against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff. Please also refer to our HR policy for guidance on dealing with allegations against staff

- If you have concerns about a member of staff or volunteer, speak to the Headteacher. If you have concerns about the Headteacher, speak to the Chair of Governors. The Headteacher/Chair of Governors will then follow the procedures within the HR policy, if appropriate
- For guidance on whistleblowing, please see the Whistleblowing policy.

Child on Child abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, including (but not limited to), bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexting. We are well-informed with regards to the guidance within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 in recognising and dealing with instances of such abuse. All staff should be clear about our policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse. Such abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", or "part of growing up". Staff will monitor patterns of behaviour on Classcharts and escalate repeat behaviours that could be considered abuse and record on CPOMS.

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must inform the academy DSL and record the allegation on CPOMS
- The school's DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team if appropriate and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The school's DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved if appropriate - both the victim(s) and the children) against whom the allegation has been made - with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The school's DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) if appropriate or other local services if more appropriate

We will minimise the risk of child on child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders - for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff

- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

Communication with parents/carers

- We will make sure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to safeguarding and child protection by setting out its duties in the school prospectus and on the website
- We will undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to any proposed interagency involvement unless the circumstances preclude this action. If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, or exacerbate the situation, we will seek advice from the local safeguarding children's board
- In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved

Online safety

- As we increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. Therefore we have appropriate internet filtering within our school and we utilise Smoothwall <https://www.smoothwall.com/education/firewall/> to monitor all activity within our applications; in particular the content of information, the nature of the contact and the conduct of the user. Please see our e-safety policy for further information.

Mobile phones and cameras

- For further information on the use of mobile phones, cameras and sharing of images please see our e-safety policy and our Acceptable Use policy
- We recognise that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the academy has developed a policy to outline the required protocol for all employees, pupils, volunteers, governors and parents/ carers. See our E-safety policy and Acceptable Use policy

Record keeping

- We will keep clear, detailed, accurate, written (or electronic based) records of concerns about children (noting the date, event, action taken and evaluation). Where there is no need to refer the matter to social care immediately. CPOMS is used to ensure this is secure.
- All information is held electronically. This information is only accessible by the DSL, deputies and appropriately trained staff

Confidentiality and information sharing

- Child protection information will be held and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR regulations
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children, which must always be the paramount concern. Therefore academy staff must share information with relevant agencies, where that information may

help protect a child. Similarly this Act does not prevent academy staff from sending child protection records to a receiving school or academy, when the pupil concerned moves school

- Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. Such a request should be referred to the DSL, or Headteacher

Training

- Staff training - **All staff** members undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures to ensure they understand the Academy's safeguarding system and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be updated annually with additional updates in line with advice from our local children's safeguarding board
- **All staff** have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (e.g. through emails, briefings and staff meetings as required but at least annually). Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable

The school's DSL and deputy (deputies)

- The school's DSL and (deputy/deputies) undertake child protection and safeguarding training in line with the requirements of Sheffield Local Authority
- In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (e.g. through e-bulletins, online updates, designated Safeguarding meetings or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments)
- School DSLs will also undertake Prevent awareness training when appropriate

Governors

- All governors must receive safeguarding training regularly to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities
- Governors are required to sign to acknowledge they have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Safer Recruitment

- The school operates safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks on employees, volunteers and governors are undertaken according to the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022)
- We ensure that at least one person on any interview /appointment panel for a post at the academy will have undertaken safer recruitment training as required by the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 local safeguarding procedures. Please also see our HR policy

Staff who have contact with pupils and families

- All staff who have contact with children and families have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues

Monitoring arrangements

- This policy template will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding lead and deputies
- At each review, the revised template for academies will be approved by the Board of Governors

Links with other policies

This policy also links to the following policies and procedures:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and child protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff code of conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable Use Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Recruitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racist incidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Safety 	