

Hillcrest Early Years Academy



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Produced by	Chris Inman
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Introduction

Hillcrest Early Years Academy is committed to a strong culture of safeguarding, ensuring that all staff embrace the concept of “it could happen here” and that they recognise that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

We are fully committed to creating a culture of vigilance. We expect everyone who works in and visits our school to share this commitment. We encourage staff, pupils, and visitors to report anything that concerns them, and we will always act in the best interest of the child.

Our pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online, and to recognise when they may be at risk. We ensure our pupils know how to get help when they need it. In line with the latest [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), we place importance on contextual safeguarding and consider risks in our local community when assessing the safety of our pupils.

Our core safeguarding Principles are:

- **Prevention:** Positive, supportive, safe culture, curriculum, social and emotional opportunities for children, and safer recruitment procedures.
- **Protection:** Following the agreed safeguarding procedures, ensuring all staff are regularly trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately, effectively, and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
- **Support:** For all learners, parents, staff, and where appropriate, specific interventions are sought for those who may be at risk of harm, including interventions to support specific emotional needs of our pupils.
- **Working with Parents and other Agencies:** To ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise, ensuring all records are secure, maintained and up to date.

The latest version of this policy is available on the school website and upon request.

Definitions

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, we define safeguarding 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

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Key Contacts

Name	Role	Contact details
Mr Chris Inman	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	chris.inman@hillcrest.lincs.sch.uk
Miss Laura McCutcheon	Deputy DSL(s)	laura.mccutcheon@hillcrest.lincs.sch.uk
Mr Chris Inman	Designated Teacher for CiC and PCiC	Chris.inman@hillcrest.lincs.sch.uk
Mrs Debbie Mitchell	Trustee	debbie.mitchell@hillcrest.lincs.sch.uk
Lincolnshire Children's Social Care	CSC	01522 782111 (WL Business support 01522 552088)
Local Authority Designated Officer	LADO	01522 554674
Lincolnshire Virtual School	Virtual School	virtualschool@lincolnshire.gov.uk 01522 550274

We are part of Lincolnshire local authority. We follow Lincolnshire multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the safeguarding partners. Further detail can be found here <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding/lscp>.

Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies):

- The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding with the support of the Deputy DSLs.
- Be available during term time for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Lead on referrals to local authority children's social care, the Channel Programme where there is a radicalisation concern, the DBS where relevant in relation to allegations of abuse made against staff, and where a crime has been committed to the Police as required with reference to the guidance [NPCC- When to call the police.](#)
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners and share information with them as required.

- Liaise with the Headteacher to keep them informed of issues, especially police investigations and ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Liaise with the case manager as required and the LADO for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Liaise with relevant staff in school, e.g., SENCO, Senior Mental Health Lead, attendance lead, online safety providers etc.
- Promote engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Take lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues of students and through identifying the impact these may have on attendance, engagement and achievement at school.
- Work with staff to ensure that the school knows the cohort of children who have or have had a social worker, their academic progress and attainment and maintain high aspirations for this cohort and support staff to enable these students to meet their potential.
- Ensure records are kept in line with good record-keeping practice as outlined in the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ensure CP files are transferred to new schools within 5 days, ensuring safe transit and confirmation of receipt.
- Ensure that this policy and safeguarding procedures are accessible to all new and existing staff, that this is reviewed at least annually and is available publicly.
- Liaise with local safeguarding partners to ensure that staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies.
- Update training every two years covering the content outlined in KCSIE and ensure any Deputy DSLs also renew this training.
- Update own knowledge and skills at least annually.
- Work to understand the views of students and encourage a culture of listening to students.
- Hold and share information in line with Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the guidance around information sharing in KCSIE.
- Adopt a sensible reasonable force policy which outlines the procedures we follow

Trustees

- Review and approve this policy at each review and hold the headteacher to account over its implementation.
- Appoint a safeguarding Trustee to oversee safeguarding compliance and the effectiveness of this policy.

- Read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- Engage with safeguarding training, including training at induction, that equips the governing body with the skills to provide strategic challenge in relation to safeguarding.
- Be aware of the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) that places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep information they hold safe and secure. In addition, adhere to the [ICO guidance](#), which includes information about the obligations and how to comply with these.
- Review the filtering and monitoring system and processes to ensure compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All staff

- Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Receive safeguarding updates regularly through an annual training plan which includes quizzes, online training and 7 minute briefings and at least annually that provide the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Understand the local early help process and staff's role in relation to it and the circumstances students may be in who might benefit from this as listed in part 1 of KCSIE.¹
- Understand the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (child protection) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments, for example supporting the safeguarding team with collecting information for enquiries or multi-agency meetings.
- Understand that the process for making referrals locally is by reporting concerns via 01522 782111.

¹ *E.g., 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.*

- know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Know not to promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and assure them that they are not causing a problem by reporting.
- Be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/ or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent professional curiosity and discussions with the DSL.
- Know the indicators of abuse and neglect and exercise professional curiosity and that such issues are rarely standalone ones.
- Be aware of extra-familial and/ or contextual risks which occur outside of the families e.g., sexual abuse, domestic abuse, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.
- Be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and the risks young people face online.
- Know how to report concerns about safeguarding practices within the school via whistleblowing procedures or other means.
- Know how to report concerns if staff have a safeguarding concern, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) harming or posing a risk of harm to children through the following process:
 - Headteacher
 - Concerns about the Headteacher to the chair of trustees, and
 - The ability to report directly to the LADO where there is a conflict of interest.
- Read and understand part 1, and Annex B of Keeping Children in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- Attend and engage with induction training, including reading and understanding our:
 - child protection policy
 - behaviour policy and the measures taken to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
 - the staff code of conduct
 - safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

Responding to and recording concerns

Why are you concerned?

- For example
 - Something a child has said – e.g., allegation of harm
 - Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
 - Behaviour change
 - Witnessed concerning behaviour

Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first.

- Follow the school procedure
 - Reassure the child
 - Clarify concerns, using open questions if necessary (**TED: Tell, Explain, Describe**)
 - Use child's own words, record facts not opinions.
 - Record information onto CPOMS
 - Seek support for yourself if required from DSL or DDSL (Chris Inman, Laura McCutcheon)

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Chris Inman 01427613483 chris.inman@hillcrest.lincs.sch.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g., unsafe to go home
- Access the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partners Guidance or click on report a concern www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding/lscp
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g., Internal or community services, early help, TAC, LADO, Police or Request for Support from children's services where an allocated Social worker is in place
- If unsure then consult with Lincolnshire County Council Children Services Customer Service Centre (CSC) Office Hours: **01522 782111** Out of hours: **01522782333**

If you are unhappy with the response Staff:

- Follow escalation procedures and liaise with a senior lead member, where there is an allegation against a member of staff working on the premises contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) **01522 554647**
- Follow Whistleblowing procedures <https://www.hillcrestearlyyearsacademy.co.uk/policies/whistle-blowing-policy/>

Learners and Parents:

- Follow school complaints procedures <https://www.hillcrestearlyyearsacademy.co.uk/policies/complaints/>

Record decision making and action taken in the learner's child protection/safeguarding file on CPOMS

MONITOR

Be clear about:

- What you are monitoring e.g., behaviour trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record onto CPOMS

Review and request further support (if necessary)

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review
The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount**

When staff or visitors to the school have a safeguarding concern, they should promptly contact the DSL by ringing or going to the office.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abuse, exploited, or neglected and to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. All staff should know to act upon concerns about a child's welfare immediately.

All staff should be aware of the following when responding to concerns:

- All staff should know not to promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse.
- All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and assure them that they are not causing a problem by reporting.
- All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/ or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent professional curiosity and discussions with the DSL.

If a member of staff is concerned by verbal conversations, disclosures, or signs of abuse or neglect these should immediately be recorded in writing and passed to the DSL. If the member of staff is unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or a deputy regarding their concerns.

The DSL will then decide what action must be taken, which can include:

- Further pastoral support in school
- Referral for an Early Help assessment
- Referral to children's social care

If the DSL and deputies are not available, a staff member should not delay and should consider speaking to another member of SLT or contact local children's social care for advice or to make a referral. Any such action should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

Parents should be aware that referrals can be made where there is suspected abuse or neglect by the school and that our concerns regarding a student will be shared. The school will always seek to share these concerns and the referral with parents first, unless to do so would put the child at greater risk of harm, where we are advised not to, or where it has not been practicable to.

At Hillcrest Early Years Academy, staff report their concerns by either recording on CPOM's or using a CPOM's slip (located in the main office).

Staff will provide first-hand a summary of their concern or detail of a disclosure they have received. They will use professional language and try to capture the incident as it took place or as it was described to them. They will report all concerns in a timely fashion. The safeguarding team will ensure that any action taken, or outcome is accurately recorded in line with good record-keeping guidance which should follow:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern

- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- The rationale for the action taken including where a decision to refer, or not, to external agencies has been made.

Students can confidently report concerns knowing that these concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can express their views and give feedback too.

Online Safety

We recognise that the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, including child-on-child abuse. We recognise that children need to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material and the school's role within this. To address this, our academy strives to:

- Have clear procedures in place to ensure the online safety of all staff and students.
- Educate the school community in the safe and responsible use of online technology.
- Set clear expectations for the use of online technology, including mobile phones.

Our approach to online safety is framed by four main areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: child to child pressure, commercial advertising and 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 (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying)
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Whilst we appreciate that the pupils within our academy are young, we recognise that they are likely to have regular access to the internet and as such, take the view of 'it could happen here'.

To address the risks above, as a school we:

- Train staff in online safety, understanding monitor and filtering including at induction.
- Use filtering and monitoring systems to protect children when they use the school's network to access the internet.

- Regularly review such systems to ensure their effectiveness.
- Inform parents about what their children are being asked to do online.
- Regularly revisit online safety topics through both our Computing and RSE (RHE) (Relationships and Sex Education, referred to as Relationships and Health Education due to the age of the children at Hillcrest) curriculums.

We have a clear guidance for our school community on acceptable use of technology and the use of mobile phones and smart technology and code of conduct policy that aligns with this.

Please refer to the Online Safety section of our website for the full policy and further helpful information: <https://www.hillcrestearlyyearsacademy.co.uk/online-safety/>.

Filtering and Monitoring

Hillcrest Early Years Academy uses Netsweeper as a filtering and monitoring system. This filters and monitors for potentially harmful and inappropriate online material in line with government guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. This covers our school network and the following devices: desktop computer, laptops, android tablets, and iPads.

The DSL has lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. The DSL and deputy monitor the effectiveness of this system through regularly monitoring the online portal and reports.

The school takes care to not 'over block'; content so that there are not unreasonable restrictions on what students can be taught regarding online safety.

The processes we have in place have been informed by our risk assessment as required by the Prevent Duty. The DfE has published filtering and monitoring standards which set out that schools should:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without impacting teaching and learning
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

We at Hillcrest Early Years Academy have done the following in relation to this:

- The DSL, with support from SLT where required, will take responsibility for managing filtering and monitoring

- The DSL will liaise with Etke and Activ8 (as the IT provider) to ensure the provision is reviewed and that filtering does not impact on teaching and learning
- The DSL and SLT will ensure monitoring strategies are in place

When the filtering and monitoring system detects concerning usage, this will be sent via email alert to the DLS and we will record this on the filtering and monitoring log and take appropriate action, including a referral to children's social care when necessary.

For more information on filtering and monitoring, parents and carers can contact the **DSL, Mr Chris Inman 01427 613483**.

Whistleblowing

At Hillcrest Early Years Academy, we recognise that adults working in a school may cause harm, including agency staff, visitors, and governors. Any concerns about a member of staff posing a risk of harm to children should immediately be referred to the Headteacher. These concerns could include where anyone working in the school has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

Where there are concerns about the headteacher, these should be referred to our Chair of Trustees.

Any member of staff or volunteer with concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in our school's safeguarding regime should contact the LADO (01522 554674) and refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline can also be contacted via telephone (0800 028 0285) or email (help@nspcc.org.uk).

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

At Hillcrest Early Years Academy, we recognise that children with social workers may potentially be at greater risk of harm and need further support. Children may need this support due to abuse, neglect, exploitation or complex family circumstances. Our staff are aware that these students may face additional barriers to their attendance, learning or behaviour. We take these needs into account and liaise regularly with the relevant social worker to put appropriate support in place.

We also recognise that low or erratic attendance and Children Missing Education (CME) may be an indicator of abuse or neglect. All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/ or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities which may include abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines involvement, mental health problems, risk of substance misuse, so called 'honour' based violence.

We know that early intervention is essential to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future. Our pastoral teams track attendance thoroughly, addressing concerns without delay and liaising with our Attendance Lead where needed.

We ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place or cannot be located, are referred to the local authority in line with local procedures and guidance such as [Children Missing Education \(DfE, 2016\)](#). The DSL will be aware of any students who may be considered CME and will work with the Attendance Lead to ensure any safeguarding concerns are reviewed, the advice of external agencies is sought, and local procedures are followed.

We also strongly encourage parents to supply us with two emergency contacts for their child, updating their contact details without delay if they are changed and share our procedures for how to notify the school of an absence with all parents. When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

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 to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual can be just as vulnerable.

KCSIE 2024 stated the Cass review which identified caution is necessary for children questioning their gender. It recommends that when families/ carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. Schools are advised to take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in 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.

As a school we endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by pupils in this group and create a culture where pupils can speak out and share their concerns with members of staff.

Children with special educational needs (SEN), disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding barriers when recognising abuse and neglect for reasons including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Cognitive understanding- being able to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/ behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

At Hillcrest Early Years Academy, we identify students who may be more at risk of harm and take action to ensure their safety. For further detail please refer to the SEND policy.

Records and information sharing

We recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. We are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

Our safeguarding records 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

We have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, understanding that the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. At Hillcrest Early Years Academy, we understand that the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

In line with our mandatory duty, Hillcrest Early Years Academy will notify our local authority if we become aware of any private fostering, to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child. Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home.

Body Map Guidance

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries which can be recorded directly onto CPOMS where there is clear access to body maps.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment. *At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, the body map should be used.

Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to Customer Service Centre or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care. When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g., red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds, and burns:

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g., upper outer arm/left cheek.
 - Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
 - Approximate shape of injury, e.g., round/square, or straight line.
 - Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
 - Is the skin broken?
 - Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
 - Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
 - Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
 - Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
 - Does the site of the injury feel hot?
 - Does the child feel hot?
 - Does the child feel pain?
 - Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?
- Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required. Ensure First Aid is provided where required and then recorded appropriately. A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's concern/confidential file. Meeting the needs of Children & Families
Lincolnshire is Lincolnshire's safeguarding model.

Site Safety

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure the buildings and school site are secure and to report any concerns that may occur.

The identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school is checked. Visitors are expected to sign in and out and to display a visitor's badge while on the school site. Visitors who have had the relevant checks to work with children unsupervised by Academy staff will wear green lanyards. All other visitors will wear red lanyards and are not permitted to be left alone anywhere within the Academy. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance by our staff.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens the school security or leads others, child, or adult, to feel unsafe. Such

behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site and advice being sought from our local safeguarding partners.

Child on child abuse

In line with our strong commitment to safeguarding, at Hillcrest Early Years Academy we believe that all children have a right to learn in a safe environment and take a whole-school approach to child-on-child abuse which includes preventative work, appropriate responses, and a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

Our staff recognise that children of any age or gender can be capable of abusing other children, which can happen both inside and outside of school and online. This behaviour will be dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy.

This child-on-child abuse can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse)
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and harassment
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- 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
- upskirting which is a criminal offence
- initiation-type violence and rituals

All the above are examples of abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter,” “just having a laugh”, “boys will be boys” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

We recognise that the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse makes it more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators but all reports will be taken seriously. All concerns should be passed onto the DSL (or a deputy).

We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse through our extensive PSHE curriculum and pastoral programmes, including assemblies and other key messages. All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers and their role in preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse. Our staff understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in our school, it does not mean child-on-child abuse is not happening-it may be the case that it is just

not being reported. Children can report any child-on-child abuse by speaking to any member of staff.

Any cases of child-on-child abuse will be thoroughly investigated, with the victim always being taken seriously and both the victim and alleged perpetrator given appropriate support. Support will take the child's wishes into account and may include increased pastoral support, a mentor, access to counselling and a referral to external services. We will liaise with the police and children's social care as necessary. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, an immediate risk assessment will be made, considering the needs of the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and our other pupils. All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded in our safeguarding files.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020).

We record these incidents in line with our normal record-keeping process. Staff must record their concern or the disclosure using CPOMs

Allegations of abuse against staff

For the Academy's procedures for managing allegations against staff, please see the Policy named 'Allegations of Abuse Against Staff'.

Children In Care

All staff recognise that Children In Care and care leavers are more vulnerable than other children, often having poorer educational outcomes; therefore, ensuring their wellbeing, safety and welfare, helping them to reach their potential which includes the child in care who is moving on. Hillcrest Early Years Academy will also ensure that care leavers are supported with pathways including liaison with the local authority where a personal advisor will be appointed and a full working relationship is maintained with the Lincolnshire Virtual School head teacher **Sarah Lane Head of Virtual School Child in Care Lincolnshire**, email sarah.lane@lincolnshire.gov.uk in respect of all pupils at the school who are subject of 'Child in Care' status.

Appendix 1: Types of abuse and safeguarding concerns

KCSIE splits abuse into four main categories:

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

There are a number of other safeguarding concerns that ALL staff need to be aware of. These are detailed further in Annex B of KCSIE which all staff should read:

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late

County lines: a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Serious violence: where children are involved with serious violent crime. Indicators 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. There are a 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.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child 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. Indicators can be similar to the indicators of CCE, as well as:

- referring to older children or adults as 'boyfriends' or 'girlfriends'; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism: Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Child abduction and community safety incidents: Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances) and by strangers.

Cybercrime: criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. Exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and therefore children

are now classified as victims and not merely witnesses where domestic abuse occurs. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Homelessness: being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. It should also be recognised in some cases that 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

'Honour-based' abuse (HBA): encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Forced marriage: forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): covers all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a **statutory duty** upon teachers to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining

pupils or students. If a victim discloses that FGM has been carried out on them, teachers must personally report to the police.

The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases-these should be discussed with the DSL, in line with our referral process.

Potential risk factors may include:

- a female child is born to a woman who has undergone FGM
- a female child has an older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- a woman/family believe FGM is integral to cultural or religious identity
- a parent or family member expresses concern that FGM may be carried out on the girl
- a girl talks about FGM in conversation, for example, a girl may tell other children about it
- being taken on a long holiday to country where FGM is prevalent

Radicalisation: We recognise that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Our school adheres to the Prevent duty and we have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". We build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues, promoting fundamental British values.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be susceptible to radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying or advocating violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality

All our staff receive training on the Prevent duty bi-annually either face to face through Lincolnshire or via online training.

Lincolnshire Prevent Referral Pathway advice: DSL submits Channel or other actions. Member of staff has a Prevent related concern. If the individual is at immediate risk of harm or immediate risk of terrorist related activity then the Police should be contacted on 999. Member of staff discusses concern with nominated Prevent lead

(DSL) for their institution. Further checks/ enquiries made DSL and staff member agree that concern is relevant to Prevent (DSL reads Prevent referral guidance and contacts Lincolnshire Prevent Team for more advice). If not Prevent related then refer to the Lincolnshire Customer Service Centre for all other safeguarding concerns 01522 782111. Referral is screened by the Lincolnshire Prevent Team, initial advice offered and Lincolnshire Prevent process commences (Please see Prevent Duty Guidance for Lincolnshire for Schools and registered childcare providers September 2018 for more information on the Lincolnshire process).

See Appendix 3 for the Lincolnshire Prevent Referral Pathway.

As part of managing the risk of radicalisation, we have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by children themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised. In England, the Prevent duty complements schools' other responsibilities for ensuring that speakers do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Our protocols include checking where the visitors are from, any credentials they have, asking for recommendations from previous visits (where appropriate) and asking to see materials beforehand.

Mental health: All staff at Hillcrest Early Years Academy 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.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they should contact the DSL or a deputy DSL and report and record their concerns in line with this policy (see section 5).

Appendix 2-Safer recruitment

Our single central record (SCR) records information on the checks carried out on staff and volunteers. Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be located in individuals' personnel files. We follow the guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education and best practice, as outlined below.

New staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- verify a candidate's identity, including checking the name on a birth certificate where this is available
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity)
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- verify the person's right to work in the UK
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate
- ensure a candidate to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State
- check that a person taking up a management position is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State
- Seek two references, including from the current employer, before interview and ask specific questions about the suitability of the candidate to work with children
- ensure that appropriate checks are made to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018
- Conduct online searches on shortlisted candidates, reviewing publicly available material for any incidents or issues and notify applicants of this process

Agency and third-party staff

For agency and third-party staff, we will include written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, the date the confirmation was received and whether an enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by the school, we will carry out all necessary checks. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will ensure that

the training provider has carried out the necessary checks and obtain written confirmation that these checks have been carried out.

Existing staff

If we have any concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out the relevant checks as if the member of staff were a new member of staff. If a member of staff moves from a post that is not in regulated activity to a post in regulated activity, we will ensure the relevant checks for that regulated activity have been carried out.

We will follow our legal duty to refer to the DBS if a member of staff has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual
- the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence
- the individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left

Volunteers

We will never leave an unchecked volunteer to be left unsupervised or to work in regulated activity. We will obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity. We will undertake a risk assessment when deciding whether to undertake an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity, and retain a record of this risk assessment.

Trustees

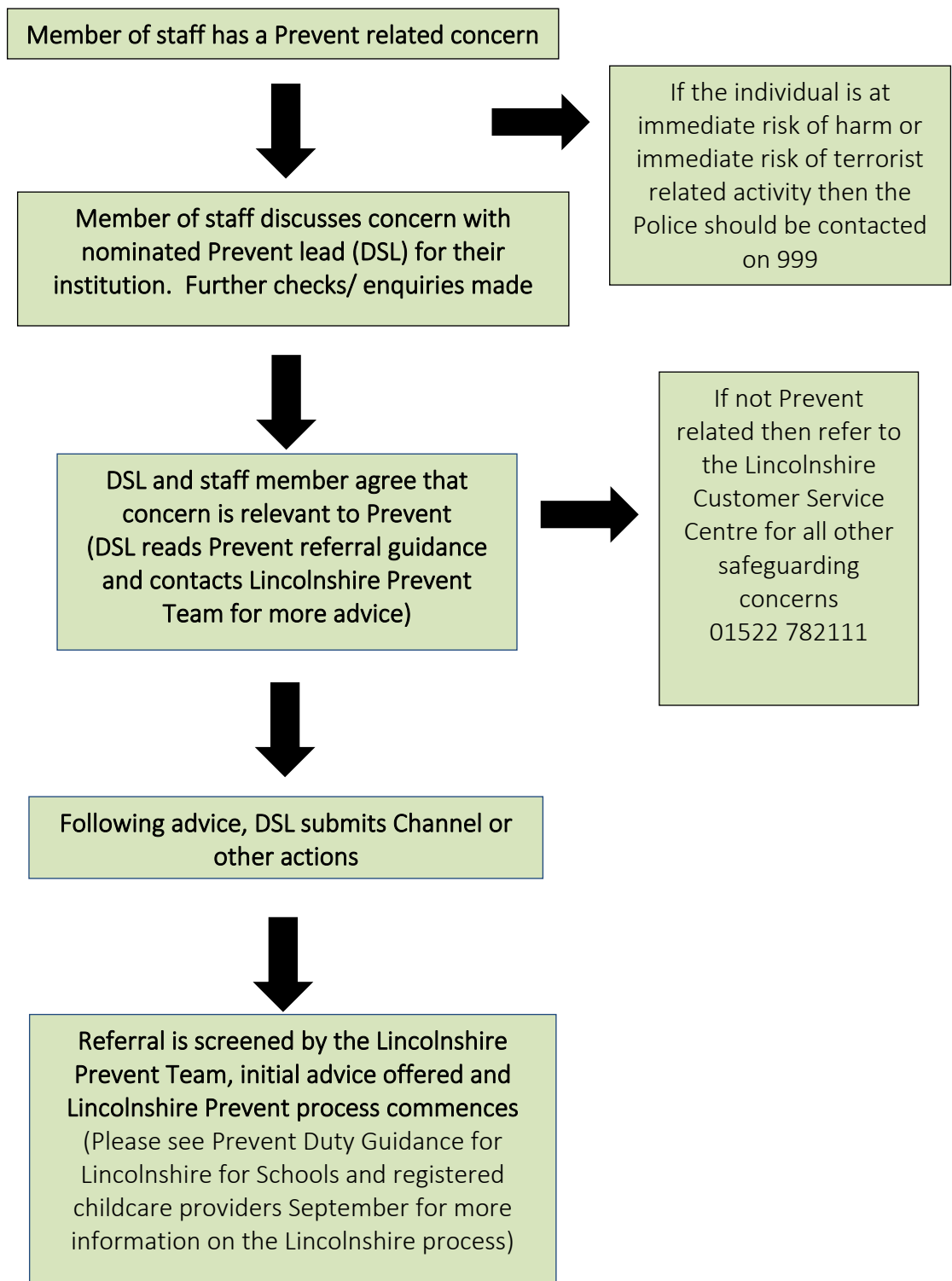
All trustees will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. A barred list check will be completed if a governor is in regulated activity. All governors will have also have a Section 128 check.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor whose work provides them with the opportunity for contact with children will have the appropriate checks. Those contractors engaging in regulated activity will have an enhanced DBS check including barred list information.

For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check will be required. If the contractor is engaged in regulated activity then an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list will be required.

Appendix 3-Prevent referral pathway



Links to other policies:

- [SEND Policy](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct including acceptable use](#)
- [Online Safety Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
- [Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy](#)
- [Safer Recruitment Policy](#)