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# Belfairs Academy



## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy September 2024**

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## SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR BELFAIRS ACADEMY

### KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE ACADEMY

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<b>DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD(S):</b>	Tracy Foster Ross Williams Natalie Rowland
<b>DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:</b>	Dominic Carver

### KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

<p><b>MASH+</b> <b>Children's Social Care,</b> <b>Southend Borough Council:</b> Where schools have concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person.</p> <p><b>OUT OF OFFICE HOURS:</b> To make URGENT referrals</p>	<p>01702 215007</p> <p><a href="mailto:mash@southend.gov.uk">mash@southend.gov.uk</a> (unsecure)</p> <p>0345 606 1212</p>
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## Contents

1.	Introduction .....	4
2.	Statutory framework .....	4
3.	Academy Commitment.....	6
4.	Roles and responsibilities .....	7
5.	Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues .....	9
6.	Children potentially at risk of greater harm .....	15
7.	Procedures.....	16
8.	Training .....	17
9.	Professional confidentiality .....	17
10.	Records and information sharing.....	17
11.	Interagency working .....	18
12.	Allegations or concerns about people working with children .....	19
13.	TYPES OF ABUSE & SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES.....	20
14.	Use of reasonable force .....	25
15.	Whistleblowing .....	25
16.	Appendix A: Children's Service Key Contacts.....	26
17.	Appendix B: Southend Windscreen of Need and Levels of Intervention.....	27
18.	Appendix C: Belfairs Safeguarding Reporting Process .....	29

## 1. Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. 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.

This Child Protection policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our academy and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' \(HMG, 2015\)](#)
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Annex C of KCSIE)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- the Belfairs Behaviour for Learning policy;
- Educational Visits and Trips Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Remote Learning Policy
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education;

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or 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

Our academy has a whole-academy approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do and underpins all systems, processes and policies. It is important that our values are understood and shared by all children, staff, parents / carers, governors and the wider academy community. Only by working in partnership, can we truly keep children safe.

## 2. Statutory framework

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together \(DfE, 2018\)](#) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work

together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements sit under the [Southend Safeguarding Partnership](#).

In Southend, the statutory partners are Southend-on-Sea City Council, Essex Police and one of the three Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) covering the county of Essex; Mid & South Essex ICB.

Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#) (*Section 157 for Independent schools*) places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the academy.

In Southend, all professionals must work in accordance with the [SET Procedures](#). Our academy also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(DfE, 2018\)](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015 \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Children and Social Work Act \(2017\)](#)

[Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE, 2016\)](#)

[Sexual Offences Act \(2003\)](#)

[Education \(Pupil Registration\) Regulations 2006](#)

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(HMG, 2018\)](#)

[Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Searching, screening and confiscation \(DfE, 2022\)](#)

[Children Act \(1989\)](#)

[Children Act \(2004\)](#)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(DfE, 2017\)](#)

[Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 \(S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015\)](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance \(Home Office, 2018\)](#)

[Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies \(DfE July 2013\)](#)

[The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers \(DfE, June 2015\)](#)

[Teaching online safety in schools – Guidance 2023](#)

### **3. Academy Commitment**

Our academy is committed to keeping children safe and aims to:

- Create a culture of vigilance where the welfare of our students is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken.
- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that students know that there are adults within the academy who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Ensure students receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This includes identifying emerging problems and those children who may benefit from early help.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law, our values and to promote respect for all others.
- Facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government.
- Provide a curriculum which actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations.
- Make parents/carers aware of the academy policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.
- Promote positive mental health and resilience. Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that the academy plays a key part in this. Our trust wants to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all students and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience.
- Understand that both the mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and need to be monitored by staff. All staff (including support staff) need to inform a DSL immediately of any mental health concerns that are accompanied by a safeguarding concern.
- Some children have an increased risk of abuse and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children from diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities.
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult circumstances for example in temporary accommodation or where there is substance abuse or domestic violence issues.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to having family members that have mental health issues
- Are looked after or previously looked after
- Have a social worker

**Belfairs is committed to keeping students safe and work in partnership with outside agencies and the police to ensure awareness of county lines, CSE and CCE and support the work of the police in counteracting this threat.**

**It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of all our students. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with the academy, so that appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.**

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our academy with these specific responsibilities (the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead) are shown on the cover sheet of this document. However, we are clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.

#### **The governing body**

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our academy are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named on the front cover of this document. This governor takes strategic responsibility at governing body level for safeguarding

arrangements in our academy. The governing body ensures there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one Deputy Safeguarding Lead in place (also named on the front cover).

The governing body ensures the academy contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The governing body ensures that all adults in our academy who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate and that it is regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.

The governing body ensures our students are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We work in accordance with government regulations which make the subjects of Relationships, Sex & Health Education (for secondary age pupils) mandatory.

The governing body and senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring the academy follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the academy's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in the academy.

## **The Headteacher**

The [Teachers' Standards 2012](#) (updated 2021) state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. The Headteacher works in accordance with all statutory requirements for safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

## **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy / Deputies)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in our academy has ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies, ensuring all staff are appropriately trained and raising awareness of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in the academy (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) are aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to Southend Children's Social Care (C-SPOC ) are made in accordance with



current [SET Procedures](#). They work with the local authority and other agencies as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

Further guidance on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex C of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#).

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will act in their absence.

### **All academy staff**

Everyone in our academy has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. Any child may benefit from early help and all staff members are aware of the local early help process and our role in it. They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff members are aware of and follow academy processes (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) – they do not assume that others have taken action.

### **5. Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues**

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#) describes abuse in the following way:

*“Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.”*

Keeping Children Safe in Education refers to different forms of child-on-child abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our staff will always reassure children who report abuse / victims of abuse that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor make them feel they are causing a problem.

All staff in our academy are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware of environmental factors which may impact on a child's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). We understand that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely 'stand-alone' events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

In addition, staff are aware of other types of abuse and safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. We understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and / or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual / non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images can be signs that children are at risk.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. In Southend, the definition of [Child Sexual Exploitation \(CSE\) from the Department of Education \(DfE, 2017\)](#) has been adopted:

*"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".*

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our academy is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.

## **Children absent from education**

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our academy recognises that a child absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the academy procedures for unauthorised absence and for children absent from education. It is also recognised that, when not in the academy, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep children in the academy whenever possible.

Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Missing Education and Child Employment Service, Social Care or Police). Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the academy, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to.

Our academy complies with [Children missing education \(DfE, September 2016\)](#) and [Southend on Sea Borough Council Early Help and Family Support Children Missing Education Guidance \(November 2023\)](#).

Our academy must inform the Local Authority of any student who has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more without a good reason, and the academy has satisfied all avenues of enquiry and is unsuccessful tracing the student.

We work in accordance with the Southend City Council's Children Missing Education Guidance Policy and our own academy's attendance policy.

Our academy also complies with the regulations regarding Elective Home Education (Regulation 12 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended 2016) and Southend's guidance <http://www.southendlearningnetwork.co.uk/Services/4834>

Our academy notifies the Elective Home Education Team via secure email to [ehesouthend.gov.uk](mailto:ehesouthend.gov.uk) at the earliest opportunity and, when relevant, immediately provides a copy of the parents written notification to home educate and the date they came off roll.

## **Children removed from school admission register**

The academy will notify the Local Authority when it is about to remove a students name from the academy admission register under any of the grounds set out in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) and [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022](#).

When removing a students' name, the notification to the Local Authority will include:

- a) the full name of the student,

- b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the student normally resides,
- c) at least one telephone number of the parent,
- d) the students future address and destination school, if applicable, and
- e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the students name is to be removed from the admission register.

The academy will make all reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the Local Authority, before deleting the students name from the register, if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii)

## **Contextual safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our academy. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

## **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Our academy recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

## **So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage)**

*Female Genital Mutilation* (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the [Serious Crime Act 2015 \(Home Office, 2015\)](#) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our academy will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

A *forced marriage* is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

## **Mental health**

Our staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that academies play a key part in this. Our academy aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all students and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our students. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with the academy, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

## **Online safety**

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. Any student can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage and personal circumstance. We want to equip our students with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world.

The range of online risks could be categorised as:

**content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, suicide, racist or radical and extremist views;

**contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;

**conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying

**commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and / or financial scams

All staff in our academy are aware of the risks to children online and we seek to help children keep themselves safe online in a range of ways - further information about our approach to online safety is available in our E-Safety / Acceptable Use / Remote Learning policies.

## **Child-on-child abuse**

Our academy may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at the academy, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our academy recognises that some children may abuse their peers and that this may happen in the academy, or outside of it. Any incidents of child-on-child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

Our academy recognises that, even though child-on-child abuse / harmful sexual abuse may not be reported, it is likely that it is occurring and we are clear there is a zero tolerance to inappropriate or abusive behaviour. We understand the barriers which may prevent a child from reporting abuse and work actively to remove these.

Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence / sexual harassment, 'up-skirting', 'sexting' or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in our academy and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs, challenging inappropriate behaviours when they occur – we do not normalise abuse, nor allow a culture where it is tolerated.

We use lessons, tutor period and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our academy understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor that they are creating a problem by doing so. Please refer to [Sexual Harassment, Behaviour \(Incl. Anti-Bullying\), Relationship and Sex Education Policies](#).

## **Prevention of radicalisation**

As of July 2015, the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Our academy operates in accordance with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Social Care and / or the Channel Panel.

## **Serious violence**

All staff are aware of the risk factors and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from the academy, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

## **6. Children potentially at risk of greater harm**

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

Our academy understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- The potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs

- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

## 7. Procedures

Our academy works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support (through a Child in Need or a Child Protection Plan).

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the academy who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead), so that discussion can take place regarding whether any support for the child can be managed internally via the academy's own pastoral support process, or if an early help assessment is indicated, or a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police.

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance:

- Southend Children's Safeguarding Partnership guidelines - the [SET Procedures](#) (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(DfE, 2018\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused \(HMG, 2015\)](#)
- [The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers \(DfE, June 2015\)](#)

Any staff member or visitor to the academy must refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If the child is in immediate danger, or at risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to Children's Social Care and/or the Police. A telephone referral to Children's Social Care must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours, using the C-SPOC Check form to provide the information required. [All safeguarding concerns are triaged by C-SPOC according to the level of support that will be needed.](#)

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, all staff understand they should press for re-consideration of the case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If, for any reason, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) is not available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the academy to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding



support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to Social Care where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our academy they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy/deputies) and how to share concerns with them.

## **8. Training**

In line with statutory requirements, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy/deputies) undertake child protection training specifically for Designated Safeguarding Leads at least every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Southend Children's Safeguarding Partnership. In addition, all staff members and other adults working with children in our academy receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any child protection training undertaken are kept for all staff and governors.

The academy ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate.

## **9. Professional confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

## **10. Records and information sharing**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our academy is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our academy and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the [Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#) places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly,

human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection are recorded on a green safeguarding form and handed to a DSL as well as recording the concern in full on Safeguard and this will be picked up and dealt with by DSL and regularly reviewed by the safeguarding team; and our online academy privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes. This record will include date, time and location and who is reporting the concern. The DSL will agree the course of action and deal with concern appropriately. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

In line with statutory guidance, where a student transfers from our academy to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting without delay, separate from their main pupil file. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Care will be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible.

We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our academy *unless there is a specific reason for us to keep it, which will be recorded (for example, we still have siblings in the school and the records relate to them too, or there is an ongoing complaint or request for access to records).*

*We will also keep a record of having received confirmation from the receiving school and of the date when we destroyed our copy.*

Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may also make contact with the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

Where a pupil joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

## **11. Interagency working**

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure that the academy is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called for children on the academy roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). A report will be made available to a Child Protection Conference Chair, 48 working hours in advance of the Conference, and shared with the parents/carers before the day of the Conference. The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the academy has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions and, in the case of a Conference, to express a view, at the end of the meeting, as to whether the child(ren) should be made subject to a Child Protection Plan.

If a child is in the care of the Local Authority or subject to a, Child Protection or Child in Need Plan, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure the child is monitored regarding their academy attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the academy is part of the core group, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure the academy is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection Plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so, and the actions agreed. If there is an unexplained absence of, or injury to a child subject to a Child Protection Plan, the child's allocated Social Worker must be notified immediately.

## **12. Allegations or concerns about people working with children**

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct. The academy works in accordance with statutory guidance and the [SET Procedures](#) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information regarding this.

The academy has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff must be referred to the Headteacher (or the Deputy Headteacher in their absence), as they have responsibility for managing employment issues. Where the allegation concerns an agency member of staff, the Headteacher (or Deputy) will liaise with the agency, while following due process.

Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported direct to the Chair of Governor or chair of the Directors of the Legra Trust who will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The [SET Procedures](#) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Headteacher, senior named person, or the Chair of Governors must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at [LADO@southend.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@southend.gov.uk) using the LADO referral form within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately via email as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to students and parents and HR. The academy does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO. The academy will manage these procedures alongside the academy's disciplinary process, if appropriate, in liaison with the academy's HR Advisor.

Staffing matters are confidential and the academy operates within a statutory framework around Data Protection.

## **13. TYPES OF ABUSE & SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

### **12.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education**

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#) defines abuse as the 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 institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.'

### **12.2 The four main types of abuse referred to in 'Keeping children safe in education' are:**

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual and
- Neglect.

12.3 Our academy is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware that wider environmental factors may impact on a child's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). Staff are aware of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting put children in danger.

12.4 Our academy recognises that there are a number of specific safeguarding issues about which staff need to be aware, including: children absent from education\*, children missing from home or care, child sexual exploitation (CSE)\*, domestic violence, drugs, E safety, fabricated/induced illness, faith abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM)\*, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, violence against women and girls (VAWG), mental health, children with special educational needs and disabilities\*, private fostering\*, prevention of radicalisation\*, teenage relationship abuse, trafficking, child on child abuse\*, which may include bullying (including cyberbullying), on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, sexting or sexually harmful behaviour. Further information regarding some of these issues (as indicated \*) can be found below and these issues are also addressed in Annex A of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#)

12.5 Whilst the academy will ensure that staff avail themselves of opportunities to raise their awareness and gain knowledge regarding these areas, we recognise that expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support in relation to these issues. Government guidance is available on the GOV.UK website and links are provided from [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) \(DfE, 2024\)](#) Other organisations also provide specialist information such as:

- NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>
- TES - <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resources>
- MindEd - <https://www.minded.org.uk/course/view.php?id=402>

## 12.6 Child-on-child abuse

Our academy recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of child-on-child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, 'up-skirting' 'sexting' or sexually harmful behaviour. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in the academy and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Child-on-child abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Our academy understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. Please see our Behaviour and Equality policies for more information.

The academy will use the guidance set out in:

- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#) Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE, July 2017)
- [Sexting in school and colleges Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people \(December 2020\)](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges>

## 12.7 Children with special educational needs and disabilities:

Our academy understands that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

This can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

## 12.8 Children absent from education

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our academy recognises that a child absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the academy procedures for unauthorised absence and for children absent from education. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Missing Education and Child Employment Service, Social Care or Police).

Our academy complies with Children missing education (DfE, September 2016) and [Southend on Sea Borough Council Early Help and Family Support Children Missing Education Guidance \(November 2023\)](#). Our academy must inform the Local Authority of any student who has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more without a good reason, and the academy has satisfied all avenues of enquiry and is unsuccessful in tracing the student.

Our academy also complies with the regulations regarding Elective Home Education (Regulation 12 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended 2016) and Southend's guidance: <http://www.southendlearningnetwork.co.uk/Services/4834>

Our academy notifies the Elective Home Education Team via secure email to [ehes@southend.gov.uk](mailto:ehes@southend.gov.uk) at the earliest opportunity and, when relevant, immediately provides a copy of the parents written notification to home educate and the date they came off roll. Please see our attendance policy for more information.

### **12.9 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

The statutory definition of CSE taken from Working Together is; 'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology'. ([Working Together to Safeguard Children \(HMG, 2020\)](#))

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our academy is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the named CSE Lead in the academy on these issues and will work with other agencies as appropriate

Our academy is committed to raising awareness of CSE and will use the guidance set out in [Child sexual exploitation Definition and a guide for practitioners \(DfE, February 2017\)](#)

We have an identified CSE Champion, Mr Johan Zweistra, who has received training in this area and attends the SSCP Champions' Forum. Our academy uses the SSCP Risk Assessment Toolkit <http://cse-toolbox.uk/> and reports any information to Essex Police on a report form, as well as referring to MASH+ or for Early Help Family Support Assessment, as appropriate.

### **12.10 Child criminal exploitation & serious violence**

Child criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity (county lines is when drug networks or gangs groom



and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas and seaside towns). Our academy works with key partners locally to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation.

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

### **12.11 Contextual safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside our academy and/or can occur between children outside of the academy. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact that they should consider whether wider environmental factors presented in a child's life are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

### **12.12 Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Our academy recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

### **12.13 So-called 'honour-based abuse' (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse. As of October 2015, the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the DSL, who will notify the police personally of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our academy will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with 'Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation' (HMG, April 2016) and existing local safeguarding procedures.

Our staff are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), or already having suffered FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Staff should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital

mutilation can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>.

A Forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

## 12.14 Prevention of radicalisation

As of July 2015, the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

As outlined in KCSIE 2024, the academy adheres to the definitions and guidelines below:  
*‘Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools’ or colleges’ safeguarding approach.*

- *Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.*
- *Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.*
- *Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.’*
- *Staff should inform DSL immediately of any forms of radicalisation or concerns around a child and any actions taken.*

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children/young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.



Our academy works in accordance with local procedures for Prevent and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns, as appropriate.

[The Prevent duty](#) (DfE, Aug 2015) and the [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales'](#) (HMG, April 19).

### **12.15 Private Fostering**

As an academy we must make sure that privately fostered children are properly and safely cared for. Local Authorities are under a legal duty to ensure the welfare of a privately fostered child is being promoted and safeguarded and are therefore required to undertake assessments of proposed or actual private fostering arrangements. As such, we will always inform the Local Authority when we are notified about such an arrangement or become aware of one. "A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a Local Authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989, i.e., a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child."

### **12.16 Children Looked After (CLA)**

Our academy has a Designated Teacher for students who are CLA. The Designated Teacher attends CLA Reviews, PEP meetings and liaises with the child's Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and with the Local Authority Virtual School Headteacher, who is responsible for the progress of children looked after. A previously looked after child remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe.

### **14. Use of reasonable force**

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our academy works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force (*see section 2*) and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

### **15. Whistleblowing**

All members of staff and the wider academy community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the academy leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place and these are available in the academy Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not

been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Parents or others in the wider academy community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## 16. Appendix A: Children’s Service Key Contacts

<p><b>C-SPOC</b>  <b>Children’s Social Care,</b>  <b>Southend City Council:</b>          Where schools have concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person.</p> <p><b>OUT OF OFFICE HOURS:</b>          To make URGENT child protection referrals</p>	<p>01702 215007</p> <p><b>9am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday 9am – 4.30pm Friday</b></p> <p><a href="mailto:c-spoc@southend.gov.uk">c-spoc@southend.gov.uk</a></p> <p>0345 606 1212</p>
<p><b>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</b></p>	<p>01702 534591 (Direct) 9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday 9am – 4pm Friday</p> <p><a href="mailto:LADO@southend.gov.uk">LADO@southend.gov.uk</a></p>

**17. Appendix B: Southend Windscreen of Need and Levels of Intervention**



Nothing is more important than the welfare of a child. Parents and carers have the primary responsibility for their children. However, local authorities, working with partner agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and protect the welfare of all the children and young people in their area and everyone who comes into contact with children and young people has a role to play.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children can be defined as:

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out a clear expectation that local agencies will work together and collaborate to identify children and young people with additional needs and provide support as soon as a problem emerges. Working Together is a statutory guidance and all practitioners working, or having contact with, children and young people are required to read and understand it so they can meet their legal obligation to keep children safe.

Providing early help is far more effective in promoting the welfare of children – and keeping them safe – than reacting later when any problems, for example neglect, may have become more entrenched. The importance of using a child-centred approach in following the child’s journey is also emphasised. All services which are provided must be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of the individual child in their family and community context.

Along the continuum of services become increasingly targeted and specialised according to the level of need. Children’s needs are not static, and they may experience different needs – at different points of the continuum – throughout their childhood years.

The continuum of need matrix does not provide an exhaustive list but provides examples that can be used as a tool to assist assessment, planning and decision making when considering the needs of children/young people and their safeguarding needs in particular. Any safeguarding indicators of concern should always be considered alongside any related needs. It should be remembered that some children/young people will have additional vulnerability because of their disability or complex needs and the parental response to the vulnerability of the child must be considered when assessing needs and risks.

Southend on Sea have adopted the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) to help professionals from across the partnership to support families where neglect is a key feature; this forms part of a wider piece of work in addressing childhood neglect. The GCP2 is a tool designed to provide an objective measure of the care of children who are, or maybe suffering from neglect. It is primarily based on the qualitative measure of the commitment shown by parents or carers in meeting their children's developmental, emotional, physical and safety needs. Information is available on the Safeguarding Partnership website <https://safeguardingsouthend.co.uk/>

Where there is an urgent and immediate need to protect a child, dial 999 to contact the Police. Otherwise for all other children/young people who may be at risk of significant harm, contact MASH+ as soon as possible.

**Acknowledgement:**

We acknowledge the Essex County Council model Child Protection Policy which contributed to the development of this model policy.

## 18. Appendix C: Belfairs Safeguarding Reporting Process

# Belfairs Safeguarding Reporting Process

