



**Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) procedures**  
**([www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp))**

Stroud Valley Community Primary School fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding children and the importance of raising awareness of child protection issues. We discharge our responsibility with the attitude that 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. Any actions we take will be in the best interests of the child and compliant with the relevant statutory guidance.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers within the school.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Debbie Sleep (Headteacher); Sarah Heague and Rachel Yeomans**

**Safeguarding Governor –Clare Hankey**

**Safer Recruitment Trained – Debbie Sleep (Headteacher); Sarah Heague (DHT); Chris Minett and Julie Howe (Governors)**

**General principles**

We recognise that because of our daily contact with children we are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse. We will:

- ensure adults are appropriately trained in the early identification of abuse and neglect and respond correctly;
- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- ensure children know there are adults in school who they can approach if they are worried;
- include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Take appropriate action in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

The school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. We understand that their behaviour may be challenging, defiant or show signs of being withdrawn. We endeavour to support all our children through:

- the content of our curriculum;
- our ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment in which all individuals are valued;
- a behaviour policy centred around positive reinforcement;
- ensuring they understand that although some behaviours are unacceptable they, as people, are valued. They are not, in any way, to blame for the experiences which may lead to such behaviours;
- liaison with all other agencies that support the child and family;

- ensuring that when a child leaves the school relevant information is passed to the new school immediately and the social worker informed.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:**

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- take action to enable children to have the best outcomes

**Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone.**

**Our policy and procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and governors.** It is important that we are fully aware of child protection issues as well as equipping our children with the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Keeping children safe is the responsibility of all staff, who should refer concerns of abuse or neglect to one of the DSL’s. If at any point there is immediate risk of serious harm to a child a referral will be made to children’s social care immediately. **Anybody can make a referral.** If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should escalate for re-consideration.

If you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm or is in immediate danger it must be reported to the Children and Families Services helpdesk – 01452 426565 or to the police – 101

When there are concerns about a child but not they are suffering or likely to suffer harm or is in immediate danger A conversation will be had with a DSL.; all concerns will be logged in written on CPOMS (software for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing and pastoral issues)

**Child Protection** refers to the activities taken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer significant harm.

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

Neglect is a form of abuse and it’s 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.

More information based on Keeping Children Safe In Education can be found at the end of this policy.

Sexting (also known as youth produces sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nudes images, videos or live streams.

Staff will not assume that someone else is taking action and sharing information that might safeguard a child. It is better that a number of people raise a concern than no-one simply because you think someone else will have.

Staff members understand the importance of NOT promising confidentiality to children and that they should always **act in the best interests of the child.**

**The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

The governments ‘information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners’ (July 2018) includes seven golden rules for sharing information and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information they will consult a DSL.

## **Confidentiality**

When a child makes a disclosure we understand how to manage the situation to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. We will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

## **Children includes everyone under the age of 18.**

The following 3 safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- the local authority (LA)
- a clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- the chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

## **Notifying Parents**

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

## **Staff**

Where appropriate we will discuss our concerns about a child with the child's parents. This will not

## **The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The responsibilities of the DSL are to ensure procedures are followed where abuse is suspected or disclosed, procedures of allegations management are followed and to keep professionals up to date with current guidance. All staff, including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers are introduced to the DSL. Photographs and names of the DSL's are on display in the main entrance.

The school has three members of staff named as designated safeguarding leads. They undergo updated child protection training every two years. The DSL's do not delegate their responsibility to other staff.

A DSL will always be available for consultation on child welfare and child protection matters. In the event of all DSL's being away from the school premises at the same time, arrangements are made for one of them to be available by telephone. The school office holds the details of DSLs in our partnership schools who can also be contacted if necessary.

A DSL will take an active role in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings such as core group meeting and child protection conferences

Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

The DSL's work closely together share issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

### **The role of staff**

All members of staff know to follow the procedures set out by Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board and take account of the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. There is a poster in the staff room with the details of GSCB website clearly given.

School staff understand the difference between their general safeguarding duties, in identifying vulnerable children and considering the need for early help, and their particular child protection duties when they believe that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

The safeguarding policy is updated annually and all staff read it, along with Part One of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and Annex A of this document. There is a copy available in each classroom for easy referral by all staff including volunteers. Mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities, as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE (2019). This includes regular supply staff and volunteers. New staff receive a safeguarding induction within their first week, where they are provided with copies of Part 1 KCSIE and this policy; they are trained fully on the next available course.

If a child makes a disclosure we will:

- listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret. Tell the child that you will come back to them and let them know what is happening and ensure that you (or someone appropriate) does this
- write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- all records will be saved in CPOMS and the DSL alerted

### **Training**

Whole school staff training takes place every three years in line with Local Authority Guidance. They also receive safeguarding and child protection updates on an annual basis, including whistle blowing, allegations management and the acceptable user policy. The school purchases external safeguarding advice and updated alerts are sent directly the HT e-mail inbox. This information is then shared with staff as appropriate.

## **The Role Of The Governing Body**

One member of the Governing Body is named as a link governor for safeguarding / child protection.

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher.

## **Early Help**

The school identifies children who are vulnerable and who may benefit from 'early help', as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. A dedicated pastoral lead trained to the level of DSL works as an intermediary, where early help may be beneficial, in order to support parents and carers.

Any child may benefit from Early Help, however we are particularly aware of children who:

- are disabled and have specific needs
- have special educational needs ( whether or not they have an Education, Health Care plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement
- if frequently missing / goes missing from care or from home
- is a risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is mis-using drugs or alcohol
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child
- is a looked after child
- has a parent in prison

Staff share information, in line with statutory guidance, with other relevant professionals, and in particular social care, in order to support early identification and assessment for early help. A culture of openness and vigilance within the staff group enables children and their families to be able to access early help in a timely and appropriate way.

The school website contains details of the offers of early help available from the school.

## **Child Protection Plans**

We fully support children, and families, who have a child protection plan in place. The school has good links with outside agencies, including children's services, involved with families and co-operate as required by them. The DSL, or appropriate member of staff, attends child protection conferences and core group meetings.

The school will notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a child who has a child protection plan.

## **Children In care**

Teachers who have responsibility for a looked after child understand the importance of liaising with the child's foster carers, having a basic knowledge of the care plan for the child and the role of the virtual school. The virtual school head (VSH) is the person appointed by the local authority to promote the educational opportunities of looked after children. The school's designated teacher for looked after children liaises with the VSH to discuss how best to support the educational achievement and other needs of the child, as identified in the child's personal education plan.

## **Adopted children and children subject to special guardianship or child arrangement orders, who were previously looked after.**

The school is aware of the new duties contained in the Children and families Act 2014, which extends the role of the designated teacher and virtual school to the above group of children and have taken steps to prepare for this increased duty.

## **Children with SEN and / or disabilities**

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

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

## **Types of Abuse**

Alongside this policy document all staff have read, and have a copy of Part One 'Safeguarding information for all staff' from Keeping Children Safe in Education. This document describes the different categories of abuse a child may suffer.

There are also links to information on specific safeguarding issues.

- bullying, including cyber bullying
- children missing education
- children missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- cyber bullying
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence

- peer on peer abuse
- gender identity and sexuality
- gender based violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- honour based violence
- mental health
- missing children and adults strategy
- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- trafficking.

School staff know how to access more detailed government information and guidance and to discuss areas of concern with the DSL if any of these issues appear to arise.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. **Any individual** who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

If it is suspected a child is at risk of FGM, or it is suspected that FGM, has been carried out the schools safeguarding procedures will be carried out and the DSL informed.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. In these situations the member of staff will talk through concerns with the DSL.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

This is abuse which is perpetrated by children upon children. It is taken very seriously by the school where we do not regard bullying or abuse as a natural part of the growing up process. Staff will not accept such abuse as 'banter' or 'teasing' and will take action. The school has a conflict resolution programme and a robust anti bullying policy.

If allegations from a child raise safeguarding concerns and the behaviours reported:

- is serious and potentially a criminal offence
- could put a child at risk
- is violent
- involves a child being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- involve sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment including indecent exposure, up-skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos.

If a child makes an allegation of abuse the member of staff will tell the DSL but not investigate.it

The DSL will contact the local social care children's service and take advice.

A record of the allegation will be made.

The DLS will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved

Peer on peer abuse is most likely, although not limited to:

- bullying, including cyber bullying
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting etc; anything causing physical harm
- sexual abuse of one child by another
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks or jokes
- up skirting (now a criminal offence) which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing
- sexting

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by ensuring our curriculum

- helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by
- ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

## **HATE**

Gloucestershire launched its Hate Crime Strategy in October 2016,

Any incident of bullying perceived by the victim, or any other person, as having a prejudicial element (disability, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or gender) should be categorised as a 'Hate' incident. We understand that those who carry out these acts are unlikely to be motivated by 'Hate', and that often simply have a lack of awareness of the consequences of their actions. At Stroud Valley, we believe in teaching our children about the consequences of their actions, how they affect another's feelings and how to make positive choices in relationships. Incidents reported to us will be investigated and the conflict resolution part of this policy carried out. Monitoring the prevalence of such instances however is a critical part of understanding the scale of the issue and evidencing the need for earlier intervention and prevention measures in tackling the harm motivated by prejudice, before such attitudes become embedded, and further harm is done.

As a school we have a duty to report incidents of 'Hate' to the Local Authority.

## **Extremism**

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- think someone is in immediate danger
- think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- see or hear something that may be terrorist-related

## **Record keeping**

Written records of concerns about children are kept, even where there is insufficient concern to refer the matter immediately to Children's services. All records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked cupboard. Staff are aware that a record of any conversation with a child should be made as soon after as possible and made as accurately as possible.

## **Parents**

This policy is published on the school website and parents and carers understand the responsibility placed on the school for safeguarding children.

## **Equality**

The school seeks to safeguard all children and their families, regardless of their sex, race, disability gender identity or sexual orientation.

We are fully aware that some children have an increased risk of abuse and some may have additional barriers when it comes to recognising or disclosing abuse.

These groups may include:

- children with special educational needs and / or disabilities
- young carers
- have English as a second language
- those living in difficult situations such as temporary accommodation; in circumstances where drug abuse or domestic violence is an issue
- at risk due to their own or family member's mental health
- are in care or previously in care
- are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage or radicalisation
- are asylum seekers

## **Safer Recruitment**

The school has a separate safer recruitment policy which follows guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education. In line with government guidance at least one NCSL accredited recruiter is on all interview panels and involved in the complete selection process. Guidance from Part Three of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (20156) is adhered to fully. This is included with the safer recruitment policy.

No member of staff or volunteer in a regulated activity will be left alone with children until a DBS check has been completed, received and found to be clear.

## **Whistleblowing**

The school has a separate whistleblowing policy which all members of staff are aware of. We all understand our duty to protect children and our responsibility to ensure unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed, using the Allegations Management Procedures. These can be found in the whistleblowing policy and on the GCSB website stated at the top of this policy. The NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline number is: 0800028 0285. All staff are aware of this service.

## **Allegations Management Procedures**

If there are concerns about a member of staff or volunteer, or an allegation is made about a member of staff or volunteer posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Headteacher. If the concerns/allegations are about the Headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

The Headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in the allegations management policy.

If it is felt that the Headteacher does not take the allegation seriously then refer to the Chair of Governors. If an individual does not feel safe talking to the school or feels the school is not taking the allegation seriously they should contact Gloucestershire Safeguarding Partnership and speak the Local Authority Designate officer (LADO)

### **Safer Working Practices**

The guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings can be found on the GSCB website in the safeguarding in education section.

### **Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body

### **Policy Review**

|                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Policy Title                      | Safeguarding and Child Protection |
| Date Policy Ratified by Governors | April 2021                        |
| Committee Responsible             | Behaviour and Safety              |
| Date for next review              | April 2022                        |

Other relevant school policies:

Safer Recruitment

Intimate care

Staff behaviour / code of conduct

Online safety

Anti bullying / conflict resolution

Children Missing Education

Acceptable Use Policy

Attendance

Behaviour

