

WILDS LODGE
SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date of issue: September 2023

Review Cycle: Annual

Next Review Date: September 2024

Wilds Lodge School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Wilds Lodge School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

The school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative

- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)

Wilds Lodge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Wilds Lodge School.

The policy documents of Wilds Lodge School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and guidance:

- Allegations Against Staff
- Attendance Policy
- Counter-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Statement
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Low Level Concern policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Medication Policy

Key documents referred to and underpinning this policy are:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015, 2018 and Feb 2019)
- Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Acts 1996, 2002, 2011
- The Education and Skills Act 2008
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice with those who work with children and young people in education settings February 2022
- Section 93 of the 2006 Education and Inspections Act (April 1st 2007)
- The 1996 Education Act (Section 55OA)
- The Use of reasonable Force in schools (2013)
- Equality Act 2010
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2017, updated May 2018) - now included in KCSIE 2022
- Prevent Duty for Schools and Childcare Providers 2015
- Statutory Guidance Prevent Duty 2.15 (April 21)
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25

Further Information on safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures can be accessed through:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sally Skipsey

Other Deputy Safeguarding Leads are: Nicola Martin, Toby Oakley, Mary Rennie, Becky McSharry and Hannah Green

Further advice on Safeguarding matters in Rutland can be obtained from Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board: <http://lrsb.org.uk/lrscp>

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Appendix

1. Signs of Abuse
2. Do's and don'ts of Disclosure
3. Stop Abuse Together

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Wilds Lodge School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect and prevent children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Wilds Lodge School acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse or harm.

All Wilds Lodge School staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together through our policies, practices and procedures to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults in its care.

1.2 To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, Wilds Lodge must have:

- Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, explicitly stated in strategic policy documents
- Arrangements in place to effectively implement the Prevent Strategy and Duty
- Arrangements in place to comply with statutory and mandatory requirements
- A clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Recruitment and Human Resources procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, including arrangements for appropriate checks on all staff and volunteers
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- Arrangements to ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and to keep this up-to-date by refresher training at regular intervals
- Procedures to ensure that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers who work with children and young people, are made aware of the establishment's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Policies for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and procedures that are in accordance with guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures
- A commitment to E-Safety and developing a learner's knowledge of safeguarding within the curriculum
- Arrangements to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, including arrangements for sharing information
- A clear commitment to develop and implement systems that enable children and young people to use online and mobile technology safely and reduce the risks of potentially harmful behaviours
- A culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with children and young people - seeking their views in ways that are appropriate to their age and understanding, and taking account of those views in individual decisions and the establishment or development of services
- Definitive whistle-blowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people to be addressed.

1.3 The principles upon which the Safeguarding Policy is based are:

- The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount
- The welfare of families will be promoted
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to
- Keeping children and young people safe from harm requires people who work with children and young people to share information
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the organisation will work in accordance with the interests of children and young people and follow the policy outlined below

1.4 This document is written in accordance with Safeguarding Children Boards' Policies, 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups', 2006, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' March 2015 and 2018 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2018/ Sept 2019/2020/Sept 2021/Sept 2022/Sept 2023, 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges' Dec 2017 updated May 2018, 'Prevent Duty for Schools and Childcare Providers' 2015, 'Statutory Guidance Prevent Duty' 2.15 (April 2021), SEND Code of Practice 0-25, Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance, Relationship Education and Sex Education (RSE), Health Education and the Equality Act 2010.

2. Introduction

2.1 Wilds Lodge school fully recognise their primary responsibilities are to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people. The school recognises its legal duty under s175 Education Act 2002 (section 157 in relation to independent schools and academies) and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all pupils/students. This organisation recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in reporting and responding to child protection situations.

Wilds Lodge school recognises and accepts that the school and their staff form part of a wider safeguarding system for children, and that promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, schools and their staff should make sure their approach is child centred, this means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the BEST INTERESTS of the child.

Wilds Lodge school and their staff do not always have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances therefore they have a role and responsibility identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action to provide support and help to children and families at the right time.

2.2 Wilds Lodge School adopts the definition of safeguarding used in the Children Act 2004 and in the Department for Education guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2018/Sept 2019/Sept 2020/Sept 2021/Sept 2022/Sept 2023) which have a focus on safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare, and also draws on guidance in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (DfE 2015). This can be summarised as:

- Protecting children and young people and from maltreatment

- Preventing impairment of children's and young people's health or development
- Ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This document has regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023). The Policy is in keeping with the Safeguarding Children Partnerships framework and policies, Procedures and Training Strategy and reflects what the Safeguarding Children Partnerships considers to be safe and professional practice in this context. Child Protection has to be considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to co- operate under the Children Act 2004 and takes account of the need for children to 'be healthy' and 'stay safe'.

Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

2.3 It is a statutory requirement for all schools to have a safeguarding policy which is published on the relevant website and is made available to parents and carers on request. Parents and carers are made aware through the admission process that the Safeguarding Policy is referenced in the school prospectus.

2.4 This Safeguarding Policy applies to Wilds Lodge School's commitment to provide a caring and safe environment in which all children and young people can develop socially, emotionally, physically and educationally and in which all children, young people and staff feel safe, secure and valued. The principles of the Equality Act 2010 underpin the school's policies, procedures and practices.

2.5 Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, including Children Looked After, and previously looked after children can face additional safeguarding challenges. Wilds Lodge School should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children

2.6 This policy shall meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards April 2019 in that boarding schools, residential special schools, residential colleges and children's homes have additional factors to consider with regard to safeguarding. Wilds Lodge staff are alert to the extra vulnerabilities of SEND children in our setting, inappropriate pupil or student relationships and the potential for child-on-child abuse, particularly as there are significantly more boys than girls. Staff are led by the designated safeguarding lead, work closely with Rutland County Council and local authorities that have placed their children at Wilds Lodge School.

2.7 Underpinning Values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, Wilds Lodge will work in accordance with the principles set out in this policy and those outlined in the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board Partnership procedures:

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded
- Each child is unique. Action taken by schools and their staff should always act in the child's BEST interest and should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender identity, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare. However, it may not be appropriate to advise parents/carers immediately about a referral depending on circumstances and the advice given by Children's Social Care. The welfare of the child is paramount in such situations
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf in an age appropriate way. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings. However, it may not always be possible to respect a child/carer's request for confidentiality. If a child may be at risk of significant harm, there is a duty on the school to share information with Children's Social Care in the area that the event or incident took place. If the incident or event has taken place within Rutland then Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships and the pupil's home Local Authority children's services need to be informed. The Rutland LADO needs to be notified if the concern relates to a member of school staff or volunteer staff. This will be explained to the child or family member and appropriate reassurance given
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned (and/or those with parental responsibility) unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child or promote their welfare. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict "need to know" basis
- Professionals should be aware of the effects of outside intervention upon children, upon family life and the impact and implications of what they say and do
- Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free. Unavoidable technical and professional terminology should be explained in simple terms

- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation
- Early help assessment and intervention is an overriding principal in providing support for children at risk of abuse. Providing support services will utilise the Common Assessment Framework Process and if necessary an assessment under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989). This is an important principle of practice in inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 All staff working at Wilds Lodge have a statutory duty and shared responsibility to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

3.2 Wilds Lodge School through the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Sally Skipsey) and Deputy DSL's (Nicola Martin, Toby Oakley, Mary Rennie, Becky McSharry and Hannah Green) have responsibility for:

- Ensuring the school operate and practice in line with the organisations safeguarding policies and procedures that comply with Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships arrangements
- Providing the necessary support and resources to ensure schools and keep children and young people safe, through at least good standards of care and education
- Reporting on a monthly basis an overview of safeguarding concerns and issues, actions taken and any potential implications for future practice
- Organising an annual safeguarding audit (Summer annually), with the DSLs and ensuring recommendations have been effectively implemented through regular meetings
- Providing support and resources to the staff involved in managing safeguarding issues, as the school acknowledges how stressful safeguarding situations are (e.g. providing additional staffing or therapy if required)
- To review the organisation's safeguarding policy annually, or as required.
- The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Providing safeguarding updates to staff and review's lessons learnt
- Providing updates and monitors training
- Within the process, there are procedures that monitor the schools systems to safeguard children who go missing from school on a repeated basis and those at risk of abuse, radicalisation, sexual exploitation and exploitation including County Lines. The Senior Leadership Team monitors these issues and ensure that the school take appropriate action, on a regular basis
- To ensure Schools policy and procedures comply with The Education Inspection Framework September 2019 (updated September 2023) and the Independent School Standards April 2019.

3.3 If there is a concern or allegation against the Head, the staff should inform info@cavendisheducation.com to the governance team at Cavendish Education. The Complaints Policy details the procedure and timeframes involved (Point 17) and is available on the school website.

3.4 The Head has responsibility for:

- Ensuring the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively embedded in the culture of the school and are compliant with the Safeguarding Children Partnerships

procedures and relevant legislation, e.g. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015/2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2023.

- Ensuring the school delivers a curriculum which promotes the prevention of and protection from child abuse or harm for example ensuring children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through Personal Social Citizenship Careers and Economic education (PSHCCE) and through Sex and Relationship education (SRE)
- Ensuring policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm on work experience placements
- Ensuring that there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead on the Senior Leadership Team, with the appropriate and time and support to fulfil their role and responsibilities
- Ensuring there is a trained deputy DSL
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are trained, and receive regular updates in the definitions and signs of abuse, and are conversant with their safeguarding duties, and have a sound knowledge of the referral process and always act in the BEST INTERESTS of the child
- Ensuring that there is a designated manager of allegations against staff, normally a member of the SLT and that they implement the procedures within the Allegations Against Staff policy
- To ensure confidentiality protocols are respected and that information is shared with the relevant agencies and personnel
- To ensure safeguarding practices and procedures, prevent, protect and support children and young people from the risks of harm and potential abuse
- To ensure any child or young person who has been subject to harm or abuse receives the support required including hospital treatment
- To ensure the staff including agency staff and volunteers are aware of who the LADO is
- Training staff receive to support them in their role
- STAFF CAN CONTACT THE RUTLAND LADO DIRECTLY WITH ANY CONCERNS

Phone: 01572 722577
Fax: 01572 758375
Email: LADO@rutland.gov.uk

Address: Rutland County Council
Children's Duty and Assessments,
Catmose,
Oakham,
Rutland
LE15 6HP

The Emergency Team, covering all of Leicestershire and Rutland, can be contacted outside office hours on 0116 305 0005.

3.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they, or their Deputies, is always be available to staff during school hours and residential hours in term time

- Ensuring that if the school chooses to have a deputy DSL that they are trained to the same level as the DSL
- Ensuring that the DSL retains overall responsibility for safeguarding even when the activities associated with the role are delegated to deputies
- Ensuring that the LADO for Rutland is informed of any allegations about staff members or other persons in a professional role at the earliest opportunity - 01572 722577
- Re-assuring that children and young people who are at risk of harm or who have been potentially abused are immediately protected and safe from harm or abuse (DSL to reinforce with all staff the difference between a concern and immediate danger or risk of harm). See KCSIE 2023
- Ensuring they have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child
- Referring cases of suspected abuse to the relevant local Children's Services team. Rutland County Council (Phone: 01572 722577) (ext 8407)
- Referring allegations against professional staff and volunteers to the LADO
- Referring cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern
- Referring cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required
- If the concerns or alleged abuse relate to the child or young person's home life, then the DSL should contact the relevant local Children's Services team. At the point of referral the DSL should seek advice with regards contacting parents/carers
- The DSL referring must ensure the school does not take any further action without first consulting the relevant Children's Services team
- Providing a full written record of the referral and accurate chronology outlining communication and actions taken to the local area Children's Services team within 24 hours
- Ensuring that all records are maintained confidentially, securely and separately from other children and young person's records. Access to the confidential records is restricted to the DSLs
- Providing support and guidance to staff on safeguarding issues
- Ensuring that the DSL or Deputy DSL attends case conferences, CORE groups or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments and provides a report that has been shared with the parents
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals (e.g. contact details of local Children's Services team) including the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships

For further information and guidance on the role of DSL please refer to Annex B in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

3.6 The Staff at Wilds Lodge are responsible for:

- Supporting and delivering a curriculum which promotes the prevention of and protection from child abuse or harm
- Supporting the school in providing an atmosphere and ethos in which pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk and be listened to
- Listening to any child who approaches them wishing to share worries and concerns and to act in their best interests
- Staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, this means providing support as soon as a problem emerges

- Staff should be able to support other professionals in an early help assessment and interventions
- Being supportive of children and young people, while helping them understand that they cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality
- Being alert to any signs of abuse or harm in the children and young people they have contact with (see Appendix 1)
- Immediately reporting any concerns both verbally and in writing on My Concern to the lead DSL Sally Skipsey, or in her absence the deputy DSLs
- Serious concerns should immediately be reported both verbally and in writing on My Concern to the lead DSL Sally Skipsey, or in her absence the deputy DSLs . Alternatively call direct to Rutland on 01572 722577
- Understanding that individual staff with concerns may refer to the local children's services directly
- Taking part in safeguarding training provided by the school on child protection and specific safeguarding issues identified in Keeping Children Safe In Education September 2023 to support them in their role
- Understanding and practising the school's safeguarding procedures
- Having an awareness of safeguarding issues – some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.
- Being aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sharing nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos
- Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse.
- Be aware that any issues can be both in school and online.
- Be vigilant, at all times be aware that child on child abuse may be happening even if no reports are received (Part 5 of KCSIE 2023 child on child abuse in more detail).

3.7 Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools can be found on the TES, MindEd and the NSPCC websites. School and care staff can access government guidance as required on the issues; these can be referred to on P12 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

Further safeguarding information and guidance for staff please refer to Part One in **Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022**.

4. Definitions and Signs of Abuse

4.1 Child abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or young people may be abused in a family or institutional or community setting by those known to them, or more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

There are four broad categories of child abuse (Appendix 1, Signs of Abuse):

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

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

4.2 General signs of abuse

Abused 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 are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. Anyone working with children or young people need to be vigilant to the signs listed below. Whilst these signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused, they probably indicate that the child or family is having some problems which should be investigated.

- Regularly experiencing nightmares or sleeping problems
- Changes in personality
- Outbursts of anger
- Changes in eating habits
- Showing an inexplicable fear of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- Self-harming (includes head banging, scratching, cutting)
- Not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries
- Showing violence to animals, toys, peers or adults
- Knowledge of "adult issues" e.g. alcohol, drugs, sexual behaviour
- Lacking in confidence or often wary/anxious
- Regressing to the behaviour of younger children
- Regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, e.g. someone raising a hand quickly
- attendance issues
- unexplained injury

4.3 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.

4.3.1 Signs and Symptoms of Physical abuse

It is normal for children to have cuts and bruises on their bodies caused by accidents which happen whilst they are moving about and/or playing. These are marks that have an acceptable and reasonable explanation.

Marks or injuries which do not have an acceptable explanation may indicate that a child has been abused. This may include:

Bruising:

- Bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet
- Bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs
- Multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- Bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand, or an object (i.e. belt, shoe, etc.)
- Large oval shaped bite marks.

Burns or scalds:

- Any burns which have a clear shape of an object, e.g. cigarette burns
- Burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals, or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (i.e. bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. It is particularly concerning if parents/carers are unable to explain these injuries and it is not clear whether they took the child to receive medical treatment at the time of the injury.

Be vigilant to possible abuse if a child is frequently described as ill by their parent but does not have any symptoms which are obvious to others. In addition, the parent will be unable to provide details of a medical diagnosis for the child's apparent condition.

4.4 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 cyberbullying*), 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, although it may occur alone.

* Cyberbullying is a growing problem and includes:

- Sending threatening or disturbing text messages
- Homophobia, racism or sexism
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'Trolling', the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Encouraging young people to self-harm
- Voting for someone in an abusive poll

- Hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- Sending non-consensual and consensual messages/images to pressure a child/peer into sending images or other activity.

4.4.1 Signs and Symptoms of Emotional abuse

It is important to remember that some children are naturally open and affectionate whilst others are quieter and more self-contained. Children also develop at different rates from one another and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child.

The following signs may indicate emotional abuse:

- Inappropriate knowledge of 'adult' matters such as sex, alcohol and drugs
- Extreme emotional outbursts
- Very low self-esteem, often with an inability to accept praise or to trust
- Lack of any sense of fun, over-serious or apathetic
- Excessive clingy or attention seeking behaviour
- Over-anxiety, either watchful and constantly checking or over-anxious to please
- Developmental delay, especially in speech
- Substantial failure to reach potential in learning, linked with lack of confidence, poor concentration and lack of pride in achievement
- Self-harming, compulsive rituals, stereotypic repetitive behaviour
- Unusual pattern of response to others showing emotions.

4.5 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.

Recognition of sexual abuse generally follows either a direct statement from the child (or very occasionally from the abuser), or more often, suspicion based on the child's circumstances, behaviour, or physical symptoms or signs.

4.5.1 Signs and Symptoms of Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse often presents itself in a veiled way. Although some child victims have obvious genital injuries, a sexually transmitted disease or are pregnant, relatively few show such obvious signs.

The following list of commonly observed indicators is not exhaustive and there may be situations where none of them is present, even though a child is known to have been abused sexually. Equally, even if some are present it may also not be definitive of sexual abuse. These physical signs should alert professionals to the possibility of abuse. Suspicion increases where several features are present together.

Physical manifestations:

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy (especially in younger girls or when identity of father is uncertain)
- Genital lacerations or bruising
- Vaginal bleeding in pre-pubescent girls
- Abnormal dilation of vagina, anus or urethra
- Additional physical signs.

Although these signs are not on their own indicative of sexual abuse, they include:

- Itching, redness, soreness
- Unexplained bleeding from vagina or anus
- Daytime wetting
- Faecal soiling or retention.

At no point should any member of staff inspect genitalia.

4.5.2 Emotional and behavioural manifestations: spotting the signs.

Behaviour with sexual overtones (depending on age and understanding):

- Explicit or frequent sexual preoccupation in talk and play
- Sexual relationships with adults or other children
- Hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words, play or drawings.

Children may also behave in the following ways:

- Withdrawn, fearful or aggressive behaviour to peers or adults
- Running away from home
- Suicide attempts and self-mutilation
- Child psychiatric problems, including behaviour problems, withdrawal from social contact, onset of wetting or soiling when previously dry and clean, severe sleep disturbances, arson (fire setting)
- Learning problems which do not match intellectual ability, or poor concentration (NB: for some sexually abused children, school may be a haven - they will arrive early, are reluctant to leave and perform well)
- Marked reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for PE, etc.

County Lines:

The following signs may indicate that a child is being exploited by a county lines gang:

- frequently going missing from school, home or care.
- travelling to locations, or being found in areas they have no obvious connections with, including seaside or market towns.
- unwillingness to explain their whereabouts.

Signs of Radicalisation & Extremism

- Have low self-esteem.
- Be confused about their faith, sense of belonging, or identity.
- Be victims of bullying or discrimination.
- Feel isolated or lonely.
- Be experiencing stress or depression.
- Be going through a transitional period in their life.
- Be angry at other people or the government.

4.6 Neglect

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

4.6.1 Signs and Symptoms of Neglect

It is important to remember that some children are very picky eaters whilst others may refuse to wear a coat regardless of how cold it is outside. A child may also appear to be underweight, but is, in fact, naturally thin.

Further Signs of Neglect:

Hygiene

- Poor hygiene, frequently smelly or dirty and regularly have dirty and unwashed clothing

Health

- Untreated health and dental problems
- Poor muscle tone and prominent joints
- Poor skin; sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies and ringworm
- Thin swollen tummy
- Injuries caused by accidents, e.g. cuts or burns becoming infected
- Anaemia
- Incontinence
- Faltering growth and not reaching developmental milestones
- Recurring illness or infections.

Nutrition

- Often hungry
- No breakfast.

Development

- Being tired
- Withdrawn and unhappy
- Anxious and avoiding people
- Difficulty making friends
- Poor language and communication skills
- Poor social skills
- Missing school

Some of the most obvious signs of neglect (e.g. children being thin, dirty or not wearing a coat) are not in themselves indicators of abuse. However, if, over time, it is clear that a child is not receiving an adequate level of care and supervision appropriate to their age, it may indicate that the child is being neglected.

4.7 Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

“Sexual exploitation of C & YP under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships, where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs. Alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them sexual activities. Child exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the Child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phone without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the Child/Young Person will have more power over them by virtue of their age,sex, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the C & YP’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.” Sexual exploitation may also be a sign of County Lines.

4.7.1 Signs and Symptoms of Child Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming. It is important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse and some do not recognise that they are being exploited. However, there are a number of tell-tale signs that the child may be being groomed for sexual exploitation.

These include:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- Regularly missing school or not taking part in education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infection

- Mood swings or changes in emotional well-being
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

4.8 Child Victims of Trafficking

Trafficking of children is a form of human trafficking which means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, and/or receipt of a child by means of a threat or use of force or other forms of coercion for the purposes of exploitation.

Trafficking specifically targets the child as an object of exploitation; the child may be unaware of their fate:

- Reason for trafficking children
- Sexual exploitation
- Domestic servitude
- Sweatshops, restaurants and other catering work
- Agricultural labour, including tending plants in illegal cannabis farms
- Benefit fraud
- Involvement in petty criminal activity
- Organ harvesting
- Drug mules, drug dealing or decoys for adult drug traffickers
- Illegal inter-country adoption

It is possible that unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) may have been trafficked into the UK and are likely to remain under the influence of their traffickers, even whilst they are looked after.

Any child who has been a victim of trafficking will have a risk assessment setting out how the child will be protected from any trafficker, to minimise any risk of traffickers being able to re-involve a child in exploitative activities. This plan should include contingency plans to be followed if the young person goes missing.

4.8.1 Signs that a child may be trafficked include

- Is withdrawn and refuses to talk or appears afraid to talk to a person in authority
- Does not appear to have money but does have a mobile phone
- Possession of large amounts of money or expensive belongings with no plausible explanation
- Receives unexplained/unidentified phone calls whilst in placement
- Has a history with missing links and unexplained moves

4.9 Grooming

Grooming can happen in person, online and in gangs or groups.

Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the child from friends or family and making the child feel dependent on them. They will use any means of power or control to make a child believe they have no choice but to do what they want.

Groomers may introduce 'secrets' as a way to control or frighten the child. Sometimes they will blackmail the child, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse. Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child. They can spend time learning about a young person's interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship.

It's easy for groomers to hide their identity online - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become 'friends' with children they are targeting.

Groomers may look for:

- usernames or comments that are flirtatious or have a sexual meaning
- public comments that suggest a child has low self-esteem or is vulnerable

Groomers don't always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of young people and wait to see who responds.

Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.

Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

Grooming can be more than just one single person, it can happen in gangs or groups of people who are of both the same, and different, age, ethnicity, religion and social backgrounds.

Online radicalisation may be a concern (see section 4.11)

For further guidance please refer to www.nspcc.org.uk.

4.10 Honour Based Violence including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant

communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985. In 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child abroad to have female genital mutilation. Anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison.

There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM is a hidden crime, so we don't know exactly how common it is. Even partial removal or 'nipping' can risk serious health problems for girls and women.

FGM is usually performed by someone with no medical training. Girls are given no anaesthetic, no antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained. The cutting is made using instruments such as a knife, a pair of scissors, scalpel, glass or razor blade.

Girls are more at risk if FGM has been carried out on their mother, sister or a member of their extended family.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about:

- being taken 'home' to visit family
- a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- an older female relative visiting the UK.

She may ask a teacher or another adult for help if she suspects FGM is going to happen or she may run away from home or miss school.

A girl or woman who has had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

FGM can be extremely painful and dangerous. It can cause:

- severe pain
- shock
- bleeding

- infection such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- organ damage
- blood loss and infections that can cause death in some cases.

4.10.1 Long-term effects

Girls and women who have had FGM may have problems that continue through adulthood, including:

- difficulties urinating or incontinence
- frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- menstrual problems
- kidney damage and possible failure
- cysts and abscesses
- pain when having sex
- infertility
- complications during pregnancy and childbirth
- emotional and mental health problems.

FGM helpline on 0808 028 3550.

Wilds Lodge is an 'open environment', where students feel able to discuss issues that they may be facing:

- the DSLs are aware of the issues surrounding FGM and Forced Marriage
- advice and signposting is available for accessing additional help, e.g. the NSPCC's helpline, ChildLine services, Forced Marriage Unit
- awareness raising about FGM is incorporated in the school's safeguarding training.

If there is a disclosure of abuse of this kind, or staff are concerned for any other reason, they are advised:

- to alert the DSL to their concerns. This member of staff will then refer concerns to children's social care, who will inform the police. If a pupil has disclosed that they are at risk in this way, the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the pupil's wishes. Where a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty for it to be reported to the police
- not to consult or discuss with the pupil's parents or family, or others within the community. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girls being at risk from FGM, or already having suffered from FGM.

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in the Multi- Agency Practice Guidelines including the focus on the role of schools and colleges [HM Government - Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)

Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) give Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place statutory duty upon staff, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to

report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the police.

Mandatory reporting commenced in October 2015. Staff must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

For further information see Annex A in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023.

4.11 Vulnerable to Extremism and Radicalisation

Extremism and radicalisation is another part of safeguarding children and young people. As with any concern, the risk of harm and abuse is raised when young people are vulnerable and is often noticed when students change their behaviour, clothing or attitudes. One aspect of safeguarding children and young people from radicalisation is to set out in 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools'. This guidance sets out British values as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- The tolerance of those with different faiths and values.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and which specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide and answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviours which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

The Government Prevent Strategy, inclusive is the approach to reducing the risk of terrorism, this is called '**CONTEST**' and has four parts:

- **Protect;** to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack
- **Prepare;** to mitigate the impact of an attack
- **Pursue;** to stop terrorist attacks
- **Prevent;** to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

4.11.1 Definition of terrorism

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Calls for the death of members of the British armed forces is also included in this definition.

From 1st July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is known as the prevent duty. It applied to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies MUST HAVE REGARD TO STATUTORY GUIDANCE ISSUES UNDER SECTION 29 OF THE CTSA 2015 (the prevent guidance), Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools.

Violent extremism takes many forms and is linked to different motivations such as political movements, religious beliefs, animal rights, environmental issues and economic issues.

The statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies.

- Wilds Lodge is expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies on implementing the Prevent Duty
- The Prevent Duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of Safeguarding Children Partnerships
- The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- Wilds Lodge school provides Prevent awareness training (supplied by Leicestershire County Council Safeguarding in Education) to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.
- Wilds Lodge must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. Schools should ensure that suitable filtering is in place. It is also important that schools teach pupils about E-Safety more generally.

The Department for Education has also PUBLISHED ADVICE FOR SCHOOLS ON THE PREVENT DUTY. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent Guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

Staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being

vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the Local Authority and include the police for the relevant Local Authority area. Following a referral, the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and, where considered appropriate and necessary, consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to cooperate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges which are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 are listed in the CTSA 2015 as partners to cooperate with local Channel panels.

Indicators of vulnerability (signs and symptoms) include:

Identity

- The student is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences
- Discomfort about their place in society
- Personal crises, the student may be experiencing family tensions
- A sense of isolation
- Low self-esteem
- They may be disassociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends
- They may be searching for answers to questions about their identity, faith and belonging.

Personal Circumstances

- Migration
- Local community tensions and events affecting the student's country of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by a personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.

Unmet Aspirations

- The student may have perceptions of injustice
- A feeling of failure
- Rejection of civic life.

Experiences of Criminality

- Involvement with criminal groups
- Imprisonment and poor resettlement/reintegration on release.

Special Educational Needs

- Social interaction
- Empathy with others
- Understanding the consequences of their actions; and awareness of the motivation of others.

More Critical Risk factors could include;

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters

- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation, resulting in issues of identity crises and/or personal crises.

De-radicalisation

- All-inclusive ethos
- Create doubt or disillusionment
- Question ideas
- Safe discussions
- Range of views.

Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

4.12 Bullying (Including cyber-bullying): See also Wilds Lodge School's Counter- Bullying Policy and e-Safety Policy.

Bullying occurs when a person or group of people behave in ways which are designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people. Bullying can be overt and plain for all to see or can be subtle and insidious. It can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- Physical – e.g. hitting, kicking, theft
- Verbal – e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling
- Psychological – e.g. excluding from social groups and activities, spreading hurtful rumours.

4.13 Allegations of abuse made by other children (Child on Child Abuse)

Wilds Lodge School has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

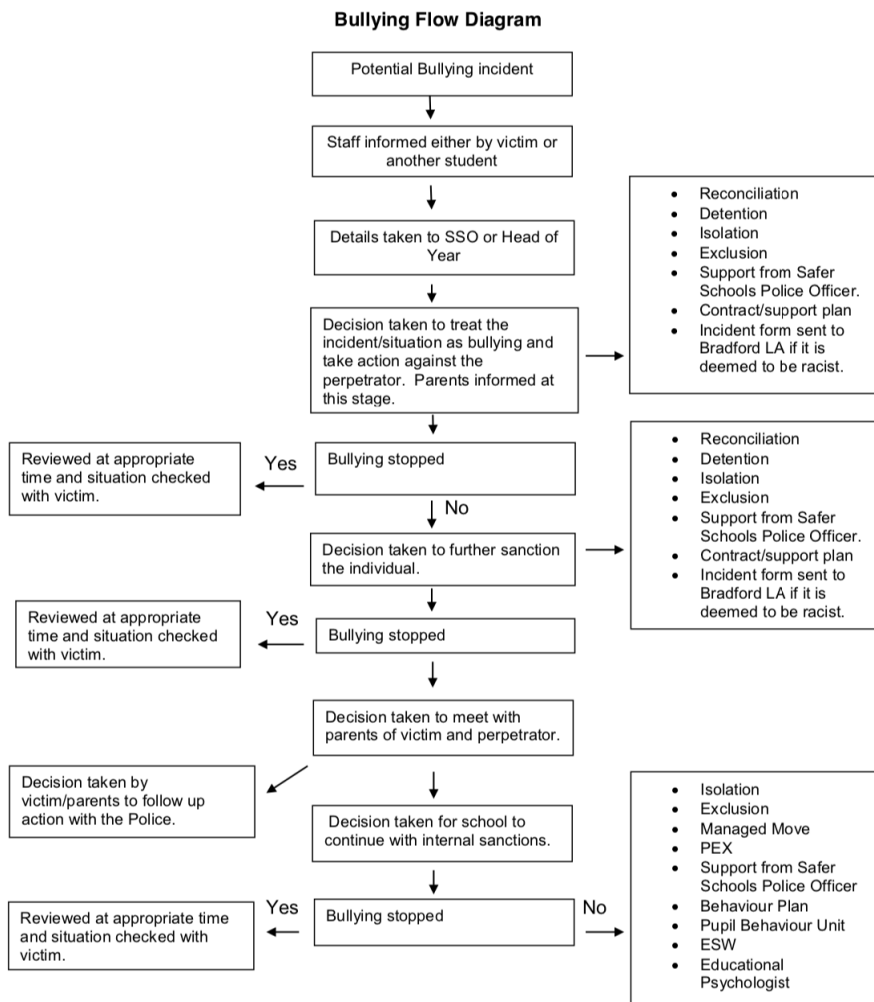
Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT+ children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up; not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviour risks normalising them. Any nagging doubts about such behaviour should be addressed/passed on. Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm is illegal and as such is a specific sexual offence.
- Wilds Lodge recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. This child on child abuse can take the form of physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, sharing nudes and semi nudes and initiation ceremonies amongst other forms.
- Wilds Lodge will make clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. It should be clear as to how victims of child on child abuse will be supported. The allegations will be passed to the Safeguarding team, and will be recorded, investigated and a resolution in place. At all times the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator will be supported and given guidance. Professional support will be sought if and as necessary.
- Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. The Department of Education provides searching screening and confiscation advice for schools which is used in our school policy. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) Education Group has recently published sharing nudes and semi nudes advice for schools
- Wilds Lodge staff should be vigilant and aware of the potential of child-on-child abuse both in day and residential settings. Reporting and recording of these incidents are essential in the continuing protection of all children and young people in our care.
- Reporting child on child abuse in the first stage needs to go to the Safeguarding team via concern reports/My Concern. This will be triaged and assessed by the DSL.
- Once received the report will be explored by the DSL.
- It may be referred out if necessary and any further actions communicated to appropriate staff and professionals.
- Support at all stages will be offered to the student and parents.
- Signposting to external support will also be considered.

Please refer to part 5 of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023’ which now also includes the guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, for full details of procedures to be followed in such cases. Also see ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people’ (UKCIS, December 2020)

The flow chart below highlights the procedures when any concern is raised including child on child abuse and bullying.



The “Everyone’s Invited” movement has raised further awareness of incidents of sexual abuse and harassment involving students in schools and universities nationwide. It has brought to the fore testimonies from students and national statistics in relation to sexual abuse and harassment involving students. Published testimonies name educational establishments across the country and individuals from both historic and current student cohorts. Wilds Lodge must remain alert to the possibility and recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, this doesn’t mean it’s not happening within the school and all staff remain vigilant.

Like all schools, Wilds Lodge plays a crucial role in teaching students about sex and relationships, equality and diversity and modern citizenship. This is enacted through our culture, curriculum and policies including *[Positive Behaviour, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Counter-bullying, Relationships and Sex Education and Whistle Blowing]*.

We recognise that, along with others, we have a vital responsibility in tackling sexual violence and harassment and cultivating in our students good values and respect for one another. Like so much of education, our work must complement that undertaken by parents and carers, and agencies in wider

society, so that students receive a consistent message and people can go about their lives free from harassment and abuse.

We continue to engage with our students, listen to their concerns, signpost necessary support provision within and beyond the school and, in liaison with other agencies where appropriate, take any necessary safeguarding action.

We ask that anyone who has experienced such behaviour, or who is suffering because of it, to report it to an appropriate adult in the school so they can be supported, and steps can be taken to address the issue. There is a range of options to allow students to report such abuse either directly or anonymously through personal support work, online email or direct message to Safeguarding, QR code directly to SLT team, written drop boxes in key areas. These routes are communicated frequently to both staff and students.

4.14 Serious violence

Wilds Lodge staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Risk factors that might increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence may include:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Wilds Lodge staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK](#)

4.15 Child Centred Policing

In cases where students have potentially committed a crime on school premises such as assault, criminal damage, cyber crime, drugs, harassment, sexual offences, theft and weapons, the DSL and Deputy DSL will follow the advice provided by the National Police Chiefs' Council Child Centred Policing 'When to Call the Police' [When to call the Police: Guidance for Schools and Colleges](#)

5. Safeguarding Referral Procedure

5.1 The first steps to be taken should a member of staff have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm is to ensure the immediate safety of that child or young person and others who may be judged to be at risk of abuse.

Consultation must take place with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or named deputy) who will be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral, or the member of staff may make a referral directly to Rutland's First Response Team.

- A written record of concerns should be made using the schools internal recording system My Concern or via email. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy if DSL unavailable) will then make the decision whether a referral is needed to Rutland County Council First Response Children's Duty, or the child's existing Social Worker. If the child lives in an authority outside of Rutland, the matter will be referred by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to the relevant Children's Social Care team in that area
- If a member of staff has serious concerns or that a child is at significant risk of harm they must immediately inform the DSL or in their absence one of the Deputy DSLs, or inform First Response Children's Duty themselves on 01572 722577 (ext 8407). They should also record on My Concern.
- If a member of staff reports a concern to the DSL that does not suggest an immediate risk, a referral will be made by the DSL
- **The Emergency Team, covering all of Leicestershire and Rutland, can be contacted outside office hours on 0116 3050005.**

5.2 The person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred and should not conduct an investigation to establish whether the child is telling the truth. The role of the person to whom a child makes a disclosure or allegation is to act promptly on the information they have received by following the identified procedure below and immediately informing the DSL. The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately.

5.3 If a child makes a disclosure or allegation (see Appendix 2, Dos and Don'ts of Managing a Disclosure) you should:

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is said. You do not need a 'witness'
- Carefully explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace and do not interrupt if they are freely recalling events
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer. Questions should be framed in an open manner and not 'lead' the child in any way. For example, say, "Tell me what has happened", rather than, "Did s/he do..."
- Reassure the child that s/he has done the right thing in telling you. Explain what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared

- Do not ask the child to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school or ask him/her to write a 'statement'
- Contact your DSL as soon as you can or, where such contact is not possible, ensure a referral is made without delay to the local children's services team
- Record in writing what was said, including the child's own words, as soon as possible using My Concern – noting the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given
- Do not discuss with parents/carers.

5.4 Guidance on Information Sharing is available, in the following DFE document:

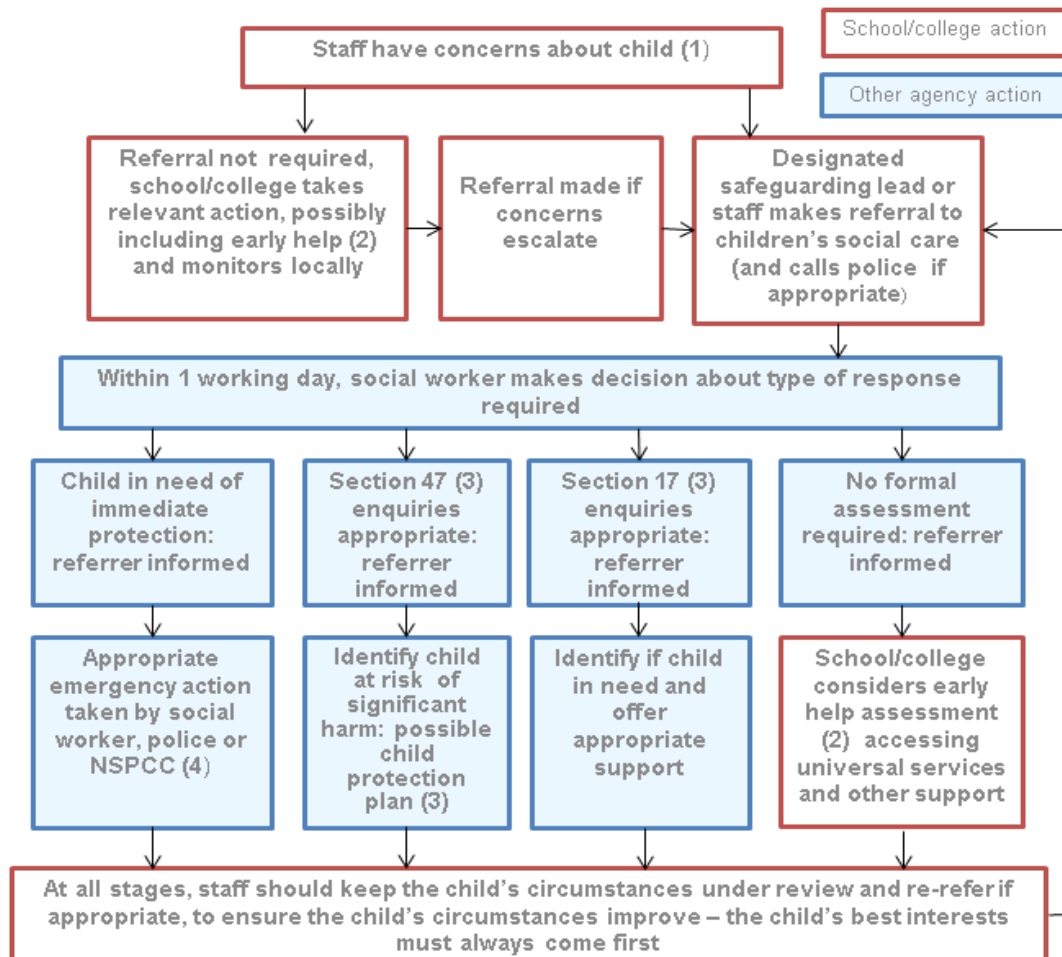
- 'Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers 2008/2015' [Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#)

5.5 A referral should always be made following a restrictive physical intervention if any of the following criteria applies:

- A child or young person is injured or makes an allegation that they have been harmed by an adult
- The child or young person wishes to complain about the manner that they have been restrained
- The parent/ carer of the child or young person makes a complaint on behalf of the child or young person about the use of restrictive physical intervention
- The referral to the local children's services and the LADO is managed by the person responsible for managing allegations against staff within the school, initially the DSL – see the Allegation Against Staff policy.

5.6 This diagram illustrates what action staff, volunteers and consultants should take when there are concerns about the welfare of a child or young person. If, at any point, there is a risk of serious immediate harm to a child or young person, a referral must be made to the local Children's Services team immediately:

Actions where there are concerns about a child



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part six of this guidance
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from coordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment

should be arranged. Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on the early help process [Working Together to Safeguard Children - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children)

3. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include s17 assessments of children in need and s47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children
4. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

5.6.1 Responding to concerns relating to Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

If a practitioner is concerned that a child or young person is involved or likely to be involved in sexual exploitation and / or trafficking, they should immediately refer to the DSL who will make a referral to Children's Social Care.

If the child or young person has (or is awaiting allocation of) a social worker, the duty team should send the referral to the named social worker, or in their absence the team manager. Sending all sexual exploitation referrals to the duty teams enables Children's Social Care to ensure a coordinated response.

Wilds Lodge School recognise, at all stages, the need for urgent action that may be necessary to secure the child or young person's safety.

Should the DSL have concerns that they would like to discuss prior to a referral, they can do so by consulting with the LADO or directly with the key contact in Children's Social Care. All professionals are encouraged to seek advice if they are not sure there is sufficient 'evidence' or are not sure about the possible risk indicators.

In relation to confidentiality, where there are concerns that a child or young person is subject to sexual exploitation/trafficking, all agencies have a responsibility to report their concerns and share information. The need for a child or young person to be safeguarded overrides their right to confidentiality. Data protection should not prevent the sharing of information but ensures that relevant information is shared appropriately.

5.7 Thresholds for Intervention

5.7.1 Early Help assessment

DSLs should be aware and conversant with the Early Help Strategies and Assessment process, and will lead in this area. Staff at Wilds Lodge have regular opportunities to discuss children who appear to have additional needs with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will lead on the early help assessment process, an outline of the process is identified below.

The principle is that when any additional need is identified with a young person whether social emotional, developmental or educational an Early Help Assessment form is completed.

Leicestershire and Rutland describe Early Help as the process of taking action early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families
--

or with a population most at risk of developing problems. Effective help may occur at any point in a child or young person's life.

This definition includes both help early in life (with young children including pre-natal interventions) and help early in the development of a problem (with children or young people of any age). It includes universal help that is offered to an entire population to prevent problems developing, and targeted help that is offered to particular children, young people and families with existing risk factors, vulnerabilities or acknowledged additional needs in order to protect them from developing problems or to reduce the severity of problems that have started to emerge.

In Rutland the new Early Help Assessment (EHA) was implemented on 1st December 2015, to replace the Common Assessment framework (CAF). All of the supporting documentation, including the EHA Guidance has been rewritten to reflect a Signs of Safety methodology.

There are standard forms to be used to record Early Help support in Rutland which can be accessed through the [Family support from early help services | Rutland County Council](#)

A referral to Rutland social services from the school may result in Early Help being offered.

The Early Help form can be completed on the Rutland County Council website and it is passed securely to the First Response team. Early Help takes place within Priority 3 of the Children's social care priority levels.

Please note: Immediate concerns about the welfare of a child must be reported without delay to the First Response Team: Priority 1 (requires same day response) 01572 722577.

5.7.2 Child in Need – Section 17 of the Children Act 1989

A 'Child in Need' referral should be considered where the needs of the child are unlikely to be met under an Early Help Assessment, such as a child with complex disabilities, when a social work-led assessment is required.

Section 17 of the Children Act says that an assessment for services should be undertaken by the Local Authority in the following circumstances:

- Child(ren) are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a Local Authority
- Their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services
- They are disabled.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a 'Child in Need' referral is appropriate, he/she will speak with parents / young person and obtain their consent for referral to the First Response Team (or other appropriate Children Service Care Team) to request an assessment. If parents refuse to give consent, but the child's needs are not being met, the Designated Safeguarding Person will discuss the issues with the First Response Team.

Appropriate school staff should be invited to participate in Child in Need (CIN) meetings convened by Children's Social Care when children are deemed to require section 17 services.

Some children in 'acute need' (Safeguarding Children Partnerships guidance) may require Child in Need Section 17 support.

5.7.3 Child Protection

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 says the Local Authority has a statutory duty to investigate when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm due to the actions or inactions of others. Staff from Wilds Lodge School do not investigate whether a child has been abused. This is the duty of Social workers from the Safeguarding team and the Police. Education staff refer reasonable concerns which indicate that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under Section 47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration. Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to both understand and evidence 'significant harm', it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

If staff have significant concerns about any child they must make them known to the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads without delay in accordance with reporting and recording procedures.

6 Managing Allegations against Staff

6.1 Duties as an employer and an employee

6.1.1 This part of the guidance is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person who would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers and contractors) in a school that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

6.1.2 We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working with or may come into contact with children and young people at Wilds Lodge School. Such allegations are usually that some kind of abuse has taken place. They can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults. See Whistleblowing Policy Sept 23 and Low Level Concerns Policy Sept 23.

- If an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform and Allegation Manager - allegations@wildslodgeschool.co.uk
- An Allegation Manager should on all such occasions follow the Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures and inform the Local Authority Designated Officers on 01572 722577, or through the First Response Team on 0116 3050005.
- If the allegation made concerns the Head, the person receiving the allegation will immediately contact info@cavendisheducation.com to the governance team at Cavendish Education who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying them first.
- An Allegations Manager will discuss with the LADO the nature of the allegations in order for appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation being made.

6.1.3 The Head and DSL will also

- Consider the safeguarding arrangements of the child or young person to ensure they are not in contact with the alleged abuser
- Contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO
- Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation and provide support
- Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedure is followed, including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary, i.e. where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal
- Act on any decision made in any Section 47 strategy meeting - the decision of the strategy/joint evaluation meeting could be: investigation by children's social care, police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation, single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the Senior HR advisor for the School
- Inform the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations founded, or would have been if they have resigned
- Ensure that a clear comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on Confide (a secure software solution for recording and case-managing allegations and concerns against staff) and a copy provided to the person concerned
- Wilds Lodge have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that an individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals should be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual.

6.2 Protecting yourself against allegations of abuse

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) says that all staff members should be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes the school's Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a Code of Conduct). The school's Code of Conduct is set out in the school Staff Induction (and based on 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who work with children and young people in Education Settings' February 2022). You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following sensible precautions can be taken when working alone with children:

- Work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- Make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally
- Avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards
- Never give out personal mobile phone numbers or private email addresses
- Do not give pupils lifts home in your car (unless this has been specifically agreed by senior management)
- Do not arrange to meet pupils outside of school activities
- Never 'befriend' or chat to pupils/students on social network sites.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil or student even when the pupil/student is over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

7. Promoting Good Behaviour and Discipline

At Wilds Lodge we aim to promote positive social, emotional and behavioural change in our children and young people through a supportive and consistent approach across education and care based on their needs. Our positive behaviour strategy is a holistic person centred approach to the development of our children and young people, based on effective evidence based teaching, learning and quality of care.

Many children and young people, exhibit and display behaviours that act as barriers to learning and inclusion. An integral part of our holistic approaches is to overcome those barriers. We aim to provide a consistent, supportive and well supervised environment, where children and young people feel safe, secure and reach their potential through the promotion of positive relationships.

Many of our children and young people display a variety of challenging behaviours which are managed by a range of strategies, including the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions, in order to reduce risk.

Staff are principally encouraged to adopt different methods of de-escalation via appropriate training and the promotion of positive relationships. By using a range of positive behaviour management strategies we aim to create an environment where all parties are kept safe, but also encourages children to be involved in the process of being reflective about their behaviour.

7.1 The use of physical intervention should, wherever possible, be avoided. It should only be used to manage a child or young person's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances.

7.2 When physical intervention is used, it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned. The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they may cause.

7.3 Wilds Lodge accepts the definition of reasonable force:

“Reasonable force uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming him/herself, others or property.”

7.4 Wilds Lodge supports and endorses the legal position that it is unlawful to use force as a punishment and believes reasonable force should not be used as a method of compliance.

7.5 The 1996 Education Act (Section 550A) and subsequently, Section 93 of the 2006 Education and Inspections Act (April 1st 2007), and reinforced in the DfE Guidance, The Use of Reasonable Force in schools (2013) all stipulate that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- Preventing him/herself from hurting themselves, or placing themselves at risk
- Preventing children and young people from hurting others
- Behaviour leading to serious damage to property
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its children and young people, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities).

7.6 The staff at Wilds Lodge are trained to use Sherwood Positive Behaviour Support & Physical Interventions Training. Staff are trained every year with the emphasis on de-escalation and preventative strategies.

8. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

8.1 Based upon Government guidance ‘Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers’, DfE 2008/2015/2018, Wilds Lodge will ensure that data regarding children is correctly stored and managed in line with these principles defined in the guidance, and student records will be retained for a period of 25 years and that we will take all appropriate action regarding the sharing of information as follows:

- Recognise that legislation (Data Protection Act) is not a barrier to sharing information about concerns
- Be honest and open with the person (be they a child or an adult) about why, what, how and with whom the information will be shared
- Seek advice when we are in doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person (be they a child or an adult) where possible
- Share information with consent where appropriate and respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information where possible
- Base our information sharing decisions on considerations of safety and well-being

- Ensure the information we share is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure
- Keep a record of our actions, decisions and reasons.
- Follow the guidance in KCSIE 2023 (Part Four) concerning allegations

8.2 Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation
- Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, including children's social care departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law
- Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared
- The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the County Legal Services Department
- When children transfer to a new school or college at any time other than key transition points (e.g. move to primary or high school), it may be necessary to inform other partners. Wherever possible information will be passed directly to the lead DSL in the new provision within 5 days, this may be through secure post and a record stored with the photocopy in Wilds Lodge.
- The Head or DSL will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being, or that of another; and we will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to the local children's services and with their parents/carers, unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the First Response Professionals Consultation Line on 0116 305 0005.

The Staff Code of Conduct can be found in the link below:
<https://c-cluster-110.uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/13ecce28-e8f2-49e9-83c6-c29337cd8071~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital>

9. Power and Position of Trust

9.1 Wilds Lodge acknowledges all adults working with children and young people are in positions of trust in relation to the children and young people in their care. A relationship of trust can be described where one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. All staff must recognise the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship. Please see 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings', DfE 2015, 2018, Sept 2019 (COVID update April 2020), February 2022.

9.2 All staff must uphold public trust in the teaching profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to the member of staff's professional position
- Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.

Procedure on concerns:

- All concerns need to be logged via MyConcern [MyConcern](#)
- All concerns will then be triaged by the DSL and Safeguarding Team and at this point tasks/actions assigned and feedback will be in place for the relevant staff about the status and necessary actions in regard to their concern.

10. Child Centred Approach

10.1 Wilds Lodge and their staff recognises and understands that effective safeguarding systems are child centred. Children and young people in our school are clear what they want from an effective safeguarding system, we know this via our regular children and young people feedback.

10.2 All our children want to be respected, their views to be heard, to have stable relationships with professionals built on trust and for consistent support provided for their individual needs. This guides the behaviour of our staff. Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say; take their views seriously; and work with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs. A child-centred approach is supported by:

- The Equality Act 2010 which puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs; and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an international agreement that protects the rights of children and provides a child-centred framework for the development of services to children.

10.3 At Wilds Lodge we ensure that a broad and balanced PSCCHEe curriculum is taught. This includes enabling children and young people to develop self-awareness, positive self-esteem and confidence, encouraging them to:

- Keep themselves and others safe
- Stay as healthy as possible
- Have worthwhile and fulfilling relationships
- Respect the differences between people
- Develop independence and responsibility
- Play an active role as members of a democratic society
- Make the most of their own abilities and those of others
- Behave in a socially and morally acceptable way including towards authority and each other
- Become involved in the life of their community
- Know about democracy and how to be an active citizen
- Know about economic well being.

Please refer to the school's Curriculum Statement.

11. WhistleBlowing

11.1 Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussions. Wilds Lodge has a clear and accessible Whistle Blowing Policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Adults who use whistleblowing procedures are made aware that their employment rights are protected.

11.2 Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

11.3 All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and that such concerns will be taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team.

11.4 Through our staff induction process, Whistleblowing Policy and Low Level Concern Policy we provide procedures on how staff can implement the Whistle Blowing Policy. Staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude and actions of colleagues where these are inappropriate or unsuitable. Staff are required to speak to an Allegations Manager - allegations@wildslodgeschool.co.uk. If any concern relates to the behaviour of the Head, the concern should be shared with the Executive Principal Ian Thorsteinsson (i.thorsteinsson@cavendisheducation.com).

11.5 Staff will be protected from harassment or victimisation, and no action will be taken against staff if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith. Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

11.6 The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – the line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

11.7 The Allegations Manager will record all allegations and low-level concerns on Confide, (a secure software solution for recording and case-managing allegations and concerns against staff). Only the Allegation Managers will have access to Confide, and all data will be stored in accordance with the school's GDPR and data protection policies.

12. Induction and Training

12.1 When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of our school's Safeguarding Policy and told who the Senior Designated Lead and deputy for safeguarding is. They will also be provided with access to My Concern and given information on how to complete a concern. Reading the policy and also reading and signing KCSIE part 1 (including any updates) will be recorded on the SCR as part of their induction process.

12.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will have an induction period that will include essential safeguarding information. This programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to, signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record any issues of confidentiality. After the induction all staff will have a clear understanding of the definition of emotional, physical, sexual and neglectful child abuse and the risks of child sexual exploitation. New staff will be made aware of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Partnership procedures.

12.3 New staff who have not had any Child Protection/Safeguarding training will be provided with safeguarding awareness training through the induction process. The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will attend approved DSL Courses at least every two years in order to maintain continuous professional development and comply with statutory guidance.

12.4 All regular visitors and volunteers to our school will be given a set of our safeguarding procedures; they will be informed of whom our Lead DSL and Deputy DSL are. They will also be informed with reference recording and reporting procedures.

12.5 Wilds Lodge School will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children at our schools and homes.

12.6 We actively encourage all of our staff at Wilds Lodge to keep up to date with the most recent local and national Safeguarding advice and guidance. All staff should now receive safeguarding updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. For example, this can be provided via email, e-bulletin and staff meetings.

12.7 The knowledge and skills of the DSL and his/her deputy/deputies should now be updated at regular intervals, but at least annually, to ensure he/she keeps up with developments relevant to the role. This could be provided via, for example, e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read about recent safeguarding developments.

13. Safer Recruitment

13.1 We will ensure that the Head, DSL and at least one other member of staff have completed appropriate safer recruitment training, recognised by the DfE. At all times the Head will ensure that safer recruitment practices and procedures are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023'. We will ensure that at least one member of any interview panel is appropriately trained in safer recruitment.

13.2 Wilds Lodge will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates. We require evidence of original academic certificates. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview and verify the references accordingly. We will question the contents of application forms, e.g. breaks in employment history (including overseas), if we are unclear about them. We will undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children. Under no circumstances will we consider offering employment to anyone who is barred from working in schools under Section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, including Proprietors and Governors. All professional/voluntary staff working with children in a regulated activity and this will be kept under regular review. Identity checks will include evidence of right to work in the UK and teachers will be subject to Prohibition from Teaching checks.

In the event of teaching applications from persons who have worked overseas, we will ask them to obtain a letter from the professional regulatory authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and that they are not aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach.

13.3 We will maintain a Single Central Register of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements and is signed off on an annual basis by the Governors/Head.

13.4 Any staff member or volunteer who becomes the subject of a police investigation in relation to physical or sexual offences against adults or children, or are charged with such a criminal offence, must inform the Head. Staff must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children whether received before, or during their employment at the school. The Head or DSL will discuss any potential safeguarding matters with the LADO and any required action will be agreed.

13.5 Any staff member or volunteer whose own children become subject to child protection investigations must inform the Head. They or the DSL will discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in regard to procedures for dealing with allegations against Persons who work in a position of trust with children. Appropriate action will be agreed.

13.6 Wilds Lodge have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that an individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals should be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual.

13.7 Wilds Lodge should ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school or college, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information). For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including barred list information) will be required. In considering whether the contact is regular, it is irrelevant whether the contractor works on a single site or across a number of sites. Under no circumstances should a contractor in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised, or engage in regulated activity. Schools and colleges are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

In the event of applications from persons who have worked overseas, we will ask them to obtain a letter from the professional regulatory authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and that they are not aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to work with children.

13.8 Wilds Lodge should ensure that individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in the school. In addition, Wilds Lodge must make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These further checks should include a check for information about any teacher sanction or restriction that an EEA professional regulating authority has imposed, using the NCTL Teacher Services' system. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professions database. Applicants can also contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

For further information regarding Safer Recruitment, see the Wilds Lodge School Safer Recruitment Policy.

14. Missing Children

14.1 Wilds Lodge recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a key duty and requires effective joint working between agencies and professionals. When a child goes missing or runs away they are at risk. Safeguarding children therefore includes protecting them from this risk.

14.2 Wilds Lodge refers to the definitions set out by the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Leicestershire Police 2022 [Children and Young People who go Missing from Home or Care Joint Protocol 2022](#)

These are:

- Missing: anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another; and
- Absent: a person not at a place where they are expected or required to be.

14.3 The police classification of a person as 'missing' or 'absent' will be based on on-going risk assessment. Note that 'absent' within this definition would not include those defined as "away from placement without authorisation" above: a child whose whereabouts are known would not be treated as either 'missing' or 'absent' under the police definitions.

14.4 Wilds Lodge has procedures for managing children who are missing, preventative strategies, risk assessments, debriefing with children and young people when issues occur.

14.5 Attendance

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education/care is a potential indicator of abuse, County Lines or neglect. Staff should follow the procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education or home, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Wilds Lodge safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for children who go missing from education and care, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

Wilds Lodge will inform their Local Authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school systems, e.g. home education
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school which they are registered
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he or she nor his or her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- Have been permanently excluded.
- Wilds Lodge will maintain records of 2 emergency contacts for parent/carer and in the unexplained absence of a student missing from education will follow up with the absence through contact with these.

Please refer to Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 for more information regarding attendance.

- The Local Authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that the authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Wilds Lodge will/must inform the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or have been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the Local Authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

15. Bullying

15.1 There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

15.2 Wilds Lodge acknowledges and recognises that under the Children Act 1989 bullying incidents should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to the relevant Local Authority Children's Services team. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we may need to draw on a range of external services to support the child or young person who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child or young person engaging in bullying, (DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', July 2017).

15.3 Bullying can have a profound impact on emotional and mental health. We have a Counter-Bullying policy setting out the respective rights and responsibilities of the young people and our staff in preventing and dealing with bullying.

15.4 Staff raise awareness of bullying through developing a culture in which respect and consideration for others is fundamental. We encourage young people to report bullying in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously.

15.5 Staff are trained in conflict management techniques to help them boost a young person's self-esteem and create a positive environment both of which we recognise as important factors in preventing young people from being bullied or becoming bullies.

15.6 School staff should apply intervention or disciplinary measures to children and young people to clearly show that their behaviour is wrong. Intervention or disciplinary measures should be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities that the children or young people may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable children and young people. It is important that the school considers the motivations behind the bullying and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.

15.7 Mental Health is an emotional subject to talk about but it is an important part of the therapeutic offer of the school. Staff have received training in Mental Health First Aid and the school holds the Gold School Mental Health Award in recognition of the work it does to support mental health. We have a team of trained psychotherapists that work with the students directly and the emphasis on talking and relationship building across the care and education teams helps to provide a wealth of support. The school also holds frequent wellbeing events to highlight the importance of mental health.

Please also see the school's Counter-Bullying Policy and KCSIE 2023.

16. Protection of Vulnerable Adults

16.1 A vulnerable adult is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

16.2 This could include:

- People with learning disabilities
- People with mental health problems
- Older people
- People with a physical disability or impairment.

16.3 The need for additional support to protect themselves may be increased when it is complicated by additional factors such as:

- Physical frailty or chronic illness
- Sensory impairment
- Challenging behaviour
- Drug or alcohol problems
- Social or emotional problems
- Poverty or homelessness.

16.4 It is every adult's right to live free from abuse in accordance with the principles of respect, dignity, autonomy, privacy and equity. Anyone who is concerned about a vulnerable person should contact social care and placing authority.

16.5 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards is when a Young Person or Adult over the age of 16, lacks mental capacity to consent to care or treatment. It is sometimes necessary to deprive them of their liberty in the BEST INTERESTS, to protect them from harm. If DoLS is considered to be required, then the relevant Local Authority would be contacted and an assessment would be requested.

17. Online Safety

17.1 The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever developing variety of devices including PCs, tablets, laptops, mobile phones, webcams, etc. place an additional risk on our children.

17.2 Internet chat rooms, discussion forums or social networks can all be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arrange to meet them. Access to abusive images is not a 'victimless' act as it has already involved the abuse of children. The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with pupils at this school.

Pupils can engage in or be a target of cyber-bullying using a range of methods including text and instant messaging to reach their target. Mobile phones are also used to capture violent assaults of other children for circulation (happy slapping), or distributing indecent images of children (e.g. sharing nudes and semi nudes). See 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' (UKCIS, December 2020).

17.3

The best protection is to make pupils aware of the dangers through curriculum teaching particularly PSCCHEe and sex and relationship education.

17.4

Filtering and Monitoring. We recognise that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Some children may use mobile and smart technology, whilst at school and outside of school, to sexually harass their peers, share indecent images (consensually and non-consensually) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Many children have unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phones and our online safety policy describes the rules governing their use in school. It also sets out the school's response to incidents which may involve one or more of the four areas of risk – content, contact, conduct and commerce. Online safety is a consideration running through the planning and implementation of all relevant policies and procedures. Staff will always respond if informed that children have been involved in sharing indecent images. The DfE guidance "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people" (Dec 2020) will be

used to guide the school's response on a case by case basis. The key points for staff and volunteers (not including the DSL) being:-

- Report immediately to the DSL
- Do not view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has shown it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it. Leave this for the DSL if needed.
- Do not ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).
- Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

Wilds Lodge School and Newcome Education take responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, DSL, governing body and proprietor do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system and school owned devices. We ensure that we have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Governing bodies and proprietors should consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

Our DSL has the lead responsibility in this area, which is overseen by the governing body. Our Governing body will ensure they maintain an oversight of the Online Safety Policy and the arrangements put in place to ensure 18 appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school network. This will include

Protection is Prevention

- Software is in place to minimise access and to highlight any one accessing inappropriate sites or information
- Pupils will be encouraged to discuss openly their use of technology and anything which makes them feel uncomfortable. (If this results in child protection concerns the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately)
- Pupils should not give out their personal details, such as phone numbers, schools, home address, computer passwords, etc.
- Pupils should adhere to the school E-Safety Policy.

The police will be involved if there is any criminal element to misuse of the internet, phones or any other form of electronic media.

17.4 Wilds Lodge will consider the age range of pupils, the number of pupils, how often its systems are accessed and the costs versus the risks when deciding on the filters and monitoring systems that are needed to prevent access to materials in line with their Prevent Duty.

17.5 As schools increasingly work online it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such the school proprietors should ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

Please refer to the Staff Code of Conduct for acceptable IT use: [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022](#)

18. Risk Assessments

18.1 Wilds Lodge will ensure risk assessments are in place and regularly updated for children ('My Safety Plan'), specific activities and visits. Wilds Lodge will maintain a risk register in respect of known safeguarding risks both site specific and child specific and the control measures in place to control these risks.

18.2 Wilds Lodge and its staff will ensure we are doing everything possible to assess, control, and reduce the risks to acceptable levels. Thus promoting a safe, positive environment and promoting and protecting children from known and unnecessary risks.

18.3 Wilds Lodge will ensure staff are regularly briefed and informed of changes to risk assessments to effectively manage the risks.

19. Recording and Reporting

Learning from Serious Case Reviews continues to identify the need for improved record keeping and information sharing, both within and between agencies.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for these decisions should be recorded in writing on My Concern. When in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the DSL.

Wilds Lodge recognise that accurate and up-to-date record keeping is essential for a number of reasons:

- It helps the school identify causes for concern at an early stage. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues are taken as a whole that a safeguarding or child protection concern becomes clear
- It helps the school to monitor and manage its safeguarding practices
- It helps to evidence robust and effective safeguarding practice in inspections and audits
- Accurate and specific records are important where there are child protection and safeguarding concerns, e.g. a chronology of information gathered and action taken

Wilds Lodge has clear procedures for reporting and recording child protection concerns and takes guidance from:

- i. Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023)
- ii. Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and Managers (DfE 200/15 and July 2018)

These give clear guidance on:

- Recording reports
- Storing child protection (CP) files
- Who has access to CP files and information sharing
- Transferring CP Files
- Retention of CP files
- Auditing of CP files.

Well-kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- state who was present, time, date and place
- use the child's words wherever possible
- be factual/state exactly what was said
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation

Records about child protection or pertaining to welfare concerns or issues, including paperwork, will be retained securely and separately to the curriculum records of the child. A clear 'sign post' will indicate in a young person's main file that a confidential report is held in a separate Child Protection file. If the child moves to another school or education setting, these records will be suitably redacted in regard to the identification of other children or adults and sent in a timely and secure manner to the Designated Safeguarding Person of the receiving school.

19.1 My Concern

Wilds Lodge School use My Concern, an online secure solution for recording and managing all safeguarding concerns. All staff have an active account on My Concern and report when there is a concern or about any aspect of a child's general welfare (examples may include changes in a child's behaviour, a comment overheard in a conversation, initial concerns around attendance or changes in eating habits). The doubts may or may not be related to a Child Protection or Safeguarding issue. All concern reports are sent to the Safeguarding Team and then triaged by the DSL or Deputy DSL. The DSL/Deputy DSL will review the report to decide what action is to be taken, i.e. to be managed internally or to take other actions including making a referral to the First Response Team or the relevant Children's Services Team. If it is decided that the issue can be managed internally the DSL/Deputy DSL will pass the form to the appropriate team leader and a plan of action will be agreed.

19.2 Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL (as directed by the DSL) will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference and Reviews, and provide a written report. A suggested template for this report is available from Safeguarding Children's Partnerships.

Parents should be informed of what is in the report as there should be no surprises about the information shared at the Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher/Team Leader or Head of Education to attend the subsequent core group meetings and they will be given appropriate support around safeguarding issues by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan this will be clearly signposted in his/her main file but confidential records will not be kept in the main file, these will be securely stored separately.

20. Evaluation and Monitoring

20.1 Wilds Lodge will monitor and evaluate policies, practices and procedures in relation to safeguarding with the school on a regular basis to ensure it keeps current with the most modern guidance and legislation.

20.2 Wilds Lodge requires safeguarding as a regular item on the agenda of Senior Leadership Team meetings, therefore being at the forefront of senior managers thinking. In these meetings safeguarding training, the risk assessment and risk register should be reviewed and updated where necessary.

20.3 To ensure the school responds positively to advice regarding safeguarding concerns and adapt its practice and procedures accordingly, half-termly reports are requested to be sent to the Rutland LADO outlining any recent concerns or welfare issues. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then choose the level of intervention and support required to further support the establishment under guidance from the LADO.

20.4

This Policy Framework is reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis by a Policy Review team, comprising of Senior Leaders from our care, education, management and therapy teams.

Appendix 1: Signs of abuse

Physical Signs	Changes in Behaviour
Physical Abuse	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body • Multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh • Cigarette burns • Human bite marks • Broken bones • Scalds, with upward splash marks, multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of parents being approached for an explanation • Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts • Flinching when approached or touched • Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather • Depression • Withdrawn behaviour • Running away from home.
Emotional	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech disorders • Delayed physical development • Substance abuse • Ulcers, severe allergies • Failure to thrive • Self-harm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking • Being unable to play • Fear of making mistakes • Sudden speech disorders • Self-harm • Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour • Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.
Sexual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or itching in the genital area • Bruising or bleeding near genital area • Sexually transmitted disease • Vaginal discharge or infection • Stomach pains • Discomfort when walking or sitting down • Pregnancy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn • Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people • Having nightmares • Running away from home • Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level • Sexual drawings or language • Bedwetting • Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia • Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about • Substance or drug abuse • Suddenly having unexplained sources of money • Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence) • Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults .
Neglect	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children • Constantly dirty or 'smelly' • Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight • Inappropriate clothing for the conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaining of being tired all the time • Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments • Having few friends • Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Appendix 2: Dos and Don'ts of Managing a Disclosure

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay calm and control expressions of panic and shock • State clearly that the abuse was not the child/young person's – no matter what the circumstances • Always accept what the child says, no matter how fanciful it may appear to you — let them know you believe them • Allow the child/young person to talk at their own pace, and use their own language • Listen attentively and only ask open-ended questions • Encourage the child/young person to talk about their concerns, as this can be helpful in dealing with difficult experiences • Tell the child/young person you are pleased they told you • At some point in the disclosure ensure that you inform the child or young person that you cannot offer absolute confidentiality or protection • Take careful notes throughout, if appropriate, or very soon after the child/young person has left • Keep to the facts, and use the words as they were spoken to you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using leading questions • Do not pressure the child/young person into telling you more than they want to. • Avoid going over the information time and time again; you are only gathering information • Do NOT try to determine for yourself if the allegation is valid or invalid • Do NOT use shocked or disbelieving body language while the child is talking. The child may interpret this to mean that you find the CHILD unacceptable versus the ACT perpetrated on the child • Do NOT gossip about the allegations to friends, relatives, or advocates • Do NOT ever try to talk a child out of what he/she is saying. If you are sceptical, do NOT express your doubts to the child. This is a task for investigators to sort through, and you can express your doubts to them • Do NOT stand over the child while he/she is talking about the abuse. This may make the child feel crowded or dominated • Don't deny, explain away, defend the abuser or justify the abuse. This discounts the victim • Don't try to find inconsistencies or question the child's motive to tell • Don't ask why. "Why did you go when he call?" "Why didn't you tell sooner?" "Why didn't you just do what she told you to do?" This blames the victim • Don't tell the child you wish s/he had not told you or that you are frightened or confused about what to do ... even when you are. Do not show revulsion or shock • Don't demand details. Don't pry. This violates the child's trust in you and it is the job of the investigators • Don't suggest things that the child could/should have done. "You should

	<p>have run away." "You could have called out." This blames the victim. It is not the time to work on prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't wait a week or so until it is mentioned again to say or do something. Don't let it drop and don't ignore your feelings.
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Appendix 3: Stop Abuse Together

It is important for everyone to know how to spot the potential signs of child sexual abuse and where to go for support if concerned. The Government's new [Stop Abuse Together](#) campaign is helping parents, those who work with children and children themselves identify instances of abuse and find the support they need.

If you're concerned about a child in your care, you should follow your organisation's safeguarding procedures. You can find more advice in [Keeping children safe in education 2023 - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges - GOV.UK](#)

If you are a professional working with children, you can sign up to the [Thinkuknow professional network](#) to get the latest resources and support on tackling child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation.

The [Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse](#) offers evidence-based practice resources for professionals and can provide training and development courses online and in-person. Their [Signs and Indicators](#) template* can help you identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse with confidence. You can also visit the [NWG Network](#) for training and advice.

You can also read The Children's Society [Guidance for professionals](#) on how to respond when children share experience of sexual harassment and abuse.

You can find more information about teaching pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse in the [relationships, sex and health education statutory guidance](#).

*Please note with caution that the CoEoCSA site says that "the [Signs and Indicators](#) template is designed to inform practice, rather than determine decision-making. The [Signs and Indicators](#) template is not a risk assessment tool, substitute for further observation or for directly communicating with children and their families".