



Ferndown
Middle School

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Review Body/Role: School Standards Board	Date: 25 September 2025
Review Date: Summer 2026	Review Frequency: Annually

This policy is given to all staff, governors/trustees to read and acknowledge annually at the start of the academic year.

SOUTHERN EDUCATION TRUST
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

The health, safety and well-being of ALL our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of KCSIE and this policy as:-

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the 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.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025).

Note for clarity:

Safeguarding – the umbrella term for preventative strategies that promote a child/ren's welfare, which aim to stop abuse or neglect before it starts. (This would also encompass safer recruitment, e-safety, safeguarding training etc.)

Child protection – the process of protecting a child/ren once abuse or neglect has been identified or is suspected. (This tells staff what to do if they have concerns about a child/ren.)

In our school, we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.

Ferndown Middle School teaches respect, independence, inclusion and PSHCE, as part of the National Curriculum including the latest statutory guidance for Relationships and Sex and Health education (September 2020) that teaches children how to be safe and keep safe. This helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, including those associated with being online and how to behave in response to them. This policy applies to all staff, governors, trustees and volunteers working in our school.

The Role of School Staff

School staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in this policy, which are in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

Our school has a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care.

The designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) work with staff to ensure they have a complete safeguarding picture and are the most appropriate people to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

As per The Teachers' Standards 2012, teachers (which includes headteachers) should at all times be cognisant of their duty to safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025)

Ferndown Middle School is committed to ensuring that staff, leaders and governors create a positive culture and ethos where safeguarding is an important part of everyday life, backed up by training at every level. There is a culture of vigilance where children's welfare is promoted and timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children who need extra help or who may be suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. Staff have an 'it could happen here' ethos and know that early intervention is more effective in promoting the welfare of children rather than reacting later. They are prepared to take actions as well as prevent incidents. This is supported through regular and appropriate training that is received by ALL staff.

Ferndown Middle School is committed to ensuring that staff and other adults receive regular supervision and support if they are working directly and regularly with children and learners whose safety and welfare are at risk. Staff are made aware that safeguarding incidents/behaviours can occur outside school or college or be associated with outside factors; safeguarding doesn't stop at the school gate.

2. Policy Statement

This policy has been developed to ensure compliance with Section 175, Education Act 2002, Section 11 CA 2004 and Working Together 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. Ferndown Middle School will follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Safeguarding Children Partnership

procedures and implement recommendations from child safeguarding practice reviews to improve ways in which Ferndown Middle School works to protect children.

3. Aims and Objectives

This policy ensures that all staff are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. These aims are supported through thorough training at every level for all staff.

Its aims are PREVENTION, PROTECTION and SUPPORT.

Its objectives are:-

- to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting actual and possible cases of abuse;
- to ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
- to lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection, with reference to the LCSB procedures, to ensure that all children feel safe to learn (this includes who to report concerns to);
- to promote effective and transparent liaisons with other agencies to protect all children.

We are committed to working with children to ensure that they are helped to keep themselves safe from bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism, criminal exploitation and other forms of discrimination.

We are committed to providing early help, as this is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. It means providing support as soon as a problem emerges. Therefore, we work to identify concerning behaviour as soon as possible.

It is important to note that our responses will be age appropriate and may not always involve the use of these technical terms.

4. Procedures

Systems are in place to ensure that all discriminatory behaviours are challenged and help and support are given to children about how to treat each other with respect. All aspects of safeguarding are included in individual school PSHCE/Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (September 2020) curriculums so that children are taught to keep themselves safe.

We are committed to identifying any risks associated with children and learners offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harming, going missing, being vulnerable to radicalisation or being sexually or criminally exploited, they are known by the adults who care for them and shared with social care or other relevant agencies. There are plans and help in place that are reducing the risk of potential harm, or actual harm, and there is evidence that the impact of these risks is being minimised. These risks are kept under regular review and there is regular and effective liaison with other agencies where appropriate.

There is a named person who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least two deputies. This is normally the Headteacher but s/he may delegate this responsibility in some circumstances to a deputy lead. There are named governors with responsibility for safeguarding who can be contacted via the school office.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will report to the senior leadership team and Local Governing Body regularly and carry out an annual audit of safeguarding which will be shared with the Board.

The role of the DSL is to lead in all matters relating to safeguarding and online safety within the setting. They will have the appropriate training, authority, time, funding, support and resources to fulfil the duties in the job description (KCSIE).

The Southern Education Trust has a named person as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Trust and there is a named trustee with responsibility for safeguarding on the Local Governing Board and the Trust Board. Local Governing Bodies also have named governors.

Ferndown Middle School's DSL is also the Prevent Lead. They will be responsible for assessing the risk of pupils being radicalised or being drawn into terrorism and knowing what to do to support those assessed as being at risk. The Prevent Lead will work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that children are always kept safe from extremist material, including whilst accessing the internet.

We are committed to working with other agencies to identify and reduce the risks of child sexual and criminal exploitation. We aim to raise awareness with parents, staff and pupils and to provide advice or signpost parents to further advice.

Ferndown Middle School is committed to ensuring that children are supported, protected and informed about the action which is being taken in relation to a safeguarding concern or child protection referral. Staff always listen to the views of children in relation to safeguarding concerns both relating to themselves or to other children and act on these concerns.

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

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or parents feigns the symptoms or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious or fictitious illness by proxy.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

We will do everything in our power to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, we will support them and keep them safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Harassment

For school staff, identifying inappropriate sexual behaviour can be a complex task. Children and adolescents are normally sexually curious and may behave inappropriately with each other – the boundary between sexual harassment and sexually abusive behaviour can be difficult to define.

Indicators of sexually abusive behaviour include:

- A significant age difference (4+ years) between children involved in sexual behaviour. An adolescent who seems interested in younger children would give rise to concern.
- Sexual behaviour involving bribery, threats or force. Children without the intellectual or physical resources to resist abuse are particularly vulnerable.
- A level of sexual knowledge inconsistent with what would normally be expected.
- Sexually intrusive/aggressive behaviour – poking objects or parts of bodies into their orifices. Defining behaviour as sexual harassment is difficult and a major issue is likely to be whether the sexual contact is consensual or not. A boy groping a girl may be an incident of inept behaviour by an immature adolescent, it may indicate that the person has the potential to become a sexual offender, it may indicate that they themselves are a victim of abuse.

In all cases, it is essential that these incidents are treated seriously. Details must be recorded accurately and passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The needs of the victim must be addressed, in addition to ensuring that the perpetrator is educated to understand the seriousness of their behaviour.

Parents of both children should be contacted to give them an opportunity to support their child. It must be remembered that a criminal offence may have been committed, and the parents of the victim have the right to pursue a complaint against someone who has assaulted their son/daughter. It must also be remembered that one or both parents/carers or a close relative may be the perpetrators.

Child on Child Abuse

All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers, both inside and out of school.

There are different forms of child on child abuse, such as:

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment. Parts one, two and five of Keeping Children Safe in Education set out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Bullying and cyberbullying.
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Sexting (also known as youth-produced sexual imagery). The DfE provides Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) Education Group has published Advice for Schools and Colleges on Responding to Sexting Incidents.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Upskirting. This typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Serious Violence. All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.
- Abuse within an intimate partner relationship.

Staff in our school:

- Are vigilant for signs of child on child abuse.
- Understand that, even if there are no reports in school, it does not mean it is not happening. They will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns, no matter how seemingly small.
- Understand their role in preventing this behaviour and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. They will therefore challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers which may include, although not limited to:
 - Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying);
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
 - Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
 - Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
 - Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
 - Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Ferndown Middle School is aware that some children may be particularly vulnerable and have an increased risk of abuse. Ferndown Middle School will recognise that children with SEND or certain health conditions are three times more likely to be abused by their peers, can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child-on-child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. Ferndown Middle School will consider extra pastoral support for those children.

Ferndown Middle School understands that all pupils have the right to be safeguarded from harm regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality or disability and will ensure that all schools within the trust give special consideration to, amongst others, children who:

- Have SEND.
- Are vulnerable to being bullied.
- Are looked after or living in unsupportive home situations.

The DSL will ensure they appropriately assess all instances of child-on-child abuse, including in cases of image-based abuse, to help determine whether the alleged perpetrator(s) is under the age of 18 or is an adult posing as a child. The DSL will immediately refer the case if it is found that a so-called child-on-child abuse incident involves an adult, e.g. where an adult poses as a child online to groom a child or young person.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Children or young people may be tricked into believing that they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some indicators of children being sexually exploited are:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- Drug and alcohol misuse;
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

A child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching. Sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence. It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17-year-old if that person holds a position of trust or authority in relation to the young person. Non-consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim. If the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or his/her family has been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent and therefore offences may have been committed.

CSE is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18. Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 13 is, or may be, sexually active, whether or not they are a pupil of Ferndown Middle School, this will result in an immediate referral to Social Care. In the case of a young person between the ages of 13 and 16, an individual risk assessment will be conducted in

accordance with the Child Protection Procedures. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

National guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Gangs and organised criminal networks have increasingly exploited children and vulnerable adults in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They use children to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. Perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or trap/coerce them into debt. The term 'county lines' is used to describe this behaviour.

Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some potential indicators of county lines involvement and exploitation are listed below, with those at the top of particular concern:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and/or being found out-of-area;
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls and/or having multiple handsets;
- Relationships with controlling/older individuals or groups;
- Leaving home/care without explanation;
- Suspicion of physical assault/unexplained injuries;
- Parental concerns;
- Carrying weapons;
- Significant decline in school results/performance;
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks;
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

Any concerns will be addressed by using Ferndown Middle School's safeguarding process, in which schools will work together with other agencies including the National Police Chief Council (NPCC) to identify and reduce risks relating to CSE and CCE.

Honour Based Abuse

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth causing danger to the child and mother and/or death.

FGM is a deeply embedded social norm, practised by families for a variety of complex reasons. It is often thought to be essential for a girl to become a proper woman and to be marriageable. The practice is not required by any religion. FGM is an unacceptable practice for which there is no justification. It is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls.

FGM is prevalent in 30 countries. These are concentrated in countries around the Atlantic coast to the Horn of Africa, in areas of the Middle East such as Iraq and Yemen, it has also been documented in communities in Colombia, Iran, Israel, Oman, The United Arab Emirates, The Occupied Palestinian Territories, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. It has also been identified in parts of Europe, North America and Australia. FGM is illegal in the UK.

It is estimated that approximately 60,000 girls aged 0-14 were born in England and Wales to mothers who had undergone FGM; approximately 103,000 women aged 15-49 and approximately 24,000 women aged 50 and over have migrated to England and Wales who are living with the consequences of FGM. In addition, approximately 10,000 girls under 15 who have migrated to England and Wales are likely to have undergone FGM.

A requirement introduced on 31 October 2015 requires that teachers, including qualified teachers or persons who are employed or engaged to carry out teaching work in schools or other institutions, to report to the police 'known' cases of FGM in girls aged under 18. It is now a legal requirement on teachers to report concerns. The duty applies to any teacher who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work', whether or not they have qualified teacher status, in maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, non-maintained special schools, sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies, relevant youth accommodation or children's homes in England. The duty does not apply in relation to suspected cases – it is limited to 'known' cases (i.e. those which are visually identified or disclosed to a professional by the victim).

The duty does not apply in cases where the woman is over 18 at the time of the disclosure/discovery of FGM (even if she was under 18 when the FGM was carried out). Further information on this duty can be found in the document 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – Procedural Information'.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in the case of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be:

- Physical – for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence;
- Emotional and psychological – for example, making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family;
- Financial abuse, for example taking someone's wages, may also be a factor.

Any concerns from staff members or parents will be dealt with by Ferndown Middle School's DSL.

National guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

Breast Ironing

Breast ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breasts to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases, breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa.

Safeguarding from Extremism

Ferndown Middle School will do its utmost to safeguard pupils from being drawn into extremism and terrorism, whilst also ensuring it protects the right to freedom of expression. This policy is not intended or designed to restrict or prevent legitimate and lawful congregation or debate.

Ferndown Middle School has a dedicated DSL who deals with any incidents of extremism and/or terrorism within our school community. As is Ferndown Middle School's responsibility under law, we will do our utmost to safeguard our pupils from being drawn into extremism and terrorism.

Ferndown Middle School has strong relationships with our local safeguarding partners and will involve them at the earliest opportunity if safeguarding issues arise.

Ferndown Middle School will encourage any pupil, parent, staff member or member of the wider school community to speak to the DSL if they have concerns about:

- Pupils becoming radicalised.
- Groups, clubs or societies with extremist or radical views.
- Friends and/or families of pupils becoming radicalised or involved in extremism.
- Pupils planning to visit known areas of conflict.
- Members of Ferndown Middle School and wider community attempting to draw young and/or vulnerable pupils into extremism.

Visitors and speakers coming into Ferndown Middle School will be vetted prior to them having access to pupils. All materials handed out to pupils, whether by teachers or visitors and speakers, will be checked by the headteacher. Due diligence checks will also be carried out on those hiring and using Ferndown Middle School's premises.

Ferndown Middle School will incorporate appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to limit pupils' exposure to online risks, including extremist content.

The DSL and ICT team will work together to ensure that there is a clear reporting process in place where filtering systems raise safeguarding or prevent-related concerns.

Preventing radicalisation

Ferndown Middle School will assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism through identifying the factors that affect children in the local area and knowing how to identify those at risk.

Allegations and concerns of radicalisation and/or terrorism will always be taken seriously and staff will act proportionately, which may include making a Prevent referral.

Ferndown Middle School is aware that extremist propaganda is widely available online and will educate pupils to ensure that British values are promoted regularly to encourage pupils to develop an appreciation of society. Ferndown Middle School will work with local religious and cultural organisations to instil a strong sense of identity in our pupils, as well as a clear place and purpose within the school.

All internet activity that takes place on site will be recorded, as well as activity on any school-owned computers, laptops and tablets off site, and appropriate filters will be installed to protect children from terrorist and extremist material online, in accordance with the Online Safety Policy. In accordance with KCSIE and our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, pupils will be taught about the importance of staying safe online through PSHE lessons.

Ferndown Middle School recognises that pupils' parents and families are best placed to spot signs of radicalisation and, as such, will promote effective engagement with parents and families.

Ferndown Middle School will always aim to integrate and engage every child within the school community, and in the wider community. A range of different religious and cultural festivals will be celebrated across the year giving every pupil the opportunity to take part.

Ferndown Middle School will monitor and assess incidents which suggest pupils are engaging, or are at risk of engaging, in extremist activity and/or radicalisation. Where a pupil has been identified as at risk of radicalisation, Ferndown Middle School will take action proportionate to the incident or risk.

Identifying concerns

Although extremist behaviour can be presented in many forms, Ferndown Middle School recognises the following as potential indicators of radicalisation or a susceptibility to radicalisation:

- Disclosure about extremist or radicalised behaviour by pupils – this could include exposure to materials outside of school
- Use of specific terms associated with certain ideological views, e.g. 'hate' language
- Intelligence reports from local and national agencies regarding the radicalisation of groups of people in the local area
- Focus on specific narratives that highlight particular extremist views
- Evidence of accessing online materials that include extremist materials
- Refusal to accept views expressed by others which is counter to Ferndown Middle School's Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Documented concerns raised by parents or family members about the changing behaviour of the pupil
- References to an extremist narrative in the pupil's work
- Disassociation from existing friendship groups
- A loss of interest in activities in which they previously engaged
- Behavioural characteristics, such as low self-esteem, isolation, and perceptions of failure and injustice
- Family tensions
- Events affecting their country or region of origin
- Alienation from UK values
- Grievance triggered by personal experience of discrimination

- Property damage
- Refusal to cooperate with the requests of teachers or other adults

When assessing whether a pupil is at risk of radicalisation, staff will ask themselves the following questions:

- Does the pupil have access to extremist influences through the internet?
- Does the pupil possess or actively seek extremist material?
- Does the pupil sympathise with, or support, extremist groups or behaviour in their speech or written work?
- Does the pupil's demeanour suggest a new social, religious or political influence, e.g. through jewellery or clothing?
- Has the pupil previously been a victim of discrimination or a religious crime?
- Has the pupil experienced any major disagreements with their peers, family or faith groups, leading to rejection, isolation or exclusion?
- Does the pupil display an irregular and distorted view of religion or politics?
- Does the pupil display a strong objection towards specific cultures, faiths or race?
- Is the pupil a foreign national awaiting a decision regarding deportation or immigration?
- Is there an irregular pattern of travel within the pupil's family?
- Has the pupil witnessed or suffered from trauma or violence in a war zone or through sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence of a relative or family friend displaying extremist views?
- Has the pupil travelled for extended periods of time to international locations?
- Does the pupil have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the pupil display a lack of affinity or understanding for others?
- Is the pupil a victim of social isolation?
- Does the pupil have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?

Critical indicators include where a pupil is:

- In contact with extremist recruiters.
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders.
- Accessing extremist websites.
- In possession of extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining extremist organisations.
- Making significant changes to their appearance and/or behaviour.

Ferndown Middle School will encourage staff to engage with online government resources, including the website Educate Against Hate, and the Prevent e-learning modules provided by the Home Office.

Making a referral

If any member of staff has any concerns about a pupil, they will raise this with the DSL.

Parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and investigate where there are any mitigating home circumstances, unless doing so would put the pupil at further risk of harm. A decision will be made at this meeting to determine whether a referral should be made to Prevent. In most cases, the DSL will refer the case to Prevent where there is a radicalisation concern, as appropriate.

If there is a concern about potential radicalisation into terrorism or reason to believe that someone is susceptible to radicalisation staff members will make referrals using the Prevent national referral form – the DSL will be notified in all cases and will support staff members who do so.

What happens when a person is referred to Prevent?

Prevent referrals will usually follow the process set out below:

1. The local police force will look at each referral first. They will check if there is an immediate security threat. They will also check if there is a genuine risk of radicalisation.
2. If the person isn't at risk of radicalisation, they will not be deemed a case for Prevent. Where appropriate, the person may instead be offered other support, for example being referred to mental health services or social services.
3. If there is a risk of radicalisation, a panel of local experts will assess the referral. The panel is led by the LA and may include the police, children's services, social services, education professionals and mental health care professionals.
4. If the panel decides that a person is at risk, they will be invited to join a support programme called Channel. This is voluntary, so a person can choose whether to take part. If a person chooses not to take part in the programme, they may be offered other support instead and any risk will be managed by the police.

The support provided by the Channel programme may include the following:

- Mentoring
- Mental health support such as counselling
- Education or career development support
- Online safety training for parents

The police will be notified immediately if someone is about to put themselves or others in immediate danger, or if they appear to be involved in planning to carry out a criminal offence and Ferndown Middle School's emergency procedures will be followed.

The DSL will record and retain all incidents for school records in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, as outlined in the Data Protection Policy.

Ferndown Middle School will ensure that all of those involved in a referral understand that referrals are not made to the Home Office and that getting support from Prevent is not a punishment and will not go on a person's criminal record.

Private Fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or by marriage). Great grandparents, great aunts, great uncles and cousins are not regarded as close relatives.

The law requires that the Local Authority should be notified if anyone is looking after someone else's child for 28 days or more. The purpose of the council's involvement is to support the child and private foster family (and wherever possible, the biological parent/s) with any issues arising. These may be practical issues such as benefits, housing, immigration or emotional issues such as keeping contact with biological family, maintaining cultural identity. If we become aware of a child in a private fostering

arrangement, we will notify the council's social care team. Advice about whether there is a need to notify the council can be obtained by calling the Local Authority.

Vulnerable and SEND Pupils

We recognise that pupils who are subject to a child protection order or are a child in need are, or have been, subjects of abuse or neglect or have lived in situations of domestic abuse. In such cases, children may exhibit distressed or challenging behaviours and may not be reaching their full academic potential. It is Ferndown Middle School's responsibility to ensure appropriate supports are in place for these pupils and actively promote the educational outcomes for vulnerable pupils. This is the responsibility of the Designated Teacher.

Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of pupils who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated social worker. If the pupil in question is a looked-after child, this will also be brought to the notice of the designated person with responsibility for children in public care.

We acknowledge that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. We are aware that 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.

If a pupil discloses that they have witnessed domestic abuse or it is suspected that they may be living in a household which is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a safeguarding issue.

Children with mental health/emotional needs

All staff should be aware that mental health problems could be an indicator that a child may have suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Pupils with mental health/emotional issues, or those with parents/siblings identified with mental health issues, will be offered additional support. Staff are well placed to identify behaviour suggestive of a mental health problem or being at risk of developing one and have a duty of care to report this.

All staff will have an awareness of mental health problems as an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation. They should understand the lasting impact of abuse, neglect and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their impact on mental health, behaviour and education, in line with 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance'. We will support pupils with strategies to develop their own emotional wellbeing through carefully planned interventions.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, staff should follow the usual safeguarding procedures.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning.

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they will be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, we will consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that our staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create and uphold a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Alternative Provision

Ferndown Middle School will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, Ferndown Middle School will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff and will satisfy itself that the placement is meeting the pupil's needs.

Those responsible for the commissioning of alternative provision will be aware that pupils in alternative provision will often have complex needs – they will be mindful of the additional risk of harm that these pupils may be vulnerable to.

Work Experience

Ferndown Middle School will ensure that schools have the appropriate procedures in place to ensure that providers of work experience have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Where pupils are undertaking work experience at the trust or one of the schools within the trust, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the pupil is over the age of 16.

Early Help

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. It means providing support as soon as a problem emerges.

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

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need

- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

We work closely with other agencies to identify children and families who would benefit from early help. The wellbeing leads will provide support for children and signpost families to support services such as:

- CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Local Authority's first response team
- Childline
- Kooth
- Mind Charity

More information can be found in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Reporting a Concern

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral will be made to children's social care immediately. We have a team of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher who are fully trained in safeguarding and child protection and should be approached in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead before any referral is handled by an individual.

Anybody can make a referral in the absence of all of the above trained staff. All staff have a duty to report their concerns as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher/Head of School, or CEO.

Staff should always inform the DSL or deputy if they feel that a child in their care shows:

- Different or unusual behaviour (including academic performance).
- Being at risk of suspension/exclusion or subject to multiple suspensions.
- Has a suspicion that a pupil is marked or bruised in a way that is not readily attributed to 'normal' knocks and scrapes.
- Notes behaviours or actions in a pupil which give rise to suspicions that the pupil may have suffered abuse.
- Received hints or a disclosure of any type of abuse from a pupil or from one of their friends.
- Mood changes – becoming withdrawn, depressed, lack of motivation, unusual emotional outbursts.

- Changes in the way the child operates in the classroom, especially relationships between peers.
- A sharing of puzzling statements or stories.
- Change to appearance, including inadequate clothing, poor hygiene, uncared for hair or skin, especially where these have been previously appropriate.
- A sudden need to take other children's food, especially 'break'.
- Any unexplained bruise or injury especially on the head, face or trunk.

Staff sometimes have an 'intuitive feeling' that all is not well with a child in their care that they know well. This in itself is not an indicator of any problems but may cause staff to be more aware of changes as they happen. This needs to be recorded and reported to the DSL. See also "Early Help".

In the first instance, this should be done verbally and then recorded online using Ferndown Middle School's electronic recording systems. However, as in all cases where referral to outside agencies is a possibility, accurate written records are vital. Our safeguarding reporting processes should be used to follow up any concern.

It is important that members of staff do not investigate or follow up suspicions of child abuse themselves, for instance by speaking with and/or questioning pupils or parents. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, together with the Headteacher/Head of School, to make an informed decision as to whether to refer the case to social services. This may be immediately following the expression of concern or after discussion with the pupil, his/her parents or carers, the member of staff, other staff and other agencies as appropriate.

Concerns can be shared with parents/carers in circumstances where sharing information would not put the child at further risk.

While staff must be circumspect about using 'hearsay' evidence, it must not be discounted without thought. Gossip is often, but not always, untrue. Such evidence may, together with other indicators, give us warning of an abusive situation. It is an essential requirement for all members of staff to record any conversation or contact that might be useful as evidence. We require staff to pass on concerns for a pupil's well-being if they hear of issues or are worried about the child. Concerns might include stress/anxiety, self-harming, eating disorder, medical, pregnancy, housing/accommodation issues.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, together with the Headteacher/Head of School, to notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil with a child protection plan. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, together with the Headteacher/Head of School, to ensure that when a pupil with a child protection plan leaves Ferndown Middle School, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed. All records must be kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

Children who are missing from education

Non-attendance could be a "red-flag" for safeguarding concerns. Ferndown Middle School will keep attendance and admissions registers accurate and up to date. The Attendance Policy is regularly updated and understood by all staff. Attendance is monitored regularly on an individual basis to ensure the safety of each child.

Concerns will also reported to the Local Authority.

Staff behaviour

The highest possible standards of behaviour are expected from staff, governors and volunteers. In particular, staff should be on their guard against:

- treating pupils or students as peers by adopting their mannerisms or slang;
- giving inappropriate details to students of their personal lives;
- seeming to favour particular students;
- using physical contact with students that is secretive or of a nature that could be considered indecent;
- not following school policy on searching or restraining students;
- failing to report concerns;
- using emotional abuse against children by ignoring, ridiculing, humiliating, harassing, intimidating, bullying or intentionally singling out any child for negative attention;
- dressing inappropriately.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Headteacher of anything now or in the future that affects, or might affect, their suitability to work with children, including cautions, warnings, convictions, orders or other determinations made that would render them disqualified from working with children under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018, replacement or similar legislation. Failure to notify the Headteacher will be a serious matter, considered as gross misconduct under the Disciplinary process and could result in summary dismissal.

Whilst the statutory duty to disclose an association with a disqualified person has been removed, Ferndown Middle School's duty to safeguard children is one that is of the utmost importance to us. We also have a duty to protect our staff. Therefore, Ferndown Middle School expects staff who may have an association with a disqualified person to disclose this to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will work with the staff member to risk assess the potential danger to children and put strategies in place to protect both the staff member and children. Failure to declare may lead to disciplinary procedures.

The restraint log is always completed whenever a student is restrained. Searching of students always takes place in the presence of at least two members of staff.

Child abuse allegations made against staff

Ferndown Middle School and LSCB have procedures in place to handle allegations made against members of staff and volunteers. Procedures will mirror those set out in Part Four of Keeping Children in Education.

A child protection allegation made against a member of staff (including the Designated Safeguarding Lead) is the responsibility of the Headteacher/Head of School. All such concerns should be accurately recorded and reported to the Headteacher/Head of School as soon as possible.

As stated earlier, the member of staff should undertake no further investigative action. Such allegations should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

A child protection allegation made against the Headteacher/Head of School should be accurately and promptly recorded and referred onto the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Lead who will, if necessary, obtain guidance from the DfE. There are also procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned. Please see Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 4.

Safer Recruitment

We take every precaution to prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children. This is achieved by:

- Adhering to the statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children. In the case of a new appointment, Ferndown Middle School follows the safer recruitment procedure required by government guidance.
- Carrying out DBS checks on all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, temporary, supply or salaried trainees. The details of these are held on a single central record. Supply teachers, whilst not employed by Ferndown Middle School are under the supervision, direction and control of the School Standards Board/Headteacher when working on the site. Any allegation regarding a supply teacher will be dealt with properly and in discussion with the LADO.
- Carrying out online searches for those considered for a position within Ferndown Middle School. As outlined in KCSIE, Trusts and schools are required to carry out online searches of candidates as part of due diligence and safeguarding procedures. Staff shortlisted for the role will be expected to agree to an appropriate online search undertaken on their name(s) should they be successful. A post will be offered, subject to a clear return on these searches. Any information given will be treated as confidential and will only be used in relation to the post for which they have applied.
- Signing the application form and submitting it in respect of the role applied for, prospective employees understand and agree that if shortlisted, an online search will be conducted on their name(s). Depending on the result of the search, Ferndown Middle School may want to explore any findings with applicants during the interview stage.
- Taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised. Ferndown Middle School has written recruitment, selection and appointment policies in place.
- Ensuring at least one member of any appointment panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training in line with safeguarding guidelines. Please see Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 3.

Safety on and off site

The safety of children inside school, moving around, arriving and leaving Ferndown Middle School site are important considerations. Arrangements for this are set out in our Educational Visits and Health and Safety Policies.

Risk assessments are completed and approved before any trips away from the site are undertaken. Residential, overseas and activity trips are logged and monitored by the Local Authority. Children are offered facilities for changing (and, if needed, for showering) that offer them the level of privacy and safety appropriate to their age.

In case of extreme emergencies, schools have a lockdown procedure and have a staff training annually.

Welcoming other visitors/practitioners

Visitors to schools must follow the signing in procedure and read any safeguarding information provided. They will be provided with visitor ID which must be kept on during the visit and returned to the school office on departure, when the visitors will sign out.

Visitors with a practitioner role, such as a school nurse, social worker, educational psychologist or members of the Police will have been vetted to work with children through their own organisation. Visits by these practitioners should be arranged and booked in advance as much as possible. Practitioners will be required to bring their identity badges on all visits and to wear and show them on entry to the site when asked for ID confirmation.

School hirers/external agencies using school premises

Where the governing board hires or rents out school facilities or Ferndown Middle School premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. Ferndown Middle School will refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances. Where the governing board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply.

Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The governing board will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

The governing board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Internet/online safety

Schools will ensure that pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements as the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. In cases of child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

Schools have procedures in place to safeguard all learners from unlawful, sexual or otherwise potentially harmful content on the internet. Information on internet safety and the importance of monitoring internet use will be made available to all parents at least annually.

Online Monitoring and Filtering – to be read in conjunction with the Digital Working Policy/Internet Safety Policy

Ferndown Middle School should provide a safe environment to learn and work, including when online. Filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

No filtering system can be 100% effective. An effective filtering system needs to block internet access to harmful sites and inappropriate content. It should not:

- unreasonably impact teaching and learning or school administration
- restrict students from learning how to assess and manage risk themselves

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that each school takes strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and seeking assurance that filtering and monitoring standards are met.

To do this, Ferndown Middle School's DSL will work with the Trust IT Lead to identify and assign:

- a member of the senior leadership team and a governor, to be responsible for ensuring these standards are met
- the roles and responsibilities of staff and third parties, for example, external service providers

The Trust IT lead, with the Trust senior leadership team (Headteachers) and school-based IT leads, are responsible for:

- procuring filtering and monitoring systems
- documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why
- reviewing the effectiveness of your provision
- overseeing reports

They are also responsible for making sure that all staff:

- understand their role
- are appropriately trained
- follow policies, processes and procedures
- act on reports and concerns

Senior leaders should work closely with governors, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the school-based IT lead and the Trust Strategic IT lead in all aspects of filtering and monitoring.

Day to day management of filtering and monitoring systems requires the specialist knowledge of both safeguarding and IT staff to be effective. The DSL should work closely together with the Trust IT Strategic Lead to meet the needs of each school, including training and support.

The DSL, with the Trust Strategic IT Lead, should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which could include overseeing and acting on:

- filtering and monitoring reports
- safeguarding concerns
- checks to filtering and monitoring systems

The Trust Strategic IT lead will have technical responsibility for:

- maintaining filtering and monitoring systems
- providing filtering and monitoring reports
- completing actions following concerns or checks to systems
- understanding and evaluating the changing needs and potential risks of our schools and review the filtering and monitoring provision, at least annually

They will work with the senior leadership team and DSL to:

- procure systems
- identify risk
- carry out reviews
- carry out checks

The filtering system in our Trust applies to all:

- users, including guest accounts
- school owned devices
- devices (including personal devices) using Ferndown Middle School's broadband connection

Our filtering system:

- filters all internet feeds, including any backup connections
- is age and ability appropriate for the users, and be suitable for educational settings
- handles multilingual web content, images, common misspellings and abbreviations
- identifies technologies and techniques that allow users to get around the filtering such as VPNs and proxy services and block them
- provides alerts when any web content has been blocked

It is important to be able to identify individuals who might be trying to access unsuitable or illegal material so they can be supported by appropriate staff, such as the senior leadership team or the designated safeguarding lead.

Our filtering systems allow us to identify:

- device name or ID, IP address, and where possible, the individual
- the time and date of attempted access
- the search term or content being blocked

In order to ensure we meet all the standards of filtering and monitoring and that safeguarding of pupils is effective, all staff must report to DSLs, senior leaders, or IT leads in a school, if:

- they witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed
- they can access unsuitable material
- they are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering logs
- there is failure in the software or abuse of the system
- there are perceived unreasonable restrictions that affect teaching and learning or administrative tasks
- they notice abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material

5. Monitoring and Record Keeping

Where staff have concerns (see above), it is essential that these concerns are recorded and the child monitored over time using Ferndown Middle School's electronic safeguarding monitoring system and Local Children Safeguarding Board guidance.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Teachers may also be requested to monitor following a case conference or by another agency. They should not, however, be expected to manage cases alone.

Schools can play a vital role in helping abused children and those who are suspected of being abused by the effective monitoring and recording of certain aspects of the child's progress and behaviour in school. This is particularly important when there has been no direct disclosure of abuse, or when a child has communication problems or is too young to give much information. Monitoring in school is particularly valuable because staff are in daily contact with children and used to monitoring them. They are uniquely placed to observe the behaviour of large numbers of children and likely to know what is 'normal' or 'usual' for a particular child.

Good records can be the basis of valuable contributions to child protection conferences and court cases, helping to ensure that sound decisions are made on the child's behalf.

Teachers and other school staff can record, as can other Local Authority staff in regular contact with the child e.g. Educational Social Worker or Psychologist.

All of the following should be recorded as relevant:

- patterns
- changes in mood
- changes in classroom functioning
- relationships (with peers, adults)
- behaviour
- statements, comments, stories, 'news', drawings
- general demeanour and appearance
- parental interest and comments
- home/family changes
- medicals
- response to PE/sport
- injuries/marks, past and present

How the information should be recorded

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make the decision when to start or finish monitoring unless this decision is taken by an outside agency (e.g. after a case conference).
- Information and notes must be recorded on Ferndown Middle School's recording system.
- All notes must record date, time and place, context, adults/others present, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the actual words used by the child.
- If recording bruising or injury, a body map is available on the reporting system.
- Notes should be objective – including statements and observable facts, not interpretations or assumptions.
- Information which bears on a case of child abuse, or the risk of it, are excluded from reports to parents and it is important that it remains totally confidential.

- Requests for information will be dealt with in accordance with the Trust's policy on the Freedom of Information Act. Working notes are not subject to disclosure but must eventually be summarised on file, then destroyed. Information about concerns is therefore kept by the DSL who will keep them in a secure place to ensure confidentiality at all times. This information may be needed as evidence in the future.
- The DSL will collate the information and may ask other staff (as appropriate) for contributions.
- The DSL will decide on further action which may be to contact the parents/social worker or may be to contact parents to find out further information e.g. changes of address, changes to child's home circumstances etc.
- If staff feel they need support with recording, they should refer to the DSL.
- When a concern is raised or an incident investigated, the record may be of a written or verbal disclosure, but pupils are not ordinarily expected to complete and sign written statements.
- After a concern has been raised, staff should take care to ensure consistent wording between reporting on the system and other documentation.

Any action that the named person takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LSCB recording guidance, available online via the website.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. In order to ensure a child's safety, we will share, where appropriate and in line with regulations, information regarding a safeguarding issue with safeguarding partners.

In sharing information as early as possible we will be better able to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. We will ensure due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which includes:

- Being confident of the processing conditions which allow practitioners to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- Understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is a good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protection the safety of children.

6. Escalation

6.1 Introduction

At no time must practitioner disagreement detract from ensuring that the child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain paramount throughout.

This procedure identifies a non-exhaustive list of potential areas of disagreement, guidance on preventing disputes and procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between practitioners at front line level. It does not include procedures when there is a disagreement regarding the need to convene an Initial Child Protection Conference or the implementation of the Child Protection Plan. These complaints should be resolved with the conference chair and if it is not resolved at this stage, should be taken to Stage 2 of the Local Authority Complaints Procedure.

6.2 Potential Areas of Disagreement

- A referral not considered to meet the threshold for assessment by Children's Social Care;
- Children's Social Care conclude that further information should be sought by the referrer before a referral is progressed;
- There is disagreement as to whether child protection procedures should be invoked;
- Children's Social Care and the Police place different interpretations on the need for significant agency response in relation to a child protection enquiry;
- There is a disagreement over the sharing of information and/or provision of services;
- There is disagreement over the outcome of any assessment and whether the appropriate action plan is in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

Where escalation is required, Ferndown Middle School will follow the LSCB escalation procedure.

7. **Partnership With Parents**

Ferndown Middle School is committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We share a purpose with them to educate, keep children safe from harm and have their welfare promoted. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information until we have permission or it is necessary to do so to protect a child. We will ensure that staff share with parents any concerns that they may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. Ferndown Middle School encourages parents to disclose any concerns that they may have with us. All parents are made aware of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and parents are aware that this is on Ferndown Middle School's website.

We follow guidelines set down, and instructions given to us, by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and any advice given by external agencies with regard to sharing information with parents.

We ensure that parents are aware that Ferndown Middle School receive information from the Police to alert the DSL in the school when there has been an incident of domestic abuse in a household where a pupil lives. The DSL is not informed of the detail of the incident, only that one has occurred. This allows Ferndown Middle School to monitor and support the pupil. If staff have additional concerns, we will discuss the need for further safeguarding actions with social care. This information would only be shared with other staff on a restricted 'need-to-know' basis i.e. those who are immediately responsible for the pupil's welfare e.g. the class teacher. Where a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) occurs, Ferndown Middle School may be asked for information and appropriate school-related information may be shared with the school after the meeting.

If a child is referred or assessed as a Child In Need, parents will continue to be informed of the educational progress of the child.

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat this accordingly. We only pass information on to appropriate persons.

Whilst volunteers would never be expected to work unsupervised with children, we do ask them to complete a DBS clearance to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all learners before working with us.

There may be times when adults in our school, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children. The Head Teacher requires the adult involved in any such incident to report this to him/her immediately, and to record it according to school procedures.

8. Training

All adults receive regular (annual) training to raise their awareness of abuse and their knowledge of agreed local child safeguarding procedures. All staff are expected to read updated documents such as Keeping Children Safe in Education, Safeguarding Policy etc.

Governors and Trustees will undertake safeguarding training when first appointed to the role and will be expected to complete annual updates thereafter.

All newly qualified teachers in Ferndown Middle School will be offered training as part of their induction, as appropriate. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that any new member of staff, teaching and non-teaching, is aware of Ferndown Middle School's policy and the requirements of Child Protection Procedures as part of their induction. The designated teacher will attend training as required to enable them to carry out their duties. Training will be addressed for all staff as part of the SDP.

9. Monitoring and Review

Local Governing Bodies regularly review any incidents and will link with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This policy is reviewed annually.

Equality Impact

Ferndown Middle School does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against pupils or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.

Important Contacts

SCHOOL NAME: FERNDOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL

ROLE	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Grant Hopkins	ghopkins@fermid.dorset.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Veronique Giddens	vgiddens@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk
Inclusion Lead	Laura Hitchins	lhitchins@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk
Head Teacher	Grant Hopkins	ghopkins@fermid.dorset.sch.uk
Deputy Head	Alysia Dolan	adolan@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Martha Sharp	lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
LA First Response Team or equivalent	Louise Dodds	safeguardingandstandardsadvisors@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Chair of Governors	Paul Clarke	pclarke@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies – cascade

	ROLE	NAME
1.	DSL	Grant Hopkins
2.	DDSL	Veronique Giddens
3.	DDSL	Alysia Dolan

Reporting system

Name of school's reporting system	My Concern
Name of administrator in school	Veronique Giddens