

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Bethany
since 1866

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Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

BETHANY SCHOOL
CURTISDEN GREEN
GOUDHURST
KENT

Pupils' views on why Bethany has a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Bethany has a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy to deter, identify and stop abuse or any other harmful treatment of children in the care of Bethany School.

Copy Location	Master Copy: Staff Team Policy Channel
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Date of Revision (if applicable)	March 2026
Date for Review	September 2026

Revision History

Version	Date Issued	Reason for Issue
1.0	29 th October 2009	Annual Review
2.0	29 th October 2010	Annual Review
3.0	1 st November 2011	Annual Review
4.0	6 th November 2012	Annual Review
5.0	4 th October 2013	Annual Review
6.0	6 th May 2014	New Statutory Guidance from DFE
6.1	28 th August 2014	Change in DSL
6.2	25 th September 2014	Change in external agency contacts

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Author	Alan Sturrock	Issue date	March 2026
Authorised by	Andrew Cunningham - Governor	Review date	September 2026

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Version	Date Issued	Reason for Issue
6.3	23 rd February 2015	Change in contact for the LADO
6.4	27 th April 2015	KCSIE March 2015
6.5	15 th July 2015	Following compliance check
7.0	4 th September 2015	Annual review
7.1	12 th January 2016	ISI Guidance
8.0	1 st September 2016	KCSIE September 2016
8.1	5 th October 2016	Change in LA contact details and wording in new guidance on 'sexting'.
8.2	26 th May 2017	Definition of CSE updated and name changes
8.3	23 rd July 2017	ISI Guidance
8.4	6 th September 2017	Changing of a name
8.5	9 th November 2017	Changes in local protocols
9.0	28 th August 2018	KCSIE September 2018
9.1	21 st January 2019	ISI Inspection
10	1 st August 2019	KCSIE September 2019
10.1	30 th October 2019	DSL Kent training – changes to local protocols.
11.0	1 st September 2020	KCSIE September 2020
12.0	1 st September 2021	KCSIE September 2021
12.1	21 st October 2021	Governors review
12.2	17 th March 2022	Contact number change for The Education People Education Safeguarding Service.
13.0	18 th July 2022	KCSIE 2022
13.1	10 th January 2023	Change in referral process to LADO
13.2	14 th April 2023	Change in details for Education Safeguarding Advisors
14.0	18 th July 2023	KCSIE 2023
14.1	2 nd January 2024	Working Together to Safeguard Children updated.
15.0	23 rd August 2024	Update to KCSIE and local services changes
16.0	12 th August 2025	Annual review
16.1	19 th March 2026	Update to Working Together to Safeguard Children

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Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

This policy is available to all parents, prospective parents, adults working at or on behalf of Bethany School (including supply / agency staff), volunteers, contractors and the wider public on the School website in the tab “About Bethany” within the “Policies and provision of information” section: <https://www.bethanyschool.org.uk/policies/>

The Governors, Headmaster and staff (this includes all adults working in proximity to children at Bethany School, including supply / agency staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors to the school and part-time staff and those not working directly with children) of Bethany School take seriously our responsibility under Sections 175 & 157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children; and to work together with other agencies (Multi-agency partners) to ensure robust arrangements are in place within the School to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm or may be at risk of suffering from harm, ensuring that action is taken in a timely manner when required. There is a requirement that all adults including volunteers, part-time staff, supply / agency staff, contractors and visitors will share this commitment. It is important to note that the potential for abuse to occur is greater in one to one situations such as music tuition or other tutorials and in a boarding environment, including child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse may occur in many ways including but not exclusively; bully; online bullying; sexual violence; sexual harassment; physical abuse upskirting; making, sending and receiving nudes; or in initiations. Staff must be aware that upskirting is a criminal act, (2019) and should be vigilant for pupils becoming involved in other serious crimes or serious violence such as gang related crime, (so-called County Lines crimes or other serious violent crime) or other forms of exploitation including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), and be aware that banter, “sexting” nudes, and other behaviours such as ‘birthday beats’ which can become in trend (“in trend” means that a behaviour may become popularised – through social media or YouTube or Tik Tok for example), taking part in harmful online challenges or being affected by online hoaxes. Staff should be observant about such trends being taken up by the pupils) can develop into safeguarding and child protection issues. All abusive comments and interactions will never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or as “part of growing up”. As such the DSL must be informed of any concerns. Adults working at Bethany School must be familiar with the expectations of their conduct as presented in the Employment Manual found in Section L of the Staff Handbook. On page 10 of KCSIE (2025) staff should pay particular attention to the section “What School and College Staff should look out for”. This includes factors that increase the vulnerability of pupils that may require support through Early Help, indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation as well as child-on-child abuse including sexual abuse of children by children (more information can be found in KCSIE part 5), indicators of pupils becoming involved in serious violence, Female Genital Mutilation and is further supported by the additional information contained in Annex A which all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, should be familiar with. It also identifies the important links between mental health and safeguarding.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts of 1989 & 2004 and related guidance. This includes DFE statutory guidance ‘Keeping

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Children Safe in Education' (September 2025). It also includes 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (March 2026), 'What To Do If You Are Worried That A Child Is Being Abused, Advice for Practitioners' (2015), the 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' (2000), Children Missing Education statutory guidance (September 2016), 'Teachers' Standards' (2012), 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006' (July 2018), 'The Prevent Duty: England and Wales' (July 2015), 'The use of social media for on-line radicalisation' (July 2015) and Teaching Online Safety in Schools. 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance', 'Young people's emotional health and wellbeing', 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges' (September 2021), 'Preventing Youth Crime and Gang Involvement', 'Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines', 'National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools' (2022) and the Filtering and Monitoring Standards.

Adults working with children at Bethany School should be aware of develop threads that bring risks of harm to children in their care, such as the growing presence of misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories that are pushed via media that young people engage with. Staff should also be vigilant for unsafe trends and online challenges. The developing use of AI also presents a growing and unknow potential for good and bad in keeping children safe from harm and should always be a consideration for adults working with children.

Updates to Working Together to Safeguard Children in March 2026 identify four focus areas for partners.

Additional guidance on abusive behaviour in intimate relationships

Coercive control

More hidden harms such as child sexual abuse (CSA)

Teenage relationship abuse.

Safeguarding and 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, all professionals 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.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection practice and procedures is the Deputy Head Pastoral, Mr Alan Sturrock, a member of the SMT. The Deputy DSL is Miss Toni Carter (HR Manager), a member of SMT. Bethany School operates a Safeguarding Committee to support the DSL and Deputy DSL in their roles.

The Deputy DSL is trained to the same level as the DSL and is able to deputise in all aspects of the role but whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to the Deputy DSL, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL. This responsibility cannot be delegated.

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

The Safeguarding Committee meet termly to review and discuss current safeguarding and child protection issues both within the school and in general. This Committee also inputs into the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as protocols and procedures within the school. All members of the Committee receive bi-annual safeguard training to Level 3.

The Safeguarding Committee comprises:

The DSL Alan Sturrock who is the Deputy Head Pastoral, The Deputy DSL Miss Toni Carter (HR Manager), The Headmaster – Mr Francie Healy, The Deputy Head Academic – Mrs Emily Hill, the Bursar – Mrs Clare Morey, the School Nurse – Sister Rhiannon.

2. How the School promotes safeguarding

Staff will address safeguarding and child protection issues with pupils. This will be via the curriculum, in particular PSHCE (including Relationship and Sex Education which takes account of the mandatory content introduced for 2025, including the July as well as guidance on gender questioning children) and laid out in the RSE Policy, or school and year group assemblies, Chapel and tutor time, as well as various policies and appropriate guidance. Pupils will be made aware of risks within British society and in the wider world context. They will be given opportunities to discuss and debate issues and to have experiences that develop their self-efficacy while encouraging their resilience and ability to make good choices, particularly with regard to radicalisation, staying safe online (particularly in view of the increase in use of technology in teaching and learning), sexual and criminal exploitation and child-on-child abuse (particularly in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment). These will support the development of Bethany School's values in line with wider British Values and tolerance within the diverse community of Bethany School and Britain as a whole.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy provides the overarching principles for all aspects of safeguarding children and is supported, but not over-ridden, by other policies which are operated to safeguard children.

Bethany School is a day and boarding school. Children boarding have additional safeguarding factors to be considered. Whilst given the age of pupils it is possible that pupils may form romantic relationships, boundaries will be in place to ensure that they do not become sexual and that they respect the fact they are living in shared accommodation. Staff should be mindful to ensure relationships are appropriate and ensure there is no imbalance in power within the relationship. The Child on Child Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy applies to all pupils with boarding staff needing to be sensitive to identifying any associated risks with regards to boarding accommodation and the associated risks of boarders sharing overnight accommodation. Where the gender balance within boarding exists this should be considered carefully and mitigations should be put in place as required. Boarding staff must be active in the monitoring of pupils use of technology in boarding and ensuring that their use of technology does not breach the Acceptable Use Policy.

These could include:

The Anti-Bullying Policy

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Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Child-on-child Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy

Online Safety Policy / Acceptable Use Policy (including filtering and monitoring)

The Self-harm and Self-injury Policy

Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing at Bethany School

PSHCE Policy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

The Staff Handbook

The Staff Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook)

Staff Code of Conduct

Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedures

Health & Safety Policy

Risk Assessments

Particular note must be made of the Acceptable Use Policy which supports the Online Safety Policy with and the potential harm that exists through the inappropriate use of technology, the internet, the potential dangers of social media and protecting your online reputation including the dangers of ‘youth produced sexual imagery’ (formally known as sexting). The School operates wi-fi across the campus with appropriate monitoring and filtering of the school servers and monitoring of the use by pupils and staff. It is recognised that with 4G / 5G available staff need to remain watchful for the misuse of technology not provided by the school. Children should be informed of and be able to understand the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet to bully, grooming, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults. Pupils and in particular boarders have access to contacts for support outside of school, including the Children’s Commissioner and the NSPCC. All members of the Bethany community should be aware that abuse can happen wholly on-line or may be used to facilitate off-line abuse. The operation of filtering and monitoring is the responsibility of the DSL working in conjunction with the onsite and offsite staff and takes account of the Filtering and Monitoring Standards. The Governor with oversight of Safeguarding and Child Protection ensures the most appropriate systems are in place and that they are being operated successfully by the School.

Bethany School seeks to promote safeguarding awareness and issues with the pupils through the curriculum, PSHCE, extra-curricular activities and in all aspects of school life. This includes social media and internet safety and the potential for influence in both the real and cyber worlds using resources provided by organisations such as CEOP’s ThinkuKnow resources <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> .

Year 12 are given Safeguarding and Child Protection training by the DSL at the start of the academic year and the Prefects are given a refresher course as part of their induction.

3. Responding to Concerns

Concerns for a child or young person may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways:

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- Observation of clear signs of changes in a child's behaviour (sudden signs of withdrawal or hyperactivity, patterns of nervousness or sudden anger, obsession with detail/control, excessively sexualised language)
- Observation of clear signs of physical neglect (unkempt appearance including hair and face and fingernails as well as clothing)
- Observation of clear signs of physical injury (to unusual places: cheeks, inner thigh, inner arm, wrists)
- A disclosure
- Information from other sources (including social media and cyberspace)

Any member of staff who has a welfare concern for a child or young person, however insignificant it might appear, must act on this immediately seeking support from the most appropriate staff within school; Head of Year, Housemaster, Wellness Centre, SMT unless it is a safeguarding or child protection concern in which case this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any intervention necessary is assessed as early as possible. Any adult can make a referral to the appropriate service but it is normal practice to use the structure of trained staff within Bethany School. If this has been carried out and you are concerned about any inaction, then you should view the **Whistleblowing Policy found in the Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook)**. Bethany School promotes a culture of safety and raising concerns. In order to promote this culture staff should familiarise themselves with the **Whistleblowing Policy found in the Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook)**. Whistleblowing relates to the reporting and handling of concerns, including about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, provision for mediation and dispute resolution. The NSPCC have a dedicated point of contact in relation to whistleblowing: contact 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk

If a child or young person makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what was said
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what you will need to do next
- The child's concern for confidentiality should be noted but the child should be reassured that their safety is paramount. **Confidentiality can never be promised.**
- Record the conversation as soon as possible and give a copy to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Seek support for oneself: receiving a disclosure can be deeply upsetting

Further general guidance is available in the Bethany School Staff Handbook.

Allegations against another Pupil (Child-on-child Abuse).

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All adults working with children at Bethany School should be aware that children can abuse other children, in school, out of school or online. It should be recognised that even if no reports are logged it does not mean that inappropriate and harmful behaviours are not happening. Staff must enforce the expected behaviours as laid out in the Behaviour Policy and challenge inappropriate behaviour to prevent this developing into problematic, abusive and / or violent behaviour in the future.

KCSIE:

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as just banter, just having a laugh, part of growing up or boys being boys can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child-on-child Abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

Bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying)

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers

Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hairpulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and or encourages physical abuse)

Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and or encourages sexual violence

Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and / or videos

Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

Initiation or hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

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If a member of staff suspects, or is informed of, or there is a disclosure of, any form of abuse by one or more pupils against another; they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headmaster who confer before deciding about referral to Children's Social Services – a referral must occur if the child has requested it, or there is serious concern that abuse has occurred. To help the decision of referral the Designated Safeguarding Lead may consult with Children's Social Services or Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team. Both the alleged victim(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) should be treated as children at risk and suitable measures put in place to safeguard both. The local police may also be consulted in order to ascertain the most appropriate course of action, although Front Door Services advise that Children's Social Services be contacted at least in conjunction with contact with the police to ensure that both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) are treated as requiring support. ***Staff should be mindful of the potential for pupil relationships to harbour elements of child-on-child abuse and that this risk is greater in a residential boarding environment in which pupils may be more vulnerable. See Annex*** Staff and pupils must be made aware of what constitutes child-on-child abuse and specifically reference the DfE 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'. Staff should be confident in how to report sexual violence and harassment, using the DSL for support and guidance. Staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is gendered and is often, but not always, perpetrated by boys against girls. Boys and girls will have specific education relating to how to ensure they do not become either a perpetrator or victim of child-on-child abuse in keeping with the Bethany School Pupils Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy. Staff should be aware that 'upskirting' is a criminal offence: The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. Staff should also be aware of latest trends of a similar nature such as down blousing.

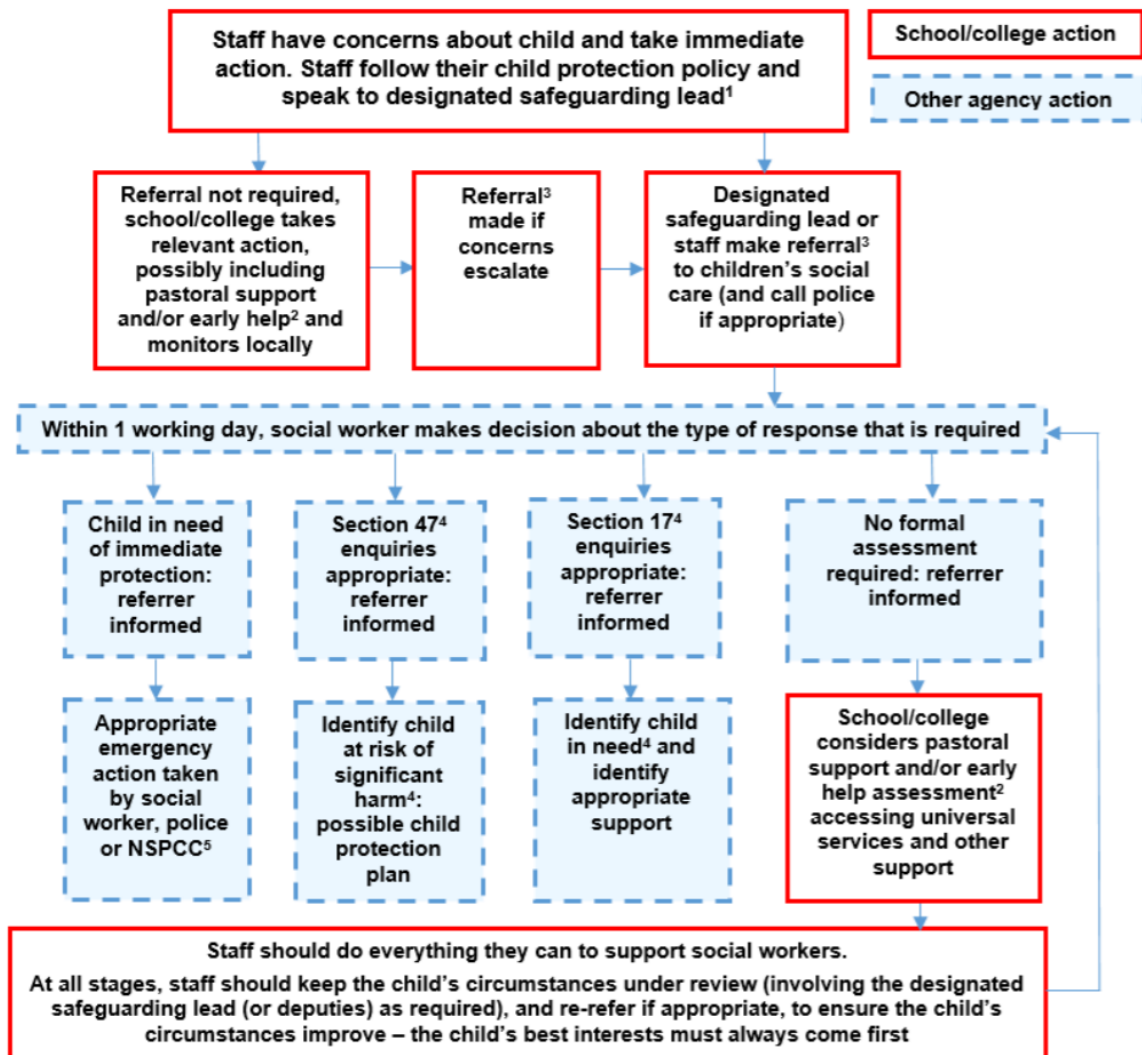
We note that **bullying** is not always defined as a form of abuse but there is clear evidence that it is abusive and will include at least one, if not two, three or all four, of the defined categories of abuse. For this reason it has been included in this policy. All staff and Governors must, therefore understand that bullying may be a Safeguarding & Child Protection issue. Further information about how we deal with related matters may be found in our **Anti-Bullying Policy**, which is provided on the School Website and in hard copy at School. Bullying will be considered a child protection issue at the point there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Further information may be found in the DfE publication 'Preventing and tackling bullying'.

Sexting / Nudes (the sharing of youth produced sexual imagery) is a safeguarding matter and the School educates pupils with regard to the seriousness of sharing such images and when required utilises the latest UKCCIS guidance 'Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' as well as seeking advice from local partners.

4. Procedures for staff contacting outside agencies

Distinction between ‘children in need’ and ‘children at risk of harm’ should be clear prior to any referral. Using the Digital Front Door electronic referral service pupils in need can be referred to Children’s Social Services. Early Help referrals are made separately via the link found on the KELSI website. Referrals relating to adults working with Children will be referred by the Headmaster to the LADO on the required referral form. Consultation prior to a referral may occur. <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/LADO-Education-Safeguarding-Advisory-Service>

Actions where there are concerns about a child



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1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Headmaster or relevant member of staff should speak to the child and should listen, reassure (do not ask leading questions) and indicate that other people's advice or involvement will be needed if they consider that the child is at risk of significant harm. The child's concern for confidentiality should be noted but the child should be reassured that their safety is paramount. **Confidentiality must not be promised.**
2. Written notes should be recorded as soon as possible using the Green Form (Initial Safeguarding Incident / Concern Form) by the interviewer to ensure accuracy in recalling events later (should this be necessary). These should be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are not the interviewer. A Safeguarding File is opened / continued. A record must be logged on the Wellbeing Manager that a safeguarding issues has been raised.
3. Referrals to Children's Social Services are made using the Kent inter-agency referral form submitted via the 'Digital Front Door'.
<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/integratedchildrensservices>
4. In urgent situations, or those of grave concern a telephone referral may be made prior to completing and submitting the form electronically. A consultation call may be made to Children's Social Services or advice sought from the Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team.
5. The person making the referral and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate person liaises with Children's Social Services regarding further arrangements, including further interviews and contact with parents.
6. The Headmaster / Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate person ensures that people within the School community, who need to be aware, are informed of developments so that the child is supported appropriately.
7. The Headmaster / Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the Governor responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection.
8. In the event of media interest only the Chairman of Governors, Headmaster or a deputy appointed by them, should speak to the press. If any other members of staff are approached by the media they should refer the matter to the Headmaster or their appointed deputy.
9. The Headmaster, Designated Safeguarding Lead or an appropriate member of staff ensures that long-term follow-up and support is available for the child concerned.
10. The Headmaster or Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that support is provided for any member of staff or other child/children who may have been caused distress through involvement in any incident.
11. All Early Help referrals will be submitted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead although supporting information may be provided by other staff. It is important that parent and child consent is given in writing prior to the submission of a referral.
<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/integratedchildrensservices>
12. If **sexual abuse** of a child is suspected (or disclosed) the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headmaster or appropriate member of staff should contact, as a matter of urgency, Children's Social Services or the LADOS office. The Team Manager will advise as to whether it will be appropriate for any further action to be taken by Children's Social Services locally or in the area where the child lives. In the case of serious harm or when a crime has been committed it should be confirmed that the

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police have also be informed from the outset. If this is not the case then the police should be informed including the details of who is dealing with the incident from the referral to Children's Social Services.

13. These details should be confirmed in writing as soon as possible and placed in the Child Protection File with the Green Form.
14. **If a form of abuse, other than sexual**, is suspected (or disclosed) - emotional or physical abuse or neglect – the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Headmaster should check whether the child is on the School Safeguarding & Child Protection Register or is identified as a “child in need”; it is noted that not all pupils reside in Kent and may be subject to different structures in their home county or borough. If this is not so, the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Headmaster should inform the Children's Social Services as soon as possible and confirm in writing using the electronic referral form. If there is a file open, the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Headmaster should inform the Children's Social Services Department or Social Worker involved immediately.
15. In all cases where arrangements have been made for the child to be medically examined, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headmaster or relevant member of staff will follow advice from Children's Social Services or the police.
16. The Headmaster, Designated Safeguarding Lead or an appropriate person will be available to attend any subsequent case conference.
17. If the case is brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headmaster any other member of the Safeguarding Committee outside normal office hours, contact should be made with the **Social Services Emergency Duty Team / Social Worker (Integrated Front Door) on 03000 411111 (out of hours 03000 419191)**.
18. Should there be any subsequent injury to a child on the Child Protection Register the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headmaster or relevant member of staff must inform immediately Children's Social Services.
19. In all cases the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headmaster or relevant member of staff must complete the necessary inter-agency referral forms within 24 hours and send them to the relevant outside agency, usually Children's Social Services.
20. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will maintain the file which will include the original comprehensive summary of the concern recorded on the Green Form, details of how the concern was followed up, a record of actions taken, decisions reached and when appropriate outcomes.
21. Where the police are involved with children (NPCC – When to call the police), the DSL should be aware of the requirement for a child to have an Appropriate Adult – further guidance can be found in PACE Code C 2019 guidance.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019>
Interviews should not be at school unless in exceptional circumstances, and the school should seek to be allowed to inform the parents as soon as possible. The Appropriate Adult if not a parent has a role not just as an observer but to protect the child

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5. Allegations against Members of Staff

Staff should be aware that they have a duty to report all concerns about other adults working with children, even if these are low level concerns. If the concern identifies that the HARM THRESHOLD has been met, identified in KCSIE 2022 Part 4 as

“anyone working in the school including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed the child and / or;

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and / or;

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and / or

Behaved or may behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children.”

Then they should be reported as follows:

1. This part of the policy relates to allegations made against an adult working for the School (including volunteers) suggesting they pose a risk of harm to children or may be unsuitable to work with children. That is to say they have 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; or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children. The alleged abuse may not have taken place in the place of current employment but it remains the duty of Bethany School to report to the LADO and other services all allegations it is made aware of. Allegations made against a member of staff no longer employed by the school must be reported to the police. Where an allegation relates to a member of agency staff or contractor, the agency will be involved fully with the process. It is important to note that allegations against staff may relate to behaviours both online and offline and in school offsite.
2. The procedures for dealing with allegations require a judgement of whether the criteria for reporting to external agencies are required or whether the matter is a disciplinary matter that would require the disciplinary procedures to be applied. This can be aided by viewing the harm test on the DBS website (GOV.UK).
3. The Headmaster will inform the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) immediately of any allegations or disclosures regarding members of staff. Consultation with the police and social services will occur if appropriate often by arranged conference call. Discussions should be recorded in writing and any communication with the individual and the parents of the child/ children should be agreed with the external agencies. **The school has a maximum of 24 hours to inform the LADO but it should look to respond with urgency and in as short a time frame as possible. LADO contact 03000 410888 (Referrals to the LADO**

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will be done through the online form - <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/LADO-Education-Safeguarding-Advisory-Service>)

4. Any allegation against / involving a member of staff must be referred directly to the Headmaster who after consultation with the LADO will then inform the Chairman of Governors, unless the allegation pertains to the Headmaster in which circumstance the referral must be made directly to the Chairman of Governors chairofgovernors@bethanyschool.org.uk who will immediately contact the LADO.
5. The initial contact with the LADO will establish the context of the allegation and a course of action.
6. Any pupils involved in the allegation must not be interviewed without this being agreed in the action plan by the LADO.
7. The Headmaster and the LADO, in conjunction with the other agencies, where appropriate, will discuss how to and who will inform the parents of the pupil / pupils concerned. This should be as soon as practicable.
8. The Headmaster or appointed Case Manager must inform the member of staff who is the subject of any allegation as soon as possible after contacting the LADO – if other agencies are to be involved they need to be consulted about what information may be disclosed to the member of staff. In some circumstances the member of staff may not be informed at the request of the external investigation lead.
9. Unless the LADO office authorises such action, the Headmaster or Case Manager should **not** interview the member of staff implicated in the allegation.
10. If the member of staff is a member of a professional association / union they should be advised to contact that organisation at the outset when they are informed an allegation has been made against them.
11. The LADO will lead any investigation, usually in conjunction with the Police and / or Social Services unless he/she is happy for the School to conduct the interviews itself. The Headmaster will need to consider if the circumstances warrant the suspension of the member of staff but suspension should not be a default position and if a reasonable risk assessment can be brought into place this should be considered where this is not contra to the disciplinary policy.
12. In the event of an allegation against a member of staff working with boarders and who is suspended pending an investigation that person will be moved into alternative accommodation away from children. For all staff the School in conjunction with the LADO will need to consider if the member of staff should be suspended and an appropriate risk assessment made.
13. More detailed information and guidance regarding the implementing of procedures will be found in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ Part 4. This can be seen on the Safeguarding noticeboard in the staffroom or a copy held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
14. When determining the outcome of allegation investigations, the following definitions should be used:
 - a. Substantiated – there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

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- b. Malicious – there has been a deliberate act to deceive and there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
 - c. False – there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
 - d. Unsubstantiated – there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation
 - e. Unfounded – to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.
15. With the exception of malicious allegations, the outcomes of investigations into allegations are to be kept in summary form on the confidential personnel file of the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made for a period of ten years.
16. The School recognises its duty of care to employees and will offer appropriate support to an individual against whom an allegation has been made. The School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity relating to the identification of a teacher who is accused. This will not be maintained after the point at which the accused is charged with an offence or the DfE / TRA publish information about and investigation or decision in a disciplinary case. Detailed information and guidance on this matter will be found in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (September 2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026). This can be accessed via the Government website or a ‘hard copy’ held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
17. The Headmaster will advise the accused to seek support through a trade union rep. or a by having an appropriate colleague present. Further details on support for staff can be seen in the Employment Manual (Section L in the Staff Handbook). Guidance on suspensions, references and the actions following the conclusion of an investigation can be found in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ Part 4 (September 2025).
18. The School will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) within one month of leaving the School any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he / she is considered unsuitable to work with children. This includes: dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed-term contract, no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency, terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee, no longer using staff employed by contractors, no longer using volunteers, resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training or volunteering.
The address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA
(tel: 0300 123 1111 email dbsdispatch@dbs.gsi.gov.uk)
19. The School has a duty to make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency where a teacher has been dismissed or would have been dismissed if he/she had not resigned and a prohibition order may be appropriate to generate. The referral will be sent to ‘Teacher Qualification, Regulation and Exam Delivery Support Division, Teaching Regulation Agency, 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH.’ As a Charity the school will consider if any matters should be reported to the Charity Commission.

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20. Following a substantiated allegation the School will review the circumstances in co-ordination with the LADO and other involved agencies to identify and amend procedures in the school to reduce the risk of a recurrence.

Low Level Concerns

Concerns that **do not** meet the HARM THRESHOLD can be consider to be ‘low level concerns’ and these may become known in a number of ways; suspicion, complaint, disclosure or through contacts outside of the school. These concerns may relate to the Staff Code of Conduct and the operation of the Employment Manual. All disciplinary matters will be managed through the systems outlines in these documents. Any concerns with any form of safeguarding or child protection element should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

KCSIE 2025 identifies:

The term low-level concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out in paragraph 338. A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

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

Examples of such behaviour could include but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their own mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent to the thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

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It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the allegation / harm threshold are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Such concerns should be reported in the same way as concerns that **do** meet the harms threshold as laid out above. A Green Form will be completed for record keeping by the Headmaster and a record of such concerns will be maintained by the Headmaster. This will document details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose and the action taken. The name of the person bringing the concern will also be logged but will be kept confidential as far as is as reasonably possible. The member of staff will be spoken with by the most appropriate member of staff and the actions taken recorded on the Green Form. The file will remain open until the end of the member of staff's employment by the school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor to identify any patterns of behaviour that become of concern.

If the concern is related to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Headmaster should be informed and if it relates to the Headmaster the Chair of Governors should be informed.

Low Level Concerns will not be shared in references unless they relate to issues normally shared in such correspondence, such as misconduct or poor performance.

Where the concern is raised by a third party the Designated Safeguarding Lead will investigate to collect as much evidence as possible.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

(KCSIE September 2025)

With this understanding, the School will act to understand the full context of the children within the school to promote and protect their safeguarding. It is understood that a **contextual safeguarding** approach is required and that the context for a child operates beyond the school and family alone. The DSL will require as broad an understanding of the real and online worlds in which an identified child is operating.

The School is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with Kent's Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>. The main role of the School in this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need; including those who may have suffered, those who may be suffering and those who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The School may also have a role to play in the provision of services to 'children in need' and their families using the Early Help services and the support of children known to have a social worker. **The School is aware**

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and emphasises that anybody may refer to Children's Services or the LADO as laid out in the sections on implementation of the policy but it is normal practice for concerns to be made using the internal systems as laid out this policy. Parents and guardians should be aware that the school has a duty to report concerns relating to pupils at risk of significant harm or suffering significant harm, to Children's Social Services and this may occur without consultation, immediately following a disclosure or the School becoming aware of a risk. Referral to Early Help in which the School is seeking extra support for a pupil in need will be carried out with consultation with parents and guardians. All staff should be aware that Looked After Children (LAC) or previously Looked After Children are more vulnerable and should therefore be proactive in monitoring these pupils. The school will work closely with outside agencies in supporting these children. The DSL will act as the point of contact with the Authority placing the child, the Virtual Head and Social Services put in place around the child.

All staff must be fully aware of the expectations of their behaviour and all policies that are in place within the school. Particular note should be taken of key policies that support the safeguarding of pupils: Behaviour Policy, Rewards and Sanctions, Anti-bullying Policy, the Use of Reasonable Force and the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and should be aware that addressing inappropriate behaviour is expected as part of their role in safeguarding children as this can have a significant impact on preventing problematic behaviours in the future. All online safety concerns MUST be reported to the DSL by email. Staff should be aware of the clear link between cyberbullying and emotional abuse and should take this into account when considering the Anti-Bullying Policy in response to an allegation of online bullying and be aware of the role of the filtering and monitoring using technology and the role they play in support of this in real world monitoring. Staff must be aware that sexual abuse, including child-on-child sexual abuse can occur online and that online activity may facilitate offline abuse. All staff must challenge unacceptable behaviour online with the same attention as they do in the real world. All staff should be aware of the issues surrounding online challenges and online hoaxes which can be harmful to pupils - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes> . They should also be aware of and challenge misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories as well and being cognisant of the role of AI in creating risks online to children in many forms.

The Governors have a duty to ensure that safeguarding and child protection policy is fully implemented in practice, that it is successful in protecting pupils from significant harm and that if they become aware of short-comings they work with the DSL to improve in an appropriately swift manner. The Governors recognise and accept that it is their statutory responsibility to ensure that all aspects of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy are fully compliant. The nominated Governor for Child Protection is Mr Andrew Cunningham who will in the Autumn Term undertake an initial annual formal review of the effectiveness of the School's Child Protection/Safeguarding policies and procedures, instituted by and on behalf of the Governors. This review must be approved by the full board following full discussion. Furthermore, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will report to the full board at the November meeting of the Governing Body and give a summary of that academic year's child protection issues and training in order that governors are fully satisfied that all elements

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Authorised by	Andrew Cunningham - Governor	Review date	September 2026

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The current master version Is held in the Staff Team under School Policies.**

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

of Bethany School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy are both fully compliant and effectively discharged in accordance with locally agreed interagency procedure and in line with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026) in relation to the 'three safeguarding partners' in Kent (Multi-agency working <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>). Bethany School has "clear powers to share, hold and use information" in the pursuit of safeguarding children in its care. (KCSIE 2025). The Governors have a clear understanding of the important role they play in ensuring that online safety is successfully addressed by the School including the successful and appropriate use of filtering and monitoring.

The School requires that any deficiencies or weaknesses in Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements are to be remedied without delay.

The School is committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to.
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Ensuring pupils are aware of systems to report abuse both within and outside of school.
- Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Working with parents to, build an understanding of the School's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication as laid out in this policy.
- Ensuring all staff are aware that a child may not be ready, or know how to tell them about abuse they may be suffering and they should remain curious about concerns they have about a child and report these to the DSL.
- Ensuring staff are aware that addressing inappropriate behaviour can be important in preventing problematic, abusive and / or violent behaviour in the future.
- Staff should be aware of how to recognise domestic abuse and the impact this can have on a child who is witness to controlling / coercive behaviours in the home as well as physical abuse. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single or a pattern of incidents. Children may see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse or suffer domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships (**teenage relationship abuse**). (See KCSIE 2025)
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection; keeping separate confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals. This would

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include children known to have a social worker. There is a distinction between children in need of extra support in order to develop towards successful adulthood and who may require interventions from a range of internal and external opportunities including learning support, Early Help interventions or family support from agencies outside of school; and those who have or continue to be at risk of significant harm or suffering from significant harm and requiring support from Children's Social Services.

- Have oversight and awareness of decisions about the monitoring and filtering in place for the provision of ICT at school. Ensure relevant staff have awareness and understanding of the monitoring and filtering in place.
- Ensure that the pupils who may be LGBTQ+ have a trusted adult who they can be open with in school.
- Developing effective supportive liaison with other agencies including contacting them, at the latest, within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
- Take account of the Human Rights Act 1998 with regard to how Bethany School operates.
- Ensuring that safer recruitment practices are followed and that they are in accordance with the School's recruitment policy. Currently the staff trained in safer recruitment are; Mr Francie Healy (Headmaster), Mr Alan Sturrock (Pastoral Deputy), Mrs Emily Hill (Assistant Head Academic), and Miss Toni Carter (HR Manager) and at least one person in the interview process must have completed safer recruitment training as required by the School Staffing Regulations, 2009.

Assurance is obtained that appropriate Child Protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the School's pupils on another site and such staff are aware that the procedures and protocols laid out in this policy will be followed for all staff working at the School regardless of if they are directly or indirectly employed by the school.

All adults in school have a role to play and all may make a referral to Children Services or the LADO in order to:

- Protect children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

They must actively promote pupils' wellbeing and work with other staff and parents to ensure pupils are kept safe. Staff must follow the requirements of KCSIE, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and all other policies as laid out in the Staff Handbook / Employment Manual. If staff feel they may have an allegation made against them they should self-refer themselves to an appropriate member of management, with safeguarding concerns self-referred to the Headmaster or one of the Deputy Heads.

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In situations where there are safeguarding or child protection concerns, the role of the School is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer or to acquire more information. Should employees at Bethany School make a referral then they must inform the DSL as soon as possible so that the School's Child Protection records may be kept up to date, unless they have good cause not to do so and must inform the Headmaster if not the DSL. (Staff are required to report concerns that meet the "harm threshold" relating to concerns about adults working with children directly to the Headmaster and not to the DSL – this would constitute good cause not to inform the DSL, or if the allegation related to the DSL or a more senior member of the school than the DSL. Concerns being reported about the Headmaster should be referred to the Chair of the Governors).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

See also Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (KCSIE 2025)

- Maintaining the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and informing the authors of related policies of changes required due to updates in the policy. The policy will have an annual review and will be updated as required by changes in legislation and as required by regulation changes.
- Co-ordinating the child protection action within the school.
- Supporting Children in Need and being alert to specific needs of Children in Need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Referring to and liaising with other agencies and professionals (including but not exclusively Children's Social Services, LADO, DBS, Police, Channel, DBS.)
- Understand the assessment process for Early Help and Intervention with other external agencies within the local authority framework.
- Have a working knowledge of how Kent County Council conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Informing the Headmaster and Governor for Child Protection each time external new advice has been sought from the LADO or another external source of advice
- Ensuring that procedures are followed; including the reporting and referral processes.
- Identifying children at risk of radicalisation, ensuring training is in place to ensure that the knowledge in school is appropriate and to work with the local authority to ensure the school is well informed of local issues and staff are well trained in the Prevent Duty and Channel.
- Have overall responsibility for online safeguarding and safety within the school setting and the promotion of safer use of technology including the operation of appropriate filtering and monitoring of technology provision which is reviewed at least annually.
- Support staff who make referrals to local safeguarding partners or to the Channel programme and act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Making referrals as necessary to Early Help and Children's Social Services.
- Maintaining a confidential and secure recording system.

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- Ensuring that the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency meetings, in particular Child Protection Case Conferences and working with multi-agency partners.
- Managing and monitoring the School's part in any child protection / care plans.
- Carrying out an induction on Safeguarding and Child Protection with all new staff. Induction will highlight; the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and systems in place within the school, the staff 'Code of Conduct' contained in the Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook), the 'Whistleblowing policy' also found in the Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook), KCSIE (latest version – part 1 and Annex A) and identify the DSL. Induction will also highlight The Peer on Peer Abuse, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy and the Behaviour Policy. Within this context staff will be made aware of the importance that they take all disclosures seriously, reassure those making disclosures and follow the school policies in response.
- Organising on an annual basis and / or delivering the training / briefing of new staff, as well as GAP assistants (or equivalent), the Prefect body, members of Year 12 and new Boarding House Monitors.
- Maintain lists of when initial briefings are given and training is carried out and who has carried the training out.
- Updating knowledge of Child Protection issues amongst serving staff (teaching and non-teaching) including ensuring that all adults have read and understand the latest version of KCSIE and maintain a list to evidence that all adults related to the school have read and understood the latest KCSIE document.
- Carryout training to Level 3 Child Protection Designated Person Course and attend Independent School Safeguarding for DSL Update training from KCC in alternate years. Ensure the Safeguarding Committee receives training regularly and ensuring the whole staff are regularly updated in the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, school safeguarding procedures and are trained every three years by Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team.
- Encourage a culture in all adults working at the school of listening to pupils and taking their concerns seriously.
- Have a working knowledge of local partner's referral procedures; access support and support from the Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team.
- Ensuring that when a pupil, who is on the Child Protection Register or is the subject of a Local Authority referral, leaves the school their information is transferred immediately to their new school and that the pupil's Social Worker is informed.
- Ensure the policy is available publicly, including on the school website and that parents are aware of the policy and directed to it when appropriate.
- Help staff to access Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team training if a need is identified in relation to safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring all child protection files follow leavers who are under 18 or remain in education and that confirmation is received that such documents have been received by the destination DSL. Consider if it would be appropriate to share information with the new setting in advance of the child leaving to aid them in providing

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appropriate support as soon as they arrive. Report pupils who move to 'Elective Home Education' to Kent County Council Children Missing Education.

- Ensure that in the event of a pupil becoming looked after by their local authority the DSL will co-ordinate with the relevant local authority to ensure that the pupils welfare needs are being met, progress is monitored care plans are followed in school and relevant meetings are attended by a representative of the school to ensure that assessment information is up to date. Contact arrangements with parents and delegated authority to carers are maintained.
- Ensure that pupils with appointed social workers are appropriately supported and that they are monitored to ensure they are fully safeguarded, including close monitoring of attendance.
- Ensure, in conjunction with Human Resources the Safer Recruitment policies support the safeguarding of the children in the school. This would include the recording and checking of guests speakers to the school, invited by staff or pupils. Further details can be seen in the Safer Recruitment Policy. All visitors to the school are required to be supervised if they have not been suitably vetted at all times by a member of staff, this includes visiting speakers.
- Have a monthly meeting with Human Resources Department to view the Single Central Register, ensure all briefings and training of new staff is complete for that month and ensure a knowledge of all adults not directly employed by the school, including contractors.
- Communicate risks and methods of mitigation to parents and carers, such as warnings about online hoaxes, online challenges and online safety in general. Pass on concerns raised by the police such as warnings about particular local risks they may have identified.
- Maintain and update the list "Where Can I Get Help Out of School" and ensure it is suitably posted in all the boarding houses, maintain contact with the appointed 'Independent Listener' to ensure they are still aware of their role and are aware of who to contact in school if they are concerned about the safeguarding of a pupil in school.
- Convene a termly meeting of the Safeguarding Committee.
- Liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians and the Dyslexic Learning Support Department) on matters of safety and safeguarding, including online and digital safety.
- Be aware of the risks presented online, have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe while they are online in school. This should focus on the 4 'Cs' – Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce.
- Be aware of the additional risks to children with SEND online due to bullying, grooming and radicalisation and have the capability to keep SEND children safe online.
- Be aware of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR with regard to the safe keeping and sharing of records and personal data within the safeguarding context. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/747620/Data_Protection_Toolkit_for_Schools_OpenBeta.pdf

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He is supported in this role by the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Either the DSL, Deputy DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Committee will be available during term time at all times. The DSL is contactable throughout the term to support staff and pupils. Outside of term time a member of the Safeguarding Committee is available to be contacted in school and either the DSL or Deputy DSL is contactable.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, part-time staff and supply staff.

1. It could happen here Act in the best interests of the child. Never assume a colleague or other professional will take action, you are legally obliged to take action yourself.
2. All adults working at Bethany School must receive a safeguarding induction prior to starting work with pupils or in the school environment and thereafter training which is regularly, attending regular and at least annual updates on changes in practice and at least every three years from Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team and also make themselves aware of the information about Child Protection produced by local partners as published on the safeguarding noticeboard in the upper staffroom or on the website www.kelsi.org.uk All part-time and voluntary staff should also receive appropriate induction and be made aware of the arrangements including those who may not have direct contact with children (who must be issued with Annex A of KCSIE).

In addition, extra guidance is available via the Government website

www.education.gov.uk

3. All staff should, further to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, be aware of the systems in place through the Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Employment Manual (Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing), and reporting children missing education or with low attendance at the point of starting work in the school setting as well as other key policies and systems as laid out in the Staff Handbook.
4. All Staff should be aware of Early Help and the process for accessing support from Early Help Services <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/integratedchildrensservices> . Staff should identify needs caused by disabilities (physical or learning), young carers, children being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, gang involvement, truancy / going missing, misusing drugs or alcohol themselves or is seen to be vulnerable to modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation, has family circumstances presenting challenges for the child, the child has returned home from care, is showing early signs of abuse or neglect, is at risk of being radicalised or exploited or is privately fostered. The DSL will generally lead a referral to Early Help but staff should expect to support this process.
5. All adults working at Bethany School must be alert to changes in a pupil's behaviour pattern or of any physical injuries which might cause concern and conversations or questions which relate to interest in topics such as drug use, radicalisation, gang involvement, participation in serious crime or serious violence or any of the identified elements listed in Appendix 2 of this policy or Annex B of KCSIE 2025.
6. Any adult working at Bethany School must report a possible case of abuse as a matter of urgency to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence to the Deputy

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- DSL or Headmaster. (Do not attempt to carry out an investigation yourself and if the concern is raised by a disclosure do not over confidentiality.)
7. Complete a Green Form (Safeguarding incident / concern form) which can be found in the upper staffroom on the Safeguarding Noticeboard or can be obtained from the DSL.
 8. When considering a safeguarding incident, staff must build a **contextual safeguarding picture**, that is that staff must consider whether wider environmental factors are present in the child's life that are a threat to their safety and / or welfare.
 9. Staff should be aware that with regard to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) it is mandatory for teachers to report all known cases of FGM to the police and the DSL immediately. Staff may ask the DSL to inform the police (Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003).
 10. The School will always refer to Children's Social Services if we suspect or believe that abuse has occurred or if the child has requested it. The Headmaster / Designated Safeguarding Lead / Head of Year / Boarding Housemaster and other staff involved (eg medical staff) may also confer before the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy DSL or the Headmaster, decides to make a referral. To help the decision of referral a consultation with Children's Social Services or Specialist Children's Services without naming the child may be carried out or advice may be sought from the West Kent Area Safeguarding in Education Advisor. Written notes should be recorded on the Designated Safeguarding Lead's Safeguarding Record of Action / Contacts Form.
 11. If a member of staff suspects, or is informed, about an allegation involving another member of staff or any adult working with pupils or for the School in any capacity, the School should not take action against the informer where he or she acted as a transmitter of information in good faith. Such an allegation is likely to indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children. Government guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025) should be used in respect of all cases where it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed 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.
 - Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – for example where an adult is involved in domestic violence out of school, they may be a threat to children within the school setting.Concerns about an adult working with children that do not meet the 'harm threshold' (identified in KCSIE Part 4, Section 2) should be reported to the DSL. See section 5 of this policy.
 12. Any allegation against / involving a member of staff will normally be referred directly to the **Headmaster**, unless the allegation pertains to the Headmaster in which circumstance the referral must be made directly to the **Chairman of Governors** chairofgovernors@bethanyschool.org.uk or it does not meet the 'harm threshold' as identified in KCSIE Part 4, Section 2. See section 5 of this policy.

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13. All staff need to be aware that it is a criminal offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague or adult that could place a child at risk if their actions or behaviour meet the harm test and that lesser concerns not reported may become a disciplinary matter within the school.
14. The School supports the immunity from “**whistleblowing**” when an allegation is made in good faith. The policy on “**whistleblowing**” can be seen in the Bethany School Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook).

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. As part of meeting a child’s needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the school or college and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required. School and college staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children’s social care. Further details on information sharing can be found in Chapter one of “Working Together to Safeguard Children” and “Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.”

Specific information; the details of procedures and the categories and definitions of abuse may be accessed or downloaded from the KELSI website:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/>

<https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>

Additional information and guidance may be accessed on various Government websites including:

www.education.gov.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Also at:

www.kenttrustweb.org.uk

Child Protection resources containing hard copies of a range of information, including ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ and ‘What to do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused’, are held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are published on the Safeguarding noticeboard in the staffroom.

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Furthermore, all staff have access to the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and guidance which gives information on 'What to do if... ' as well listing the signs and symptoms of abuse on the Bethany School website (www.bethanyschool.org.uk). All staff are also issued Part 1 of the new statutory guidance KCSIE on release, in conjunction with Annex A and receive a briefing on the changes from the previous KCSIE document as required (Annex H).

7. Information to be Recorded and Record Keeping

The Initial Safeguarding Incident / Concern Form should be signed and dated. If it is not possible to do this then the documentation submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be signed and dated or have clear provenance electronically. It is important to remember that Child Protection issues must be kept confidential and other staff should be informed only on a 'need to know' basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead opens (or continues) a Safeguarding File which includes:

- Child or young person's name and date of birth
- The incident / concern which triggered the process
- The Initial Form record of conversation and any other record of what the child or young person has said
- A body map indicating bruising / injuries – if appropriate NB Staff must only view areas of the body that are normally visible.
- The action taken is recorded using the Safeguarding Record of Action / Contacts Form which acts as an ongoing chronology of the case.

These basic details are vital to the information gathering process and do not in themselves constitute an investigation.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead holds and stores securely all of the written information in a location separate from main files. The Designated Safeguarding Lead keeps the Headmaster informed. Other staff will have information shared with them on a strictly 'need to know' basis.

The detailed implementation procedures for Bethany School, including guidelines for any referrals to Children's Social Services, managing allegations against members of staff, briefing and training details as well as what to do if a child goes missing are made clear in this policy.

The DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD keeps a central log of all possible child protection issues, regardless of whether they are referred or not.

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8. Induction and Training

Training of staff

Staff are provided regular training and updates in Safeguarding and Child Protection. The DSL will carry out briefings when changes occur to legislation and in particular to Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff will be required to sign to say they have received, read and understood Part 1 of KCSIE which is distributed in hard copy along with Annex A and H. Further safeguarding and child protection information is available on the Safeguarding noticeboard in the staffroom and through the KELSI website <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/>. Staff may also be required to carry out certain online safeguarding training.

New Governors will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction with a particular emphasis on elements of safeguarding that are a priority to Bethany School pupils and online safety. Following induction governors will maintain their training in safeguarding to ensure they can give due oversight within the roles on the board that they play. This will include an annual update on KCSIE.

New staff will receive induction from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL or when necessary a member of the Safeguarding Committee on the school safeguarding procedures, highlighting KCSIE by issuing Part 1 and Annex A and H of the latest document which will be signed for and recorded in a log, showing the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where to find it on the school website, raise important issues such as Prevent (separate training is carried out online), FGM, CSE and the whistleblowing policy found in the Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook). Staff will be made aware of the support that can be gained through Early Help and the role of the DSL, Deputy DSL and Safeguarding Committee will be made clear. Staff will also be made aware of the importance of monitoring attendance and their duty as part of the school within the reporting of children missing education, Children Missing Education, September 2016. They will also be made aware of the importance of implementing other key policies, such as the Behaviour Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; Child-on-Child Abuse, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy as well as other policies that promote the safeguarding of children within the school. Staff induction will include how we keep pupils safe online by the monitoring of issues based on concerns focused on four areas; Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce.

A follow up review will be held with staff within their first year to consider their understanding of safeguarding and child protection procedures at Bethany and seek any feedback from their perspective.

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy DSL must ensure that they attend and receive appropriate Level 3 Child Protection Training every two years, including inter agency training from within Kent. Both will be equally well trained in their roles.

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Authorised by	Andrew Cunningham - Governor	Review date	September 2026

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2. The Safeguarding Committee are given Level 3 Safeguarding training every two years.
3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that appropriate Child Protection inductions are given, as part of whole school INSET, to all staff on an annual cycle and at any other appropriate times through the year.
4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that appropriate Child Protection induction is given, as part of their overall induction, to all new members' staff – including GAP Assistants (or equivalent) on taking up their appointment.
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that appropriate Child Protection briefing is given to all new members of ancillary, domestic, estates and maintenance staff on joining the school staff.
6. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will brief the Holroyd Howe Manager in Child Protection.
7. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that appropriate Child Protection briefing is given, as part of their induction, to the new Prefect body and members of Year 12 on an annual basis.
8. Safeguarding Newsletters released by Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team are placed on the Safeguarding noticeboard in the upper staffroom.
9. All Pupils are given training in safeguarding themselves throughout the curriculum and the extra-curriculum. Specific areas of safeguarding are addressed whenever appropriate including e-safety issues, bullying and cyber-bullying and online safety in a wider context.

10. *This briefing and training should include not only dealing with alleged, suspected or disclosed abuse - as in the above policy guidelines – but also with safeguarding one's self from any possible, potential allegations of abuse. Further information regarding professional conduct is given to all staff in their induction material and is also available in the Code of Conduct in the Employment Manual found in section L of the Staff Handbook.*

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9. Useful Contacts

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Mr Alan Sturrock
01580 211273, Ext 208

DEPUTY DSL

Miss Toni Carter Ext 225
01580 211273

Headmaster

Mr Francie Healy
01580 211273, Ext 209

Nominated Governor for Safeguarding & Child Protection

Mr Andrew Cunningham
c/o Bethany School

Chairman of Governors

Mr Jonathan Fenn
c/o Bethany School
chairofgovenors@bethanyschool.org.uk

LADO Office 03000 410888

LADO referrals via: <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/LADO-Education-Safeguarding-Advisory-Service>

Social Services County Duty Service: Front Door

03000 411111 (out of hours – 03000 419191)

West Kent Police – Child Abuse Investigation Unit

01892 502146 or call the police on 101

Kent Early Help 03000 419222

West Kent Early Help 03000416200 (T. Wells)

ISI

Cap House, London, EC1A 9HA
020 7776 8849

NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285

help@nspcc.org.uk
OFSTED safeguarding children 0300 123 4666

Kent Channel Co-ordinator

channel@kent.pnn.police.uk

UK Anti-terrorist Hotline

0800 789 321

Prevent Education Officer (West Kent) 03000 413439

DfE dedicated telephone helpline for non-emergency advice about radicalisation for staff and governors

020 7340 7264 counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

DBS Service

PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA
01325 953795
dbdispatch@db.s.gsi.gov.uk

TRA

53–55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH
0370 000 2288
misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk

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This is a controlled document. If printed it may no longer be valid over time.

The current master version is held in the Staff Team under School Policies.

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

10. Glossary:

DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead – the member of staff in the school who is in charge of safeguarding and child protection.
Safeguarding	The umbrella under which children are kept safe and are prepared to face the challenges appropriate to their age. This involves developing the child in terms of knowledge, skills, resilience, esteem etc and the maintenance of an appropriately safe environment in which to grow at Bethany School.
Child Protection	This is the mechanism by which we identify and report children in need or children at risk of significant harm.
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer – the office to be contacted with regard to allegations of abuse when reporting an adult.
Children’s’ Social Services	Deal with all aspects of abuse relating to significant harm of children that do not involve adults. Also known as Specialist Children’s Services.
Prevent Duty	Prevent is the national strategy to deal with the increasing issue of radicalisation of children in the UK, both through cyber contact and person to person contacts.
Channel	As part of the Prevent strategy Channel is the reporting mechanism for concerns about radicalisation in the local area.
Extremism	Promoting or acting on extreme beliefs that are linked to violence.
Radicalisation	How a person may end up promoting and acting upon extreme violent beliefs.
Whistleblowing	This is the act of reporting poor practice to a more senior member of the organisation. The policy is contained in the Employment Manual (Section L of the Staff Handbook) and shows how the school will respond to information passed on about concerns within the organisation.
Child in Need	A Child in Need is defined as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services, or a child who is disabled. (Children’s’ Act, 1989). Children would be assessed under section 17 of the Children’s Act, 1989)

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Significant Harm Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm are assessed supported under section 47 of the Children's Act, 1989.

Contextual safeguarding

This refers to the importance of all staff and in particular the DSL in ensuring they build a full picture of the context both inside and outside of school when considering the threats to their safety.

Disinformation

The deliberate sharing of untrue information with the aim to promote a view point or support an untruth.

Misinformation

The unknowing sharing of information the sharer believes to be true but is not.

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11. Appendix 1: Missing Student

Children Missing from Education.

Children in England may leave education at the age of 16 but until the age of 18 children are expected to either start an apprenticeship or work as a volunteer while in part-time education. Children going missing from education is a potential indicator for abuse or neglect. Pupils at Bethany are required to attend school during term time. Absences are required to be marked on the register and tutors will be aware of the reasons for any absence which will be marked as an authorised absence. Staff should be watchful for patterns of unexplained or persistent absence and if they are concerned should raise these concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a pupil leaves the school and is deleted from the admissions register for the following reasons then the DSL should inform Kent County Council:

- They have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside of the school system eg elective home education.
- They have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they registered
- They have been certified as medically unfit to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they or their parents has indicated the intention to continue to attend Bethany after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- They 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
- They have been permanently excluded

The DSL must be informed of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent from the school without permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more and report this to the relevant Local Authority Department using the reporting framework.

Details of the school response to a pupil going missing from school during attendance at the school can be found below:

If the school suspects that a student is missing it will follow procedures to identify the whereabouts of the pupil as laid out below. If a pupil is not successfully found through the procedures this would become a child protection issue. If a student is missing school regularly or school absence is noted with other concerning behaviours then a referral should be made to the appropriate agency or agencies.

○ **Checking Routines & Missing Student Procedures**

Checking Routines

- Checking pupils on their return at the end of the school day and at prep time

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The Housemaster/mistress or Assistant Housemaster/mistress must make certain that they have checked that the pupils have returned to the House at the end of the school day/or after supper (depending on age groups and supper timings) and that they have checked with the prep monitor that all pupils are present during prep.

Checking students at night

- The Housemaster/mistress or Assistant Housemaster/mistress must make certain that they have checked and personally seen all students at night time/lights out in their bed or at 10pm registration for Orchard 6th Formers..

Checking students on return from other boarding houses/specialist areas of school

- The 'signing in and out' book should be checked at the time students are due to have returned. Within 15 minutes for the younger pupils and between 30 and 45 minutes for the older pupils, all students need to have been seen by the member of staff in charge. Never rely on another student telling you that they have seen someone whom you have not seen personally.

Checking pupils on return from weekends, holidays and periods of absence from school

- After a weekend, holiday or period of absence from school the Housemaster/mistress or Assistant Housemaster/mistress should check personally that pupils are back at the times agreed. If they have not returned as agreed please begin investigating within 45 minutes.

Checking pupils on return from off-site visits – shopping, matches, theatre etc

- After day time/early evening visits/matches organised by a member of staff, using coaches, mini-buses or cars, pupils should have checked into their Houses within 15 minutes of their arrival back at school – 30 minutes if they have gone straight into supper.
- After late evening visits (e.g. theatre visits) an accompanying member of staff should escort the pupils into their Houses. House staff will probably wish to 'wait up' to check younger pupils but possibly not for older pupils if they have been escorted into the House by another member of staff.
- For visits organised by the pupils themselves using for example, taxis or private cars, pupils should use the 'signing in and out' book and be seen on their return, during 'daylight hours', by a member of House staff within 30 to 45 minutes. For late evening returns the pupils(s) should still use the 'signing in and out' book but should also check in directly on their return with their Housemaster/mistress or Assistant Housemaster/mistress.

In all of the above scenarios members of staff and pupils alike should be actively encouraged to keep in contact with House staff by mobile phone to advise them of unforeseen delays etc.

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Missing Boarding Student Procedures

- Boarding houses carry out regular registrations in order to be sure that boarders are present in School and ensure their well-being. All boarders are accounted for at their bedtimes, after which they are expected to remain in the boarding house. Boarding houses will have a staff presence throughout the night, with occasional and random checks to ensure boarders are present, are well and are asleep.
- If a boarder is found to be missing following their bedtime the procedures laid out below should be followed.
- In the event of a boarder leaving the boarding house during the night and Housestaff being made aware, Housestaff should immediately contact the member of SMT on duty to report a missing pupil. The procedure laid out below will then be followed.
- Registration is carried out in boarding houses either prior to breakfast or in breakfast. If a boarder fails to register boarding houses will ensure they are present on site. If this is not the case the procedures below will be followed. For Orchard/Acorns registration is carried out by tutors at 8.30 am.

Missing pupils – evening / weekend daily routine

- The duty member of House staff should instigate the following procedures and keep a record of events in the House duty log. A copy of these notes may then need to be passed on to SMT.
- Firstly ascertain that the student is not in the boarding house or its environs
- Check whether other pupils know of the missing student's whereabouts
- Try to contact the student via their mobile phone
- Phone the other boarding houses for them to check their visitor's 'signing in and out' book and to conduct a search of their areas
- Check the specialist areas of the school, i.e. Music School, Chapel, that can be legitimately visited
- Check the Medical Centre
- Check other buildings and areas of the school and grounds
- Enlist the help of other House colleagues/GAP assistants/Prefects/House monitors as appropriate to help search.
- Contact a relevant member of the SMT using their weekly 'on-site' proforma
- If after 30 to 45 minutes the student still cannot be accounted for then SMT will confer and then contact parents or guardians and police as appropriate.
- SMT should keep a record of events and actions using the Initial Safeguarding Incident / Concern Form and also add the initial notes from the House day book.

If it is rumoured that a parent has collected their youngster without letting House staff know, and you believe it is a possibility, then do phone them.

Missing pupils – after weekends, holidays, periods of absence

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- If after the 30 to 45 minutes the student still cannot be accounted for then please ensure that you contact the parents/guardians/hosts to find out what has happened.

Parents/guardians/hosts should be actively encouraged to make contact with House staff to advise them of unforeseen delays etc.

- If you have been unable to make contact with parents/guardians/hosts after the 45 minutes continue trying whilst instigating the procedures above.

Contact numbers

- A list of student mobile phone numbers should be compiled, checked and updated on a regular basis by House staff and the records kept on file in the House Office.
- Parents/guardians contact numbers should also be checked and updated on a regular basis - *parents/guardians should be actively encouraged to advise House staff of these changes*
- Host family contact numbers should also be checked – *regular host families should be actively encouraged to advise House staff of any changes.*
- Pupils/parents/guardians/hosts should have the appropriate contact numbers for the House to hand/programmed into their phones.

Missing Student Procedures - During the School Day

- In the first instance ascertain, by checking with your other pupils, whether the missing student is for example; just merely delayed from another lesson, in the Wellness Centre, having a music lesson, left School early for a fixture.
- Double check with a colleague if other pupils are missing.
- Check with the School Office, via phone if at all possible or by using a ‘runner’, whether the missing student has ‘signed out’, is on an ‘off-site’ list or is in the Wellness Centre. Contact the Tutor and Head of Year to identify if they have any knowledge of a reason for the absence. Check with the Music Department and LAMDA timetables to ensure they are not involved in another activity in school.
- Contact a member of the SMT, via the School Office, phone or a ‘runner’.
- Buildings and other areas of the school and grounds are checked and searched.
- Enlist the help of other colleagues / Estates Team / GAP assistants / Prefects / House monitors as appropriate to help checking and searching.
- Try to contact the student via their mobile phone.

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- The member of staff instigating the search in the first instance should write appropriate notes and pass them on to SMT / DSL.
- If after 30 to 45 minutes the student still cannot be accounted for the SMT will confer and then contact parents or guardians and police as appropriate.
- SMT should keep a record of events and actions using the Initial Safeguarding Incident / Concern Form and also add the member of staff's initial notes.
- SMT / DSL to contact Children's Social Services or Police – if appropriate.
- Headmaster contacts Chairman of Governors – if appropriate.

If it is rumoured that a parent has collected their youngster without letting staff / school office know and they have not signed out, and you believe it is a possibility, then do phone them.

If it is rumoured that a Sixth Former has driven home / off-site without signing out then check the car parks for their vehicle and then phone their mobile and / or their home number.

Contact numbers

- A list of student mobile phone numbers should be compiled, checked and updated on a regular basis by Tutors and stored on iSAMS on a confidential basis.

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12. Appendix 2: Definitions of Abuse

There are four types of child abuse. They are identified under the following headings and further information can be found on the NSPCC website:

1. **Physical abuse**
2. **Emotional abuse**
3. **Sexual abuse**
4. **Neglect**

All school and college 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. (KCSIE, September 2019 Paragraph 20)

Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution 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.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 children 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 the 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, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

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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. Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting) can count as a form of sexual abuse. Bethany School recognises that **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** can sometimes manifest no external signs of the abuse which the child is suffering.

NB It should be noted that sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in the education setting.

Neglect

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

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.

Regard should also be given to areas identified in KCSIE 2022 Annex B:

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1080047/KCSIE_2022_revised.pdf

- Child Abduction and community safety incidents
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Children in the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Cybercrime
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- Mental Health
- Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Preventing radicalization
 - The prevent duty
 - Channel
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.
- Serious violence
- So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)
 - FGM
 - FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers
 - Forced marriage
- County Lines
- Child abduction and community safety issues

Further information on preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

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 with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

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

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- Schools are 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 and what to do to support them. Schools should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools to have distinct 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 the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Effective engagement with parents / the family should also be considered as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms. Schools should also discuss any concerns in relation to possible radicalisation with a child's parents in line with the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures unless they have specific reason to believe that to do so would put the child at risk.

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 placed 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 staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

Schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

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. The Government has launched educate against hate, a website designed to equip school and college leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people.

Channel

School and college 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. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel.

All adults working at Bethany School should be aware of the Prevent Duty. Staff should be aware of the Prevent strategy of which Channel is part. Staff can gain further information by carrying out the Channel general awareness training. The DSL and the deputy DSL will have training in the Prevent Duty.

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The following factors place people at risk of radicalisation:

- Peer Pressure
- Influence from other internet users
- Bullying, crime and anti-social behaviours
- Family tensions
- Race/ hate crime
- Lack of self-esteem or identity
- Personal or political grievances

The following may be signs of radicalisation:

- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn / aggression)
- Claiming terrorist and other violent acts are justified
- Associating with known violent extremists
- Viewing violent extremist material on-line
- Possessing violent extremist literature (leaflets)

Any concerns about pupils who may become or who are showing an interest in radicalisation should be reported to the DSL who will work with the appropriate outside agencies.

Minor concerns – Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator or the LOCAL PARTNERS.
More serious concerns – Contact police or Anti-terrorist Hotline or Channel.

The DSL will have clear contacts within the Local Authority in order to have a clear understanding of the risk perceived by the Local Authority for Bethany School. As part of the Prevent Duty all visiting speakers and guests of the school, invited by pupils or staff will be made known to the Human Resources Manager. If there are any concerns under the Prevent Duty, specific checks will be carried out. Supervision is always put in place for visitors except where appropriate checks have been previously carried out and are in place. A record of all such individuals will be maintained as part of the Single Central Register by the Human Resources Manager. This is referred to further in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

Online safety

The use of technology has become a significant area for staff to be aware in how they keep children safe. CSE, radicalisation, sexual predation, creation of youth produced sexual imagery, cyber-bullying and other forms of harassment all occur through different technological platforms.

Consider the following areas when dealing with online threats:

Content: being exposed to illegal or inappropriate or harmful material

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interactions with other users

Conduct: personal online behaviour.

Commerce: Gambling and other financial transactions.

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File name:	Child Protection Policy	Version	16.1
Author	Alan Sturrock	Issue date	March 2026
Authorised by	Andrew Cunningham - Governor	Review date	September 2026

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The current master version is held in the Staff Team under School Policies.**

13. Appendix 3: Signs of Abuse

Signs of abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. You do however, have both a responsibility and duty, as set out in your organisation's child protection procedures, to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical Abuse Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body like parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns, as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place sometime later.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

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.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

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 Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only

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be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

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 Abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

It is also important to remember that it not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

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

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

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

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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

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
constantly dirty or 'smelly'
loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
inappropriate clothing for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

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.

Bullying

Bullying is not always easy to recognise as it can take a number of forms. A child may encounter bullying attacks that are:

physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats
verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
emotional: excluding (sending to Coventry), tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating.

Persistent bullying can result in:

depression
low self-esteem
shyness
poor academic achievement
isolation
threatened or attempted suicide

Signs that a child may be being bullied can be:

coming home with cuts and bruises
torn clothes
asking for stolen possessions to be replaced
losing dinner money
falling out with previously good friends
being moody and bad tempered
wanting to avoid leaving their home
aggression with younger brothers and sisters
doing less well at school
sleep problems
anxiety

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becoming quiet and withdrawn

These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive, but only serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family or relationship problems between parents/carers. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, the authorities will always want to understand them in relation to the child's development and context

Source: NSPCC

Procedures for dealing with all forms of bullying can be found in the School's anti-bullying policy.

Safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harmful stop behaviour is linked to issues such as drug taking and all alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude, semi nude images and / or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

CSE / CCE

Children being exploited in criminal activity may become apparent through discovery that they are transporting either drugs or money, may have become involved in shoplifting or pickpocketing or other such criminal behaviour. They may come to school with expensive items that you may not expect their parents to have bought for them, or show off items such as multiple mobile phones. Children involved in criminal exploitation may take to carrying weapons such as knives. It is also important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation. Note that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Children involved with sexual exploitation may develop the use of sexualised language that is inappropriate for their age or may reveal the use of online material that is inappropriate and sexualised. Children involved in sexual exploitation may also appear to have gifts. It is important to note this child sexual exploitation can affect any child who's been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to having sex. Some children may not realise that they are being exploited and believe that they are in a genuine romantic relationship. CSE may also become apparent if children are found to have older boyfriends or girlfriends; suffer from sexually transmitted infections; display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

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Children being exploited may also become involved in the misuse of drugs and alcohol and suffer from changes in their emotional wellbeing; they may also go missing for periods of time; will be reported as regularly missing from home. These children may also have a tendency to have a low attendance or lose their sense of importance of education.

FGM

Disclosure is the main route to discovering FGM, forced marriage and honour-based crimes, however staff should also be aware of requests for pupils to be absent from school for periods of time, particularly around certain ages and where travel overseas is required. Pupils may also appear to be upset, worried or concerned about taking leave or at the start of a holiday.

County Lines

Children involved in county lines may demonstrate a number of indicators similar to those for CSE and CCE, but there are some specific additional indicators identified such as: children who go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home; have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence such as knife crime; are involved in receiving requests for drugs via phone, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs; are exposed to techniques such as plugging, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection; are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house' or 'cuckooing' or hotel rooms where there is drug activity; owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters; have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.