



HEARTWOOD HOUSE

Policy document control box

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Policy owner (including job title)	Chris Seymour (Executive Headteacher)
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Version	Date	Title	Status	Comment
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0.2	14/06/2021	Headteacher	Minor updates	-update point 6.6.5 regarding escalation of concerns with Local authority -added point 7.13.3 and 7.13.4 regarding LAC reviews - added point 3.5 regarding policy review
1	14/06/2021	Safeguarding Trustee	Final	Reviewed by Safeguarding Trustee and ready to be signed off at Next Trustee Meeting on 17 July 2021.
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3	17/3/2022	Headteacher		added points 7.6-7.10 added point 5.6 some minor wording changes edited references to KCSiE (annex A vs annex B)
4	1/9/2022	Executive Headteacher	Update due to new KCSiE document	Amended references to "Peer on Peer abuse" to "child on child abuse" throughout Added points 3.6 and 3.7 Amended references to "Children's Social Care" to "Local Authority Children's Social Care" throughout Added point 7.2 Added point 7.18.2 Added points 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 Added point 7.5 Added points 5.11 and 5.12
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6.0	14/11/2025	Executive Headteacher	Review to reflect KCSiE	Updated Executive Headteacher

			2025 legislatio n	Updated references to KCSiE 2024
7.0	17/11/2025	Executive Headteacher	Notify LA of absence	Updated requirement to notify LA if any pupil has not attended for 10 consecutive days

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Heartwood House Flowchart – How to ACT on Your Concerns

You have concerns about a child's safety & welfare Do: - remain calm, approachable and receptive - listen carefully, without interrupting - acknowledge you understand how difficult this may be - make it clear that you are taking what is said seriously - reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you - let them know that you'll do everything you can to help them - make a written record of exactly what has been said. Don't: - promise confidentiality - ask leading or probing questions - investigate - repeatedly question or ask the individual to repeat the disclosure - discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know - delay in reporting the disclosure to the Safeguarding team.		
Action 1	Is it an emergency? Is there an imminent risk of significant harm?	
Action 2	No	Yes
	Go to Action 4	Heartwood House Staff should: - Call the Police (emergency Services) - Inform / Refer to Local Authority Children's Social care - Call an Ambulance if the child is injured or has an acute illness
Action 3	Heartwood House Staff should immediately discuss the concern/s to the - Heartwood House Head Teacher or - Heartwood House Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or - Heartwood House to Designated Person (DP) <u>(Within one hour)</u> <u>Anyone can make a referral. If you are unable to discuss with anyone listed above or if you are unsatisfied that the appropriate action has been taken, it is your responsibility to make a referral yourself.</u>	
Action 4	Heartwood House Staff should immediately document the concern and any decisions in CPOMS <u>(Within three hours)</u>	

You have concerns about a child's safety & welfare

Do:

remain calm, approachable and receptive
listen carefully, without interrupting
acknowledge you understand how difficult this may be
make it clear that you are taking what is said seriously
reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
let them know that you'll do everything you can to help them
make a written record of exactly what has been said.

Don't:

promise confidentiality
ask leading or probing questions
investigate
repeatedly question or ask the individual to repeat the disclosure
discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know
delay in reporting the disclosure to the Safeguarding team.

Action 1	Is it an emergency? Is there an imminent risk of significant harm?
Action 5	Heartwood House Head Teacher/ Heartwood House Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Heartwood House to Designated Person (DP) to review concern and consider a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care. Consent been obtained from the parents or whoever holds parental responsibility, unless getting consent puts the child or family at risk of harm If no referral or input for early help is needed this should be recorded into is 'CPOMS' Local Authority Children's Social Care will need to know the following: • The child's full name, DOB (age), home address • The name and identity of the child's primary carer/s and legal parent/s. • The name of any siblings or other children (under 18 years old) that live at the same address. • The specific concerns about the child's safety (distinguishing fact from opinion). • The source of information on which these concerns are based. • Other known relevant history. • What is being asked of Local Authority Children's Social Care (e.g. to assess).
Action 6	• Refer to Local Authority Children's Social Care • Follow up in writing within 24 hours using the Local Authority referral form Record your actions and outcome in 'CPOMS'
Action 7	• Follow up to see if the referral been accepted by Local Authority Children's Social Care Record the outcome in 'CPOMS'

You have concerns about a child's safety & welfare

Do:

remain calm, approachable and receptive
listen carefully, without interrupting
acknowledge you understand how difficult this may be
make it clear that you are taking what is said seriously
reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
let them know that you'll do everything you can to help them
make a written record of exactly what has been said.

Don't:

promise confidentiality
ask leading or probing questions
investigate
repeatedly question or ask the individual to repeat the disclosure
discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know
delay in reporting the disclosure to the Safeguarding team.

Action 1	Is it an emergency? Is there an imminent risk of significant harm?
	If you disagree with the 'NO' decision you should escalate your concerns with senior manager within Local Authority Children's Social Care or consult with your Trustees Get clarification if you still haven't received a response within 3 working days!

Safeguarding Contact Details

Contact details for Safeguarding Referrals

This referral must go to Local Authority Children's Social Care where the child/young person lives using one of the following methods:

You should still notify the child and family before making such a referral unless to do so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.

Brent	Family.FrontDoor@brent.gov.uk	020 8937 4300 (option 1) Out of hours: 020 8863 5250
Barnet	MASH@Barnet.gov.uk mash@barnet.gcsx.gov.uk	020 8937 4300 Out of hours: 020 8863 5250
Ealing	ecirs@ealing.gov.uk	020 8825 8000 (24hr line)
Hammersmith & Fulham	Consultation via Initial Contact and Advice Team (ICAT) familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk	020 8753 6600 (Option 2 then Option 3) Out of hours: 020 8748 8588
Harrow	duty&assess@harrow.gov.uk.cjism.net	020 8901 2690 Out of hours: 020 8424 0999
Hertfordshire		0300 123 4043
Hillingdon	lbhmash@hillingdon.gov.uk	01895 556633 Out of hours: 01895 556633
Hounslow	childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk	020 8583 6600 Out of hours: 020 8583 2222
Kensington & Chelsea	socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk	020 7361 3013 Out of hours: 020 7373 3227
Richmond	cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk	020 8708 3885 Out of hours: 020 8708 5897

Any email correspondence between Heartwood House and Local Authority Children's Social Care must be sent securely.

This should be documented and uploaded to the '[CPOMS](#)' management information system

1. Purpose

1.1. Heartwood House is committed to meeting all legislative requirements with regard to 'keeping children safe' and complying with all relevant guidance and, therefore, to ensuring that all Heartwood House students are safe at all times, both physically and emotionally.

1.2. Everyone has a duty to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children.

Heartwood House staff must always consider the 'best interests of the child' in all areas of practice, and must act if they believe these interests are not being met or a child is at risk of coming to harm.

1.3. It is our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We work to ensure that the practice of all staff is of the very highest standard, and that, should there be concerns regarding a student's welfare or safety as a result of events in their home or their community, staff feel confident as to how to respond to those concerns.

1.4. Further we seek to ensure that no student is exposed to materials or persons that are likely to lead to that young person becoming radicalised. Heartwood House is clear that radical/extreme views may come from a range of sources. The Aim is for staff to protect Heartwood House students from any source that encourages extreme views, acts of violence or destruction.

2. Scope

2.1. Child Protection is the legal responsibility of every individual who works or volunteers (in any capacity) for Heartwood House.

3. Policy statement and provision

3.1. Heartwood House fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 157/175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.2. This responsibility is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges Keeping Children Safe in Education, updated Sept 2025. We will ensure that all staff are made aware of their duties and responsibilities under part one of this document.

3.3. Through their day-to-day contact with students and direct work with families all Heartwood House 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 s/he is being abused, neglected, or exploited;
- follow the referral process if they have a concern.

3.4. This policy sets out how managers at Heartwood House will discharge their statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are provided for by the charity. The policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working anywhere within the organisation, including trustees. Support staff, housekeeping staff and administrators as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

3.5. This policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Trustee and Headteacher as part of the annual Safeguarding Audit which takes place each Summer term. Updates will be made in light of this review, as well as in light of any updates to Government guidance such as KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education).

3.6. Regarding the term victim – not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Ultimately, Heartwood House staff should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.'

3.7. Regarding the term alleged perpetrator(s) and where appropriate perpetrator(s). Heartwood House staff should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

4. Policy elements

4.1. There are four main elements to the policy:

Prevention	Through the teaching and pastoral support offered to students and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos.
Procedures	For identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
Supporting children	Particularly those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.
Preventing unsuitable people from working with children	Processes are followed to ensure that all staff engaged to work for Heartwood House are 'suitable' for the task i.e. they pose no threat to the welfare, health or safety of young people referred to the organisation.

4.2. This policy is available to parents on request and is posted on the charity's website. It is only available in English (language), but should a parent or carer require linguistic support to access the policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will liaise with the Local Authority to ensure appropriate support is made available.

5. PREVENTION

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

5.2. The organisation will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe in both the real and the virtual world - all students are encouraged to talk openly and are listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the organisation that they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate;
- include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse both in the real and the virtual world;
- ensure all students know who to turn to for help should they need it;
- include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills;

- ensure that specific guidance regarding safeguarding, including online safety is included within PSHE (personal, social and health education) and RSE (relationships and sex education).

5.3. The teaching of 'online safety' will run throughout the work of all staff through the curriculum offered and advice to and ongoing conversations with students re. the best ways to make use of all the benefits of technology without placing themselves at risk of harm.

5.4. Heartwood House recognises its crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. Heartwood House's clear set of values and standards will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/college life.

5.5. Heartwood House's values are underpinned by its behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. This programme is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).

5.6. This program will tackle at an age-appropriate stages issues such as:

5.6.1. Healthy and respectful relationships.

5.6.2. Boundaries and consent.

5.6.3. Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.

5.6.4. Body confidence and self-esteem.

5.6.5. How to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour.

5.6.6. The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support.

5.6.7. What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

5.7. Induction and ongoing training

5.7.1. All Heartwood House staff will be taken through a comprehensive induction process in which safeguarding, child protection and online safety is a key element. No member of staff will engage in regulated activity until they have completed this process. It will be made

explicitly clear to staff who are the designated persons and who is the DSL.

5.7.2. As part of that process staff will be required to read, and sign to say that they have read, and will implement, the requirements of:

- a. Chapter One of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025, together with 'Annex B' of that document,
- b. Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023,
- c. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for Practitioners, March 2015,
- d. Heartwood House's Safeguarding and Child Protection, Whistleblowing and Behaviour for Learning Policies and the Staff Code of Conduct.

5.7.3. All Heartwood House staff will complete level one child protection training and Prevent training and will update that training as required (annually). Heartwood House will ensure that all staff are updated re any changes to required practice (local or national) through electronic updates.

5.7.4. Through appropriate training Heartwood House will ensure that all staff are aware of the need to recognise when children are in need or at risk, are able to distinguish between the two categories, and understand what course of action should be taken when a child is deemed to come into either category.

5.7.5. Heartwood House will ensure that staff are aware of the particular needs of children attending this setting.

5.7.6. Heartwood House Staff have a responsibility to keep their own safeguarding training up to date and failing to do so may be seen as misconduct.

5.7.7. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are defined as:

- 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

5.7.8. Child in Need (CIN)

If staff members have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the DSL to agree a course of action, although any Heartwood

House staff member can make a referral to Local Authority children's social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership".

5.7.9. Child at Risk

5.7.9.1. If a child is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm, then the DSL must be notified and s/he must make an immediate referral to social care or to the police by phone and then following up in writing.

5.7.9.2. Should the DSL not be immediately available, the person aware of the situation must make the referral; see "[How to ACT on Your Concerns](#)" Flowchart.

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025, definitions:

- 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".
- Child at Risk: A child at risk is one who is in immediate danger of harm.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2025) guidance:

"All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to Local Authority children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially

- Section 17 (children in need) and
- Section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments".

There is additional information about children who may especially benefit from early help...

"Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is a young carer;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol;

- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit,
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending,
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse; and/or
- has returned home to their family from care”.

Options include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college’s own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment;
- a referral for statutory services, for example as the child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.”

5.7.10. Child Protection is defined as:

The term relating to activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

5.7.11. Child Abuse is defined as:

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child/children, or their immediate peers. Harm can include children witnessing the ill-treatment of others and that this is particularly relevant when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects.

5.8. Categories of abuse, neglect and exploitation

Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. (Fabrication of illness occurs when a parent or carer falsely reports or over reports symptoms or interferes with documentation or bodily samples. Induction of illness occurs when a parent or carer actually causes the child to be ill by their actions such as suffocation or poisoning usually in the context of repeated presentations to health services).
Emotional abuse	

	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
Sexual abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
Part of sexual abuse: 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 (which can include physical contact and non-contact activities). (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. c) CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year old who can consent to having sex. Some children may not realise

	they are being exploited eg. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: • provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); • protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); it may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

5.9. Signs of Abuse

5.9.1. 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.

5.9.2. All staff receive in depth training to spot the signs of abuse.

5.10. Prevention of Child on Child Abuse

5.10.1. We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include, but is not limited to: bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, being coerced to send sexual images (sexting), teenage relationship abuse, upskirting (now a criminal offence... see below), and physical abuse.

5.10.2. The separate Child on Child abuse policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

5.10.3. All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

5.10.4. Heartwood House will therefore:

- create a protective ethos in which child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated (NB not being tolerated does not imply that perpetrators will be punished or excluded, rather the nil tolerance will be exemplified as described within Heartwood House's 'Behaviour for Learning' policy);
- provide training for staff about recognising and responding to child on child abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of child on child 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 the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers and online;
- provide high quality relationship and sex education (RSE), including teaching about consent;
- ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of child on child abuse.

5.10.5. Where instances of child on child abuse occur, staff will ensure that both the child(ren) seen as victim(s) and those seen as perpetrators receive support. As per Heartwood House's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour for Learning policies, staff will seek to reach mutually beneficial outcomes through conflict resolution procedures enabling all parties to modify their behaviour and to contribute positively to the Heartwood House.

5.10.6. Appropriate staff will be specifically trained in restorative justice and conflict resolution in order to be aware of, monitor, and resolve instances of child on child abuse.

5.11. Harmful sexual behaviour

5.11.1. Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental

damage. A useful umbrella term is “harmful sexual behaviour” (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context.

5.11.2. When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years’ difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

5.11.3. It is effective safeguarding practice for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) to have a good understanding of HSB. This should form part of their safeguarding training. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, drafting and implementing an effective child protection policy and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

5.11.4. HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

5.12. Responding to a report of HSB

5.12.1. Local authority children’s social care and the police will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. Referrals to the police will often be a natural progression of making a referral to local authority children’s social care. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should lead the school or college response and should be aware of the local process for referrals to children’s social care and making referrals to the police.

5.12.2. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual

violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

5.13. E-safety

5.13.1. Online safety whilst students are in the Heartwood House centre is crucial. The separate e-safety policy should be read in conjunction with this one.

5.14. Upskirting

5.14.1. Upskirting is a term used to describe the act of taking a sexually intrusive photograph up someone's skirt without their permission. The new law (came into effect April 2019) creates two new offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

The new offences apply when:

- without consent, an individual operates equipment or records an image beneath a person's clothing;
- the offender has a motive of either obtaining sexual gratification or causing humiliation, distress or alarm to the victim.

Perpetrators may be imprisoned for two years.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. Heartwood House staff will work with each relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care and follow procedures required by them.

The Heartwood House Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for safeguarding and child protection is:

Cathy Haysom
(Executive Headteacher)

cathy.haysom@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

The following members of staff are also trained to Designated Person (DP) standard:

[Julie Newell](#)

julie.newell@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

[Ela Ward](#)

ela.ward@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

[Chris Seymour](#)

chris.seymour@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

Erika Day

erika.day@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

Stephanie Alonso

stephanie.alonso@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

Cinzia Planiscig

cinzia.planiscig@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

Deb Garfield

Deb.garfield@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

The nominated Trustee for safeguarding and child protection is:

[Thomas Webster](#)

Thomas.Webster@heartwoodhouse.org.uk

6.2. All Heartwood House Staff will:

- The policy applies to all staff in Heartwood House who are responsible for familiarising themselves with content and adapting practice to meet policy requirements.
- It is Heartwood House staff members' responsibility to ensure they have attended and are up to date with the required level of training (annually).
- Heartwood House staff members' will know about the "[How to ACT on Your Concerns](#)" Flowchart
- Every member of Heartwood House knows:
 - ✓ the name of the designated person/s and their role;
 - ✓ how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect;
 - ✓ how to pass on and record concerns about a student;
 - ✓ that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the DSL/DP;
 - ✓ that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
 - ✓ where to find the inter-agency procedures on the relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care website;
 - ✓ their role in the early help process;
 - ✓ the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care;
 - ✓ how to use the '[CPOMS](#)' management information system effectively.
- Heartwood House Staff must follow this policy and failure to do so resulting in potential or actual harm occurring to a child may be seen as gross misconduct.

6.3. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Policy Author is the DSL assisted by the nominated Trustee for safeguarding and child protection.
- The DSL is accountable for this policy and will provide assurance to the Trustees of the dissemination, implementation and outcomes of this policy.

This duty is delegated to and discharged through the nominated Trustee for safeguarding and child protection.

- Responsible for ensuring staff attend relevant training and adhere to the policy detail
- It is DSL responsibility to ensure they have attended and are up to date with the required level of training for the role of DSL
- The DSL or DP are available (during school hours, during term-time) to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- The DSL must follow this policy and failure to do so resulting in potential or actual harm occurring to a child may be seen as gross misconduct.

6.4. Other Heartwood House who are Designated Person (DP) will:

- Deputise for the DSL on Safeguarding and child protection as and when needed inline with the policy
- It is DP responsibility to ensure they have attended and are up to date with the required level of training for the role of DP
- The DSL or DP are available (during school hours, during term-time) to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- The DP must follow this policy and failure to do so resulting in potential or actual harm occurring to a child may be seen as gross misconduct.

6.5. The Trustees will:

- appoint a senior member of staff, from the leadership team of each centre, to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- ensure that the DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection... whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, (Designated Personnel, DP), the lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL and cannot be delegated;
- ensure that the roles of DSL and DP are explicit in the role holders' job descriptions;
- ensure that the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post;
- give the DSL the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters (see Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025);
- Seek assurance from the DSL that the DSL and deputies (DP) have undertaken the required training and that this training is updated at least every two years;

- Seek assurance from the DSL that in addition to the formal training set out above, the DSL and DPs refresh their knowledge and skills (eg via bulletins, meetings or further reading) at least annually;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that DSLs across all centres have access to peer support;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that every member of staff, paid or unpaid, and the members of the trustee group know(s) who the designated personnel are and the procedures for passing on concerns - this will be a key element of our induction process;

(Heartwood House uses the '[CPOMS](#)' management information system. All staff will be trained in the use of this system as part of their induction. Staff are required to log a concern immediately. That concern will immediately be flagged up to the centre DSL who will take appropriate action.) Any other person reporting a concern will be shown how to record this on CPOMS by the DSL at the time.

- Seek assurance from the DSL that the DSL or DP are available (during school hours, during term-time) to discuss any safeguarding concerns - should there be some unavoidable reason (eg multiple illness) why there is not a trained person on site, staff should contact the local authority children's social care themselves.
- Seek assurance from the DSL that all staff are aware that they may make direct contact with the appropriate - Local Authority Children's Social Care
- nominate a trustee for safeguarding and child protection and ensure that person undertakes appropriate training,
- Seek assurance from the DSL every member of Heartwood House staff and every Trustee (with guidance from the DSL for Trustees) knows:
 - ✓ the name of the designated person/s and their role;
 - ✓ how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect;
 - ✓ how to pass on and record concerns about a student;
 - ✓ that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the DSL/DP;
 - ✓ that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
 - ✓ where to find the inter-agency procedures on the relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care website;
 - ✓ their role in the early help process;
 - ✓ the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care;
 - ✓ how to use the '[CPOMS](#)' management information system effectively.

- Seek assurance from the DSL all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction (as described on Section 4 of this policy);
- Seek assurance from the DSL that staff training is regularly updated and that, in addition to this training, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required annually;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that 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 (NB staff will be directed to guidance in para 53, section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 should they feel that any concerns they have have not been appropriately responded to...this includes an updated link to an NSPCC helpline);
- Seek assurance from the DSL staff are aware that they do not need parental / carer permission before making a referral;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that parents / carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the website and informing the parents / carers during initial interviews;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that this policy is available publicly via the centre website.
- Seek assurance from the DSL in any situation wherein any student is educated 'off site', the centre and the provider will have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns between them. Written confirmation that the alternative provider has carried out appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working at the establishment will be sought by the centre.

6.6. Liaison with Other Agencies

6.6.1. As described in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025, there are revised requirements for multi-agency working. "Schools and colleges have a pivotal role to play in multiagency safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multiagency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. It is especially important that schools and colleges understand their role in the new safeguarding partner arrangements."

6.6.2. The three safeguarding partners (the Local Authority; a commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police area in the local authority area) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant

agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

6.6.3. The three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To fulfil this role they must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the three safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need. The three safeguarding partners must set out in their published arrangements which organisations and agencies they will be working with and the expectations placed on any agencies and organisations by the new arrangements.

6.6.4. The DSL and safeguarding trustee will ensure that they are fully conversant with the plans of the new safeguarding partners.

6.6.5. Heartwood House will:

- work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all students;
- co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups;
- Seek assurance from the DSL if there is a need notify the relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care immediately if:
 - ✓ it should decide to exclude a student who is subject to a child protection plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
 - ✓ there is an unexplained absence of a student who is subject to a child protection plan;
 - ✓ there is any change in circumstances to a student who is subject to a child protection plan.
- Seek assurance from the DSL that, when a student who is subject to a child protection plan moves to another provider, information is transferred to the new provider immediately... the DSL will also ensure that all involved agencies and the CADS are informed.
- Follow procedures set out by the relevant local authority to escalate any concerns regarding the working practice of local authority staff.

6.7. Record Keeping

6.7.1. Heartwood House 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...
- these records will be held on the '[CPOMS](#)' management information system (purpose built and secure);
- ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a student moves schools in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025, and the 'Education Child Protection Record Keeping Guidance' - the DSL will consider whether it would be appropriate to share information with the new school/college in advance of a child leaving;
- make parents/carers aware that such records exist except where to do so would place the child at risk of harm;
- ensure all actions and decisions are led by what is considered to be in the best interests of the child.

6.8. Confidentiality and information sharing

6.8.1. The General Data Protection Regulation, 2018, does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

6.8.2. We 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, July 2018);
- ensure that if a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (under the GDPR 2018) from a student or parent, they will refer the request to the DSL or headteacher;
- ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

6.8.3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- disclose information about a student to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis - parental consent may be required.
- 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, Dec 2024);
- seek advice about confidentiality from outside agencies if required (see Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018).

6.8.4. The Seven Golden Rules in 'Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' (HM Government, 2018)

The Seven Golden Rules:

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

(HM Government, 2018)

6.9. Communication with Parents/Carers

6.9.1. Heartwood House will:

- ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the centre and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties on the organisation's website;
- undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this action;
- seek advice from Social Care if the centre believes that notifying parents could increase the risk of harm to the child - particular circumstances where parents may not be informed include any disclosure of sexual abuse or physical abuse where the child has an injury;
- record what discussions have taken place with parents or if a decision has been made not to discuss it with parents and record the reasons why - records may subsequently be disclosable to relevant partner agencies if child protection proceedings commence.

6.10. Dealing with Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

6.10.1. Heartwood House recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Sexual violence may include rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature', such as sexual comments, sexual taunting, upskirting or physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone. Online sexual harassment may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who don't want to receive such content, and sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.

6.10.2. Heartwood House will:

- be clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment 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 and that they will be supported and kept safe so that no victim will be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment and no victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- 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 the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations;

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

6.10.3. Further guidance can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five, Sept 2025, Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, May 2018, and Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

7. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

7.1. Heartwood House recognises that any child may be subject to abuse and neglect. Heartwood House staff must support all children by:

- providing curricular opportunities to encourage positive self-esteem and self-efficacy;
- creating an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community;
- applying Heartwood House's Behaviour for Learning policy effectively - staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the student's sense of self-worth;
- ensuring that all students know that some behaviours are unacceptable, hence not tolerated, but that they will always be treated respectfully by staff regardless of their behaviour;
- liaising with other agencies that support young people such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Sexual Behaviour Services or early help teams;
- developing productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers.

7.2. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation, or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

7.3. Heartwood House recognises that any child may benefit from early help, but 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 the following 'categories' of young people.

7.4. Children with Disabilities, Additional Needs or Special Educational Needs

7.4.1. Heartwood House recognises that, statistically, children with additional needs, special educational needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Staff will be encouraged to be particularly aware of the likelihood of abuse in the lives of these children.

7.4.2. As Heartwood House is an organisation specifically set up to cater for the needs of the above children, staff should be particularly vigilant to changes in the behaviour of students, or other signs that they may wish to communicate concerns, for example concerning themes in students' artwork or creative writing.

7.4.3. As part of the PSHE and RSE curriculum staff will teach children personal safety skills commensurate with their age, ability and needs. Children will be taught personal safety skills such as 'telling' and who to tell, good and bad touches and how to manage risk. The content of lessons will be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.

7.5. Children who are LGB or Gender Questioning (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Gender Questioning)

7.5.1. It is crucial that students who identify as LGB or Gender Questioning have a trusted adult in school with whom they may be open. This will in most cases be the pastoral tutor for that student, however if any issues of discomfort or concern by the student become apparent, the Centre Headteacher will arrange for an alternative pastoral tutor.

7.6. Young Carers

7.6.1. Heartwood House 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.

7.6.2. Heartwood House Staff will seek to identify young carers and offer additional support internally. They will liaise with external agencies as appropriate and refer to Social Care if such referral appears appropriate / supportive.

7.7. Children experiencing mental health difficulties

- 7.7.1. Heartwood House staff will be aware that young people experiencing mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be a sign that a child is suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 7.7.2. Heartwood House staff will be aware that the profile of young people attending the centre means that it is more likely that these young people will have experienced adverse childhood experiences. All Heartwood House staff are trained in these issues and how to appropriately support and monitor the mental health and wellbeing of these children.
- 7.7.3. Heartwood House staff who have a mental health concern about a child but who suspect this may be part of a safeguarding concern, should report this as a safeguarding concern.

7.8. Child abduction and community safety incidents

- 7.8.1. Heartwood House staff will train students in an age- and ability-appropriate manner about the risks present to them in the community, through a programme of travel training and life skills.
- 7.8.2. Heartwood House staff will be vigilant to the presence of adults loitering nearby the school or engaging children in conversation, and will take rapid action (which may include calling the police) where they have concerns
- 7.8.3. Heartwood House staff will supervise children leaving the building to ensure they are collected by a known parent/carer or registered taxi (except in cases of students who have had permission to travel independently to and from school)

7.9. Children and the court system

- 7.9.1. Students being required to give evidence in court will be supported by Heartwood House staff to manage the emotional impact of such an experience. This support will usually be delivered by the student's individual psychotherapist or via the tutor/pastoral system.

7.10. Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

- 7.10.1. Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.
- 7.10.2. Heartwood House staff should be vigilant to possible signs that students may be involved in Modern Slavery. Where there are concerns, these should be reported here:
<https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/>

7.11. Cybercrime

- 7.11.1. Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;
- 7.11.1.1. unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
 - 7.11.1.2. denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
 - 7.11.1.3. making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.
 - 7.11.1.4. Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.
 - 7.11.1.5. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

7.12. Homelessness

- 7.12.1. Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.12.2. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.
- 7.12.3. In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families,

and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local Authority Children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

7.13. Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation

7.13.1. Criminal exploitation of children is a form of abuse. It may take many forms, but invariably involves adults or other children encouraging / forcing / bribing children to engage in criminal activity on their behalf e.g. drug networks or gangs exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas

7.13.2. Exploitation can occur even if the activity appears to be consensual.

7.13.3. Children may become trapped as they and their families may become threatened with violence and they may be coerced or trapped into debt or carrying weapons. They may carry weapons as a form of protection.

7.13.4. Children involved in criminal exploitation need to be treated as victims themselves (particularly older children) even though they may commit crimes themselves.

7.13.5. Girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too even though their experience may be different.

7.13.6. Heartwood House Staff will be trained to be aware of child criminal exploitation to include developments in 'County Lines' activity, and will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of criminal exploitation arise.

7.13.7. The Heartwood House DSL will complete the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Child Exploitation Checklist and refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

7.13.8. Heartwood House recognises that young people who go missing can be at increased risk of child criminal exploitation and/or trafficking and/or serious violence and has procedures in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions (see below).

7.13.9. Heartwood House recognises that young people in the Harrow area can be particularly vulnerable to involvement in drug trafficking or “County Lines”. This risk can be monitored and mitigated through the use of an effective pastoral tutor programme, as well as education through the PSHEE curriculum.

7.14. Children Frequently Missing Education

7.14.1. When a child ‘goes missing’, particularly repeatedly, that should act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM (female genital mutilation) or forced marriage.

7.14.2. Heartwood House monitors attendance of individual students closely, as outlined in its Attendance Policy, and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence.

7.14.3. Heartwood House aims to hold more than one emergency contact for each student to provide additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

7.14.4. When a child is missing from education, Heartwood House follows Children Missing Education guidance. Centres will inform the Education Welfare Service and Social Care if a missing child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

7.14.5. Heartwood House will notify the local authority of any pupil who has missed 10 consecutive school days without authorisation or 15 cumulative days of illness within a school year. Attendance will be discussed by SLT weekly. The school will work with families and external agencies to address barriers to attendance.

7.15. Fabricated / Induced Illness (FII) and Perplexing Presentations

7.15.1. Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a condition whereby a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm through the deliberate action of their parent or carer and which is attributed by the parent to another cause. This was previously described as Munchausen’s Syndrome by Proxy (MSbP) and is often referred to as perplexing presentations to suggest the need for professional curiosity.

7.15.2. FII can include the fabrication of signs and symptoms, fabrication of past medical history; falsification of hospital charts, records, letters and documents and specimens of bodily fluid; or induction of illness by a variety of means.

7.15.3. Fabrication of illness may not necessarily result in a child experiencing physical harm, but there may be concerns about the child suffering emotional abuse as a result of an abnormal relationship with their parent and / or disturbed family relationships. Fabricated or induced illness is most commonly identified in younger children but older children may also be involved in fabrication of their own physical or emotional health.

7.15.4. All professionals who come into contact with children and their families, or adults who are parents, may come into contact with a child or parent where there are suspicions of fabricated or induced illness. Suspicions are likely to centre on discrepancies between what a parent says and what the professional observes. The focus must be on the child's physical and emotional health and welfare in the long and short term, and the likelihood of the child suffering significant harm.

7.15.5. Heartwood House will:

- ensure that the designated safeguarding lead is trained to recognise and respond appropriately should suspicions arise, no matter how far-fetched they appear;
- promote awareness of FII through training and access to resources;
- ensure that the signs and indicators are known and recognised by staff and that unexplained absences are recorded and explored further;
- ensure that, where appropriate, pupils are encouraged to seek help and support about concerns they may have;
- ensure that all staff are aware that any suspicions should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead;
- understand that sharing information with parents or carers may not be appropriate and ensure that decisions of this nature are made by Local Authority Children's Social Care or the police.

7.16. Children Misusing Drugs or Alcohol

7.16.1. The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reports of their substance misuse are not necessarily sufficient of itself to initiate child protection proceedings, but the centre will consider such action 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;
- believe the young person's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;

or where:

- the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse;
- the misuse indicates an urgent health or safeguarding concern;
- the child is perceived to be at risk of harm through any substance associated criminality

7.17. Children at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

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

7.17.2. Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from a seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups. 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.

7.17.3. The DSL will complete the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Child Exploitation Checklist and refer to the Local Authority Children's Social Care if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation.

7.17.4. Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation, hence the centre has procedures in place (described above) to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

7.18. Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

7.18.1. Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

7.18.2. Should staff become aware that any of the following factors are present:

- use of the family resources to finance the parent's / parents' dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children;
- exposure of the young person to unsuitable caregivers or visitors eg customers or dealers;
- the effects of alcohol on parents/carers leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour;
- drug and / or alcohol use by parents/carers leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance;
- disturbed moods on the part of parents/carers as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency;
- unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment in the home;
- drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of an unborn child...

7.18.3. Then referral will be made to the appropriate Local Authority Children's Social Care.

7.19. Children Living with Domestic Abuse

7.19.1. 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 or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

7.19.2. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. It covers types of abuse such as psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

7.19.3. Where there is domestic abuse in a family, the children 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.

training

7.19.4. Staff will be trained to be vigilant to signs of domestic abuse and will always refer to appropriate agencies should they consider that there is evidence of such abuse taking place. The DSL will either engage in specific training regarding domestic abuse or ensure another member of staff is appropriately trained.

7.19.5. Heartwood House 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 and referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care.

7.20. Children at risk of 'Honour- Based' Violence (HBV) including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage

7.20.1. The term 'honour-based' violence encompasses incidents which have been committed to protect or 'defend the honour' of a family and/or community, including breast ironing, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. DSLs will ensure that all staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBV through training. Staff are required to treat all forms of HBV as abuse and follow appropriate procedures.

7.20.2. 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. Where there is any indication that a child is at risk of FGM, or where FGM is suspected to have been carried out, staff will take action in accordance with the child protection procedures outlined in this policy.

7.20.3. Staff will report concerns to the DSL, who will make appropriate and timely referrals to Local Authority Children's Social Care. In such cases parents will not be informed before advice is sought and the case will still be referred to Local Authority Children's Social Care, even if it is against the student's wishes.

7.20.4. 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 children (ie those under the age of 18) to the police.

7.20.5. Teachers should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve Local Authority Children's Social Care as appropriate,

but the teacher will personally report to the police that they believe that an act of FGM has been carried out.

7.21. Looked After Children (LAC) These are a child/ren 'looked after' by the Local Authority

7.21.1. Heartwood House recognises that looked after children may be more vulnerable to abusive behaviour from others and may have additional needs resulting from their life experiences.

7.21.2. Heartwood House will liaise with local authority virtual schools for looked after children and work with local authority staff to ensure children are supported and 'kept safe' wherever possible. Centres will work with carers as they would with all parents to ensure 'wrap around' support.

7.21.3. Heartwood House will liaise with the Reviewing Officer in relation to statutory reviews for LAC, attending meetings, providing written reports, and taking action as necessary.

7.21.4. Heartwood House will inform the Safeguarding Trustee if there are any significant concerns regarding the welfare of any LAC.

7.22. Children who have returned home to their family from care

7.22.1. Heartwood House recognises that a previously looked after child (LAC) potentially remains vulnerable

7.22.2. Heartwood House will vigilantly monitor the welfare of previously LAC, keep records and notify Local Authority Children's Social Care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

7.23. Children showing signs of Abuse and/or Neglect

7.23.1. Abuse or neglect will almost certainly have an adverse impact on those children who experience it. This may last into adulthood unless there is appropriate intervention and support. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Children who have experienced abuse or neglect may subsequently behave in ways that are challenging and defiant or passive and withdrawn.

7.23.2. Heartwood House recognises that children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

7.23.3. The term used to describe these are “Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)”. ACEs describe traumatic experiences before age 18 that can lead to negative, lifelong emotional and physical outcomes. The three types of ACEs include:

- ✓ Abuse: Physical, Emotional & Sexual
- ✓ Neglect: Physical & Emotional
- ✓ Household Dysfunction: Mental Illness, Incarcerated Relative, Mother Treated Violently, Substance Abuse & Divorce

7.23.4. Heartwood House will provide training for staff to ensure that they have the skills to identify and report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

7.23.5. Staff should be vigilant to the possibility of multiple safeguarding issues overlapping for one child.

7.24. Children at Risk of Radicalisation

7.24.1. Heartwood House recognises that children may be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and that protecting children from this risk forms part of the organisation’s safeguarding response.

7.24.2. Heartwood House management will ensure that all DSLs and safeguarding trustees have undertaken Prevent awareness training and that all staff receive training about their Prevent duty.

7.24.3. Through appropriate training we will ensure that staff are alert to changes in children’s behavior which could indicate they need help or protection. Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation must be referred to the DSL in the usual way. If appropriate, the DSL will make a Channel referral.

7.24.4. Further information is available in The Prevent Duty, Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers, June 2015, and Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales, July 2015.

7.25. Privately Fostered Children

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

7.25.2. Heartwood House (through the DSL) will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any ‘Private Fostering’ arrangements.

7.26. Children who have Family Members in Prison

7.26.1. Heartwood House are 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.

7.26.2. Children with family members in prison are usually at significant risk of poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health and poor attendance.

7.26.3. Heartwood House will treat information shared by the family in confidence and it will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

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

8. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

8.1. Heartwood House will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to part three of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025. Heartwood House has a separate Safer Recruitment policy that should be read in conjunction with this policy and provides greater detail regarding the organisation's commitment to ensuring that no one working for the organisation poses any threat whatsoever to the welfare of its students.

8.2. All interviewing panels will include at least one person who has undertaken up to date safe recruitment training, and all recruitment processes will be overseen by an appropriately trained member of staff.

The following members of staff have undertaken safer recruitment training:

- Cathy Taylor (Executive Headteacher)
- Chris Seymour (Centre Headteacher)
- Erika Day (Centre Deputy)
- Joan Reilly (Business manager)

8.3. Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to the headteacher. In cases where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the chair of trustees. The centre will subsequently follow the procedures set out in part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025

8.4. Heartwood House will consult with the 'Local Authority Designated Officer' in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025.

- 8.5. Independent schools (such as Heartwood House) are under a duty to consider making a referral to the TRA (Teaching Regulation Agency) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence'. If advice is required as to whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to warrant referral to the TRA, staff will consult 'Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (October 2015)' and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency website.
- 8.6. Heartwood House will refer all allegations against staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) ensuring that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. Following consultation with the LADO, Heartwood House will decide on all further action to be taken.
- 8.7. As required by Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025 if an allegation is made against anyone working at a Heartwood House, every effort will be made to eradicate all unnecessary delays. Heartwood House will not undertake their own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO(s), or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, discussions with the LADO(s) can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.
- 8.8. Heartwood House will report promptly to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services we have ceased to use because their practice has met the DBS referral criteria i.e. they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.
- 8.9. As detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2025 'ceasing to use a person's services' includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. Those staff compiling reports will seek to include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report when required constitutes an offence. 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required, nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation. Proprietors of independent schools

have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but they do not have to find it from other sources.

- 8.10. Heartwood House will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- 8.11. Heartwood House Staff 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 is neither mandatory, nor automatic but, in some cases, Heartwood House staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.
- 8.12. It is recognised that a child may make an allegation against an innocent party, possibly because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. Although all allegations will be rigorously investigated, and staff may be suspended during those investigations, the principle of innocence until guilt is proven remains paramount.
- 8.13. Heartwood House will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students and parents/carers as advised within the organisation's Code of Conduct. As part of the induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children.
- 8.14. The Heartwood House DSL will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with students aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings being taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).
- 8.15. The Heartwood House DSL and safeguarding trustee will further ensure that all communication between students and adults, by whatever method, is transparent, takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and is open to scrutiny.

9. TRUSTEE CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

- 9.1. Heartwood House trustees fully recognise their responsibilities with regard to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They work jointly with the DSL through the nominated trustee to

ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the centre are effective and comply with the law and government guidance at all times.

9.2. In meeting their responsibilities / legal duties they will:

- nominate a Trustee for safeguarding and child protection who will take leadership responsibility for Heartwood House's safeguarding arrangements, and practice and champion child protection issues;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that an annual report is made to the full governing body - any identified weaknesses / shortcomings identified through scrutiny of this report will be rectified without delay;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is annually reviewed and updated, shared with staff and available on the centre website;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that children's exposure to potential risks while using the internet is limited by having in place age appropriate filtering and monitoring systems;
- Seek assurance from the DSL that children's wishes and feelings are taken into account where there are safeguarding concerns.

10. Related legislation and documents

10.1. External Documents

- Children Act (Gov. UK 1989)
- Children Act (Gov. UK 2004)
- General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR (May 2018)
- Human Rights Act (Gov. UK 1998)
- Education Act (Gov. UK 2002)
- Education and Skills Act (Gov. UK 2008)
- Sexual Offences Act (Abuse of Trust) (Gov. UK 2003)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (Gov. UK 2003)
- Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (Gov.UK July 2018)
- Counter-terrorism and Security Act (Gov.UK 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education - KCSiE (Gov.UK Sept 2025)
- Revised Prevent Duty Advice for Schools (Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales Gov.UK (2023)
- Children Missing Education (Gov.UK Sept 2016)
- Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (Gov.UK October 2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Gov.UK 2023)

10.2. Other Heartwood House policies to be read in conjunction with this one

- Safe Recruitment
- Whistleblowing
- Esafety

- Attendance
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff
- Student Wellbeing and Personal Development
- Behaviour for Learning
- Anti-Bullying
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection

Appendix A: “MyConcern”

Heartwood House uses the ‘[CPOMS](#)’ management information system.

All staff will be trained in the use of this system as part of their induction.

Staff are required to log a concern immediately.

That concern will immediately be flagged up to the centre DSL who will take appropriate action.

<https://www.myconcern.education/Account/Login>



Email Address

Password

Log in

[Forgotten your password?](#)

Appendix B: Other Definitions for Safeguarding Children

Adult	Anyone who is 18 years old or over.
Capacity/Competence	Capacity is the ability to understand the nature and effects of one's acts. Competency is a legal finding, the central test is whether the young person had sufficient understanding and intelligence to understand fully what is proposed.
Child	Anyone under 18 years old.

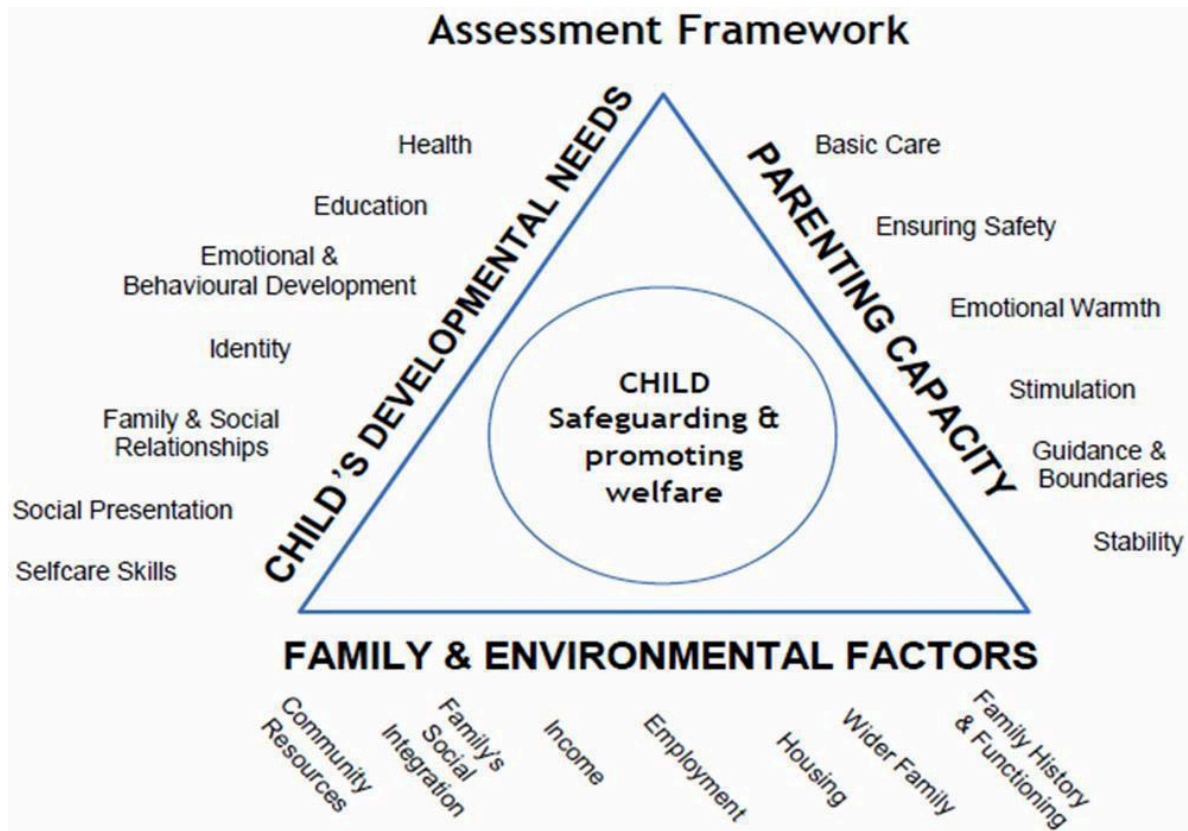
Child in Need referral	Section 17 (Children Act 1989): All children with disabilities or complex needs will qualify as a child in need. Referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care with parental consent for social work assessment and support.
Child Protection Conference	Section 47 (Children Act 1989): Local Authority' mandatory duty to investigate if it is suspected or established that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, All partner agencies must cooperate with that investigation. A conference should be held following a Section 47 enquiry and attended by parents, significant family members and professionals involved with the child. Young people may also attend the conference themselves. Following the initial child protection conference there will be a series of review conferences until either it is judged that the plan has been successful or the Local Authority decides to take legal action usually to obtain parental responsibility.
Child Protection Plan	A plan formulated at the child protection conference once a decision has been made that the threshold for child protection has been met. The aim of this plan is to address the issues of concern within stipulated timescales. Most children on a child protection plan live at home. Parental responsibility does not change in any way because a child is on a child protection plan.
Child Protection referral	Referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care department where the threshold for Section 47 child protection met. It is ultimately the Local Authority's decision about how any referral is progressed.
Consent	People aged 16 or over are entitled to consent to their own treatment. This can only be overruled in Exceptional circumstances. Children under the age of 16 can consent to their own treatment if they're believed to have enough intelligence, competence and understanding to fully appreciate what's involved in their treatment. This is known as being Gillick competent.
Local Authority	An organisation that is officially responsible for all the public services and facilities in a particular area including providing Children's Social Care.
Looked after Child	Section 31 (Children Act 1989) Establishes the 'Threshold Criteria' which has to be met and evidenced by the Local Authority to secure a Care or Supervision Order to safeguard a child. A child is looked after by a Local Authority if a court has granted a care order to place a child in care, or a council's children's services department has cared for the child for more than 24 hours. They might be living with foster parents, at home with their parents under the supervision of social services or in residential children's homes.
Section 20	Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 provides the local authority with the power to provide accommodation for children without a court order when they do not have somewhere suitable to live. It is widely known as voluntary accommodation because the parents must agree to the child being accommodated.

MARAC	Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is the multi-agency forum which manages high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and honour based violence.
Parental Responsibility	The rights and responsibilities that parents have in law for their child, including the right to consent to medical treatment for them, up to the age of 18. Not all parents have Parental Responsibility. Parents – references to “parents” in this Policy usually mean “those with Parental Responsibility”. This includes adoptive parents, as they have Parental Responsibility. However, it does not include foster parents, as foster parents never have Parental Responsibility.
Child Safeguarding Practice Review	In England, child safeguarding practice reviews (previously known as serious case reviews) should be considered for serious child safeguarding cases where: abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and a child has died or been seriously harmed.
Strategy meeting / discussion	A strategy meeting, which may be held as a telephone discussion, is called by the Local Authority whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This is a multi-agency professional meeting to enable Local Authority Children's Social Care to establish what is known about the child, the family and the general situation to determine whether the threshold has been met for a Section 47 enquiry and to plan this enquiry should it be necessary.
Young person	This phrase does not have an accepted legal meaning, but is commonly used to refer to older children. This Policy assumes that all young people are under 18 years old.

Appendix C: Assessment Framework

Good safeguarding assessments use a conceptual model which considers the child's developmental needs in the context of parenting capacity and family and environmental factors.

These domains are:



- The child's developmental needs, including whether they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm;
- Parents' or carers' capacity to respond to those needs; and
- The impact and influence of wider family, community and environment circumstances.

This is often represented as a triangle, as shown above (Department of Health, 2000). It is helpful in considering a holistic picture of the child's lived experiences, it's best practice practitioners to use these tools when making referrals to Local Authority Children's Social Care or carrying out assessments.

Appendix D: Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family:

The Think Family agenda recognises and promotes the importance of a whole-family approach which is built on the principles of 'Reaching out: think family'

- No wrong door – contact with any service offers an open door into a system of joined-up support. This is based on more coordination between adult and children's services.
- Looking at the whole family – services working with both adults and children take into account family circumstances and responsibilities. For example, an alcohol treatment service combines treatment with parenting classes while supervised childcare is provided for the children.
- Providing support tailored to need – working with families to agree a package of support best suited to their particular situation.
- Building on family strengths – practitioners work in partnerships with families recognising and promoting resilience and helping them to build their capabilities. For example, family group conferencing is used to empower a family to negotiate their own solution to a problem.

The Crossing Bridges Family Model (Falkov 1998) is a useful conceptual, Staff are to consider the parent, the child and the family as a whole when assessing how the mental health and wellbeing of the children and adults in a family where a parent is mentally ill are intimately linked in at least three ways:

- parental mental health problems can adversely affect the development, and in some cases the safety, of children
- growing up with a mentally ill parent can have a negative impact on a person's adjustment in adulthood, including their transition to parenthood
- children, particularly those with emotional, behavioural or chronic physical difficulties, can precipitate or exacerbate mental ill health in their parents/carers



It also identifies risks, stressors and vulnerability factors increasing the likelihood of a poor outcome, as well as strengths, resources and protective factors that enable families to overcome adversity. (SCIE, 2011)

Appendix E: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Job Descriptions

The DSL has a number of important responsibilities to fulfil on an ongoing basis. As the lead, it's also part of their duty to ensure others in the organisation understand and follow safeguarding procedures. They will also work closely with any other senior individuals to coordinate safeguarding duties, such as the head teacher or other Designated Person (DP) and The nominated Trustee for safeguarding and child protection

The responsibilities of a designated safeguarding lead include:

- Being available for all staff to discuss any safeguarding issues or concerns. They should ensure that all staff are aware of the DSL and deputy contact details.
- Ensuring that cases of suspected or actual child protection or safeguarding concerns are referred to the appropriate agencies. The DSL will gather further information and evidence if needed.
- Ensuring that all staff are fully trained in safeguarding and know how to spot and raise concerns, including regarding online safety. They will also help to maintain an effective staff supervision programme.
- Updating training to Level 3 "Inter-agency working" level, every 2 years.
- Undergoing regular refresher training themselves to ensure their safeguarding knowledge is as up to date as possible and in line with new guidance.
- Ensuring that adequate reporting and recording systems are in place for safeguarding procedures, and that there are appropriate transferal procedures for records if students move.
- Ensuring that the school's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date with the most recent statutory guidance, and that everyone who has safeguarding duties are familiar with any updates.
- Communicating with families on the school's policies and procedures, as well as any concerns or referrals where appropriate.
- Complying with any Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) requirements.
- Ensuring their organisation has sufficient safer recruitment procedures.
- Being aware of how to keep children safe, including online.
- Being aware of any children who may require specific safeguarding needs and have specific vulnerabilities.

As the NSPCC states, the designated safeguarding lead must be trained in:

- The law and guidance on safeguarding.
- Types of abuse and the signs and indicators to look for.
- How to build a safe culture so that people are safe and willing to share concerns.
- Barriers to disclosure and recognition of safeguarding issues.
- Safer recruitment.
- Listening to and supporting those who have concerns.

Appendix F: Designated Person (DP) Job Descriptions

The responsibilities of a designated person include:

- Being available for all staff to discuss any safeguarding issues or concerns, in the absence of the DSL.
- Ensuring that cases of suspected or actual child protection or safeguarding concerns are referred to the appropriate agencies, in the absence of the DSL.
- Undergoing regular refresher training themselves to ensure their safeguarding knowledge is as up to date as possible and in line with new guidance.
- Communicating with families on any concerns or referrals where appropriate, in the absence of the DSL.
- Complying with any Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) requirements.
- Being aware of any children who may require specific safeguarding needs and have specific vulnerabilities.