Downland School
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Version	Reason	Date Ratified	Ratified by
1	New Model Issued by LA	November 2016	FGB
1a	DDSL Updated due to Staff Changes	October 2017	n/a
2	Annual Review	03/11/2017	FGB
3	WSCB issues updated forms:	12/01/2018	FGB
4	New Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issued by the Local Authority. Updated by DDSL.	24/09/2018	FGB
5	New Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issued by the Local Authority. Updated by DDSL.	20/09/2019	FGB
6	New Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issued by the Local Authority. Updated by DDSL.	01/09/2020	FGB
7	New Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issued by the Local Authority. Updated by DDSL.	10/09/2021	FGB
8	New Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issued by the Local Authority. Updated by DDSL.	01/09/2022	FGB
9	New Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issued by the Local Authority. Updated by DDSL.	01/09/2023	FGB
10	Updated working together to safeguard children 2024 and change to designated teacher	11/09/2024	FGB
11	Updated KCSiE2025 and change to nominated governor	08/09/2025	

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Downland School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection.

Policy agreed (date):	
Policy published (including on website) **(date):**	**September 2025**
Next review (date):	**01/09/2026**

Key Safeguarding Personnel			
Role	**Name**	**Tel.**	**Email**
Headteacher	**Mrs G Keily- Theobald**	**01380 724193**	**gkeily@downland.wilts.sch.uk**
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	**Mrs G Keily- Theobald**	**01380 724193**	**gkeily@downland.wilts.sch.uk**
Deputy DSL(s) (DDSL)	**Mr D Brown**	**01380 724193**	**davidbrown@downland.wilts.sch.uk**
Nominated Governor	**Mrs S Gray**	**01380 724193**	Sarahgray@downland.wilts.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	**Mr R Green**	**01380 724193**	**richardgreen@downland.wilts.sch.uk**
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	**Mrs G Keily- Theobald**	**01380 724193**	**gkeily@downland.wilts.sch.uk.**
Senior Mental Health Lead (non-mandatory)	**Mrs G Keily- Theobald**	**01380 724193**	**gkeily@downland.wilts.sch.uk**
The key safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles above are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)			

Children's Social Care referrals: Integrated Front Door: Out of hours:	0300 456 0108 0300 456 0100

If you believe a child is **at immediate risk** of significant harm or injury,
you **must** call the police on 999.

Introduction

Downland School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following key documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- The procedures of the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (formerly WSCB)
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2025)

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- all our pupils are safe and protected from harm.
- safeguarding procedures are in place to help pupils to feel safe and learn to stay safe.
- adults in the school community are aware of the expected behaviours and the school's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

Scope

Safeguarding children is defined 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 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

The term 'safeguarding children' covers a range of measures including child protection procedures. It encompasses a whole-school preventative approach to keeping children safe, including online that incorporates pupil health and safety; school behaviour management and preventing child-on-child abuse; supporting pupils with medical conditions; Relationships, Sex and Health (RSHE) education and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education; providing first aid and site security.

Consequently, this policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the governors and should be read alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our pupils:

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education/PSHE
- Online safety policy
- Behaviour policy, incl. pupil use of mobile and smart technology
- School Staff code of conduct for safer practice
- Whistleblowing policy
- Complaints procedure
- SEND policy
- Health and safety policy
- Curriculum policy
- Assessment policy
- Equality Statement
- Administration of medicines

This policy applies to all staff in our school. For the purposes of this policy:

- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full-time or part-time, in a paid or regular voluntary capacity.
- **A volunteer** is a person who performs an activity that involves spending time, unpaid in school (except for approved expenses).
- **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

- **Child** refers to all children on our school roll and any child under the age of 18 who comes into contact with our school. This includes unborn babies.

Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to a child at school, outside of school and online are within the scope of this policy.

Expectations

All staff are:

- familiar with this safeguarding policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse and wider safeguarding issues.
- aware of the importance of professional curiosity.
- able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy.
- able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child.
- involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans as required.

In addition, all staff have read and understood Part 1 or Annex A of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2025). School leaders and staff who work directly with children have also read Annex B and Part 5.

Governors

As key strategic decision makers and vision setters for the school, the governors will make sure that our policies and procedures are in line with national and local safeguarding requirements. Governors will work with the senior leaders to make sure the following safeguarding essentials are in place:

Training/Teaching	Policy/Procedures	Key safeguarding roles
Whole school approach to broad and balanced curriculum embedding safeguarding teaching D/DSL training Designated teacher training KCSiE Part 1 or Annex A (and Annex B and Part 5 for staff working directly with children) Staff training, including regular safeguarding updates Children taught about keeping safe online Online safety training for staff Preventing radicalisation Teaching staff confidence to deliver RSHE/PSHE to all pupils Annual review of online safety arrangements	Child-on-child abuse Pupil voice Online safety Whistleblowing Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice), incl. low-level concerns about staff conduct Early help Mental Health Multi-agency working Children who are absent and/or missing from education Children with SEND and a physical health issue Reporting abuse, incl. dealing with a child at immediate risk / SVPP procedures Honour based abuse (HBA) Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Behaviour policy	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a senior member of the leadership team. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) Designated teacher for children looked-after (even if there are no LAC on roll) Senior mental health lead Pastoral and well-being staff Nominated governor for whistleblowing Nominated governor for filtering and monitoring & online safety. Filtering and monitoring & online safety lead. Lead governor for attendance Senior attendance champion

	Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) policy Staff contribution to policy Safeguarding policy review	

Concerns and allegations management

Our chair of governors is responsible for liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations (LADO) and other partner agencies in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Headteacher.

See also 'Managing concerns and allegations against staff'.

Audit

The nominated governor (NG) for safeguarding collaborates with the Headteacher and the D/DSL to complete an annual safeguarding audit return to the local authority.

Safer Recruitment

Our governors monitor the school's safer recruitment practice, including scrutiny around DSL and /or headteacher monitoring of the Single Central Record.

Monitoring and review

The headteacher ensures that the policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood, and followed by all staff and should be easily understood by staff, children and parents, by re-visiting regularly.

The headteacher reports at least three times per year to the governors around the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures, and in particular, child-on-child incidents, including all aspects of trend analysis. The school's approach to online safety and filtering and monitoring is reviewed annually as a minimum.

Governors ensure that safeguarding is an agenda item for every full governing body meeting.

The Headteacher ensures that safeguarding is an agenda item for every staff meeting.

This policy is reviewed annually or earlier as required by changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

The nominated governor meets the DSL every term (six times a year) to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

Mandatory procedures – Staff and adults at school

Safer recruitment

All staff are subject to safer recruitment processes and checks, and we follow the guidance set out in Part 3 of KCSiE (2025).
At Downland School, we scrutinise all applications for paid or voluntary posts. We undertake interviews and make appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We maintain a single central record (SCR) of the essential checks as set out in KCSiE, that have been carried out and certificates obtained. The SCR applies to:

- all staff (including supply staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.
- all governors

Assurances are sought for contractors who are required on site, including identification checks on arrival. Appropriate vetting checks are carried out by the school for self-employed individuals.

Visitors

All visitors complete a signing in/out process, wear a school ID badge and are provided with key safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel in school.

Scheduled visitors in a professional role (e.g. fire officer, police, NSPCC staff) are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at school. Careful consideration is given to the suitability of any external organisations. School complete an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered by the scheduled visitor prior to booking a visit.

If the visit is unscheduled and the visitor is unknown to the school, we will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity, if necessary.

Site safety

Risk assessments are undertaken and maintained in accordance with the school's health and safety policy. The school ensures that when our premises are hired or rented to other organisations (ASC, evening and weekend clubs) including shared site providers who work with children, those organisations adhere to the guidance for out-of-school settings.

Off site visits and exchange visits

We carry out a risk assessment prior to any off-site visit and designate the specific roles and responsibilities of each adult, whether employed or volunteers. We seek written assurances from any alternative provision provider that appropriate safer recruitment checks have been completed, and safeguarding policy & procedures are in place. A site visit is also completed by DSL and/or SENCO.

Where there are safeguarding concerns or allegations that happen offsite, staff will follow the procedures described above and in the SVPP flowcharts as appropriate. A copy of the flowcharts is taken on off-site visits for reference.

Any adult over 18 in a host family will be subject to DBS checks. We work with partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to any overseas visit by our pupils.

See also Training.

Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice)

Downland School is committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our pupils underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour.

The Staff Behaviour Policy sets out staff behaviours that should be avoided as well as those that constitute safe practice and supports our commitment to safeguarding children.

Teaching staff are additionally expected to act within the guidance of the 'personal and professional conduct' section of the Teachers' Standards.

Identifying the signs

All staff know how to recognise and are alert to the signs of neglect, abuse, exploitation, and wider safeguarding issues, including but not limited to child-on-child sexual violence and harassment, child-on-child abuse, and 'all' risks of harm outside of the home and within the local area including online. Definitions of abuse, set out in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners' (2015), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2025) along with notes from safeguarding training, are important

reference documents for all staff. Every member of staff is provided with a copy of Part 1 or Annex A of KCSiE which they are required to read, and which also includes supporting guidance about several specific safeguarding issues. Staff who work directly with children are also required to read Annex B and Part 5 of KCSiE (2025).

Responding to concerns/disclosures of abuse

Flowcharts provided by Wiltshire Council Safeguarding Team and SVPP that set out the required procedure for staff to follow when they have a safeguarding concern about a child are displayed in the staffroom and adult cloakrooms for easy reference.

Staff adhere to the organisation's safeguarding training requirements when concerned about abuse or when responding to a disclosure of abuse. Staff understand that they must NOT:

- take photographs of any injuries.
- postpone or delay the opportunity for the child to talk.
- take notes while the child is speaking or ask the child to write an account.
- try to investigate the allegation.
- promise confidentiality e.g. say they will keep 'the secret'.
- approach or inform the alleged abuser.

All staff record any concern about or disclosure by a pupil of abuse or neglect and report this to the D/DSL using the standard form. It is the responsibility of each adult in school to ensure that the D/DSL receives the record of concern without delay. In the absence of the D/DSL, staff members know to speak directly to the IFD In some circumstances, the D/DSL or member of staff seeks advice by ringing the IFD for advice.

The D/DSL will liaise with safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together (2018) and will refer to National Police Chief's Council guidance for schools to understand when they should consider calling the police.

The D/DSL will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

The D/DSL consistently monitors all children with concerns, whether a request for service to the Wiltshire IFD or appropriate Local Authority Children's Services has been made or not.

During term time, the DSL and/or a DDSL is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The D/DSL provides feedback to any staff who share concern/s.

The voice of the child is central to our safeguarding practice and pupils are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

Online safety

Please see schools separate online safety policy

Online safety is a running and interrelated theme which is reflected in our policies and procedures. Children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. Online safety is considered as part of our whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training (including at induction) and curriculum planning. A personalised or contextualised approach is taken for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND.

Downland school ensures that parents and carers are made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents and carers are offered advice and guidance in support of identifying the risks that may be present to children online.

Downland school acknowledges the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks, the school will follow its policy on the use of mobile and smart

technology in school to safeguard children and will follow child-on-child abuse procedures when mobile phones are used by a child whilst in school to sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content. The school adheres to the DFE Filtering and Monitoring standards, and the Cyber Security Standards set out in KCSiE (2025). Our online safety mechanisms are reviewed annually.

Managing concerns and allegations against staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises**)**

Downland school follows the procedure set out by the SVPP 'Allegations against adults' flowchart which is displayed in the staffroom and adult cloakrooms for easy reference.

Where anyone in the school has a concern about the behaviour of an adult (including online) who works or volunteers at the school, including supply staff and contractors, and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises, they must immediately consult the Headteacher/Principal who will refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations (LADO).

Any concern or allegation against the Headteacher will be reported to the Chair of Governors without informing the Headteacher.

All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount and must not delay raising concerns for fear a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. Downland School promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In addition to the concern/allegation management process, the school's DSL will also refer suspected abuse to the Wiltshire IFD or appropriate Local Authority Children's services as described in 'responding to a concern.'

All members of staff and volunteers have read and signed to confirm they have understood the school's Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice), all supply staff and contractors are made aware of expectations of their behaviour.

Concerns and allegations reported relating to supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers for investigation and potential referral to LADO.

Downland School will appoint a 'case manager' to lead any investigation where the reported allegation does not meet the allegations threshold to consider a referral to the LADO. This is the headteacher or where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the chair of governors.

Managing low-level concerns about adults

Downland School operates a 'low-level' concerns policy in accordance with KCSIE. 'Low-level' refers to behaviour that is: inconsistent with expectations set out in the Staff Behaviour Policy, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and/or does not meet the allegations threshold, or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

All low-level concerns will be reported to the headteacher; low-level concerns about the headteacher will be reported to the chair of governors.

Downland School will:

- ensure all staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is (as set out in the Staff Behaviour Policy), and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others;
- empower staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns;

- provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised, for both the child/ren and the adult; and,
- respond to reports of low-level concerns in accordance with our HR conduct procedures by addressing unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage. If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:
    - directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
    - to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reporting low-level concerns helps to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing, retained and reviewed to help recognise any weakness in the school safeguarding system so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Whistleblowing

In accordance with our school's whistleblowing policy and procedures all staff and pupils can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. Our whistleblowing procedures (including our child-friendly whistleblowing mechanisms), which are also reflected in staff training and our staff behaviour policy, and shared with pupils, are in place for such concerns to be raised with the headteacher or any other member of SLT. Systems are in place and well promoted so that children can confidently report concerns or abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with headteacher or any other member of SLT or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline
  Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 from 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- A member of the governing body: Richad Green

Escalation of concerns

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between colleagues and between agencies.

Staff must be confident and able to professionally disagree and challenge decision-making as an entirely legitimate activity; a part of our professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice. Staff are encouraged to press for re-consideration if they believe a decision to act/not act in response to a concern raised about a child is wrong. In such cases the SVPP Case Resolution Protocol is used if necessary.

If we are on the receiving end of a professional challenge, we see this as an opportunity to reflect on our decision making.

Record keeping and information sharing

The school:

- liaises with partner organisations (alternative provisions, Wiltshire Council, other local authorities as necessary) to ensure any safeguarding records for learners are shared on transition and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term:
    - by the setting/school/organisation previously attended by the child.
    - by our DSL when the child leaves our school.

For any child dual-registered with another school/setting/organisation, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of the placed pupil thus the DSL will regularly liaise with the DSL at that base to ensure information is shared in the child's best interests. This includes contextual safeguarding information about relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online to enable assessment and intervention to happen within these extra-familial contexts.

- keeps clear and comprehensive written records of all pupil safeguarding and child protection concerns using CPOMS, with a body map, including how the concern was followed up and resolved as well as a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. This should include instances where referrals ere or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program, etc.
- ensures all pupil safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely in a locked location.
- ensures the records incorporate the wishes and views of the pupil.

The D/DSL acts in accordance with Information Sharing – Department for Education (DfE) (May 2024) and in line with the Wiltshire Council Record Keeping Guidance which includes details about file retention. Information about pupils at risk of harm is shared with members of staff in keeping with the seven golden rules to sharing information in the DfE guidance.

We are committed to work in partnership with parents and carers. In most situations, we will discuss initial concerns with them. However, the D/DSL will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- place an adult at increased risk of serious harm
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

When we become aware that a child is being privately fostered, we remind the carer/parent of their legal duty to notify Wiltshire Children's Social Care. We follow this up by contacting Children's Social Care directly.

Mandatory procedures – Supporting children

A culture of listening to children

We have a whole school approach to listening to children and have systems in place which create an environment where children feel safe to share their concerns and worries and know they will be taken seriously. These systems operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Children can safely express their views and give feedback. The school's safeguarding team are clearly identifiable to our pupils. We regularly gather pupil voice via forums and surveys, this data informs our practice and policies.

Curriculum – teaching about safeguarding

Our pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum (age and stage of development appropriate) that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

We provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety, and well-being. The PSHE and citizenship curriculum, incorporating Relationships, Sex and Health (RSHE) education specifically includes the following objectives:

- Developing pupil self-esteem and communication skills
- Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships and consent)

Examples of topics:

- healthy and respectful relationships
- boundaries and consent
- stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- the concepts of, and laws relating to-sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM, and how to access support, and
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

Remote learning

If the school is required to change the way provision to children is offered due to exceptional circumstances e.g. during a pandemic lockdown, self-isolation, staff responsibilities to remain alert to the signs and risks of abuse to children will continue to apply. In such circumstances:

The DSL will:

- work closely with social care and partner agencies to support children in these circumstances and to identify children who may be at risk for the first time and/or benefit from additional support
- use specific local and national guidance about safeguarding in such circumstances to inform practice e.g. UK Safer internet centre guidance, DfE safeguarding and remote education and will ensure staff, children, and families are provided with written:
  - amended DSL arrangements as required (names, location and contact details)
  - temporary changes to procedures for working with children e.g. online.
  - amended procedures for reporting concerns
  - safeguarding training arrangements
  - timescales for such changes so that all children, families and staff understand when such arrangements will end, and arrangements revert to those in place prior to the events leading to the need for the temporary changes.

We will ensure the curriculum we offer during such circumstances, continues to promote learners' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development.

Early help

At Downland school, all our staff can identify children who may benefit from early help as a problem emerges and discuss this with the D/DSL.

The D/DSL uses:

- The Wiltshire's Integrated Front Door (MASH and Early Support Hub).
- The Digital Assessment and Referral Tool as appropriate as part of a holistic assessment of the child's needs.
- The Multi-Agency Thresholds guidance for Safeguarding Children on the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) website about suitable action to take when a pupil has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need.
- Liaises with Wiltshire SEND service
- Various resources to identify and respond to harmful sexual behaviour

Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health issues

Pupils with additional needs or certain health conditions face an increased risk of abuse and neglect. Staff take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. We never assume that behaviour, mood or injury relates to the pupil's additional needs without further exploration. Staff understand that additional challenges can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in pupils with SEND, including communication barriers. Staff recognise that children with SEND are also at a higher risk of peer group isolation and can be disproportionately affected by bullying (including prejudiced-based bullying).

To address those additional challenges, extra pastoral support is considered for children with SEND or physical health issues and they are also encouraged to discuss their concerns. The D/DSL works with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) to identify pupils with additional communication needs and whenever possible, these pupils are given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills.

The use of 'reasonable force' in school

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. Downland School follows DfE advice for schools is available at Use of Reasonable Force in Schools.

All staff will follow our behaviour policy and all pupils are encouraged to follow these expectations to reduce the need for the need for 'use of reasonable force.' Staff will work in collaboration with pupils and parents/carers to plan positive, proactive behaviour support which may include support plans, referral to specialist agencies and agreeing actions to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour.

Mandatory procedures – Specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues

Child-on-child abuse

All children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

In addition, we have a zero-tolerance approach and will respond to all reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school, and/or online.

Staff recognise that while both boys and girls can abuse their peers, it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys instigators of such abuse. Children who are LGBT may be targeted by other children. Child-on-child abuse is not tolerated, passed off as "banter" or seen as "part of growing up". The different forms of child-on-child abuse is likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- 'upskirting' or any picture taken under a person's clothing without their permission or them knowing to obtain sexual gratification or cause humiliation, distress or alarm.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting)
- sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, as defined by Sexual offences act 2003 which considers rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault, all types of sexual violence. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can be between two children, or a group of children and can occur online and offline.

Consequently, child-on-child abuse is dealt with as a safeguarding issue, recorded as such, and not managed through the systems set out in the school behaviour policy.

Any pupil who may have been victimised and/or displayed such harmful behaviours, along with any other child affected by child-on-child abuse, will be supported through the school's pastoral system and the support will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

We will address inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) as this can be an important intervention that may help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

We acknowledge that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. Staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by providing:

- a relevant, effective curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation, and the mandatory teaching of Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education
- established/publicised systems for pupils to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously
- training to all staff so they understand that child-on-child abuse can and does happen and are trained to be alert to any behaviours that could cause concern
- a clear procedure for all staff to report all incidents as a safeguarding concern to the school D/DSL.

Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

The DSL will follow local and national guidance when there has been a report of sexual violence and harassment between children. This will include liaising with other professionals to develop robust risk and needs assessments and multi-agency safety planning with appropriate specialist targeted work for pupils who are identified as posing a potential risk to other children. This is done using a Contextual Safeguarding approach to ensure assessments consider risks posed by any wider environmental factors present in a child's life. The DSL will record specifically the time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer.

The NSPCC has a dedicated helpline 0800 136 663 to provide children who are victims of sexual abuse in schools with appropriate support and advice. The helpline also provides support to parents and professionals.

Serious violence

We are committed to success in learning for all our pupils as one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime.

Our curriculum includes teaching conflict resolution skills and understanding risky situations to help our children develop the social and emotional skills they need to thrive.

Staff are trained to recognise both the early warning signs of contextual risks and that pupils may be susceptible to exploitation and getting involved in gangs as well as indicators that a pupil is involved in

serious violent crime. They are also aware of the associated risks and know the measures put in place to minimise such risks.

Children who are absent and/or missing from education

Staff report immediately to the D/DSL, if they know of any child who may be:

- Absent from education persistently, or for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions
- Missing – whereabouts unknown or
- Missing education – (compulsory school age (5-16) with no school place and not electively home educated)

The designated teacher for CLA and care leavers discusses any unauthorised/unexplained absence of Child Looked After with Virtual School when required.

The DSL shares any unauthorised/unexplained absence of children who have an allocated social worker within 24 hours.

Children who do not attend school regularly can be at increased risk of abuse and neglect. Where there is unauthorised/unexplained absence, and

- after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family without success, the DSL follows the SVPP procedure and consults/refers to the IFD team as appropriate.
- there are no known welfare concerns about a pupil, we follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and report concerns to the Education Welfare Service.

Mental health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff understand that:

- abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff are aware of how
- these experiences can impact on children's mental health, behaviour and education.
- they have a duty to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will report this concern using the agreed reporting mechanisms.

Domestic abuse

Staff understand that domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional harm, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

The DSL liaises with partner agencies as part of 'Encompass' in Wiltshire. When police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the DSL ensures the organisation receives up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and will ensure key staff provide emotional and practical support to the child according to their needs.

Preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of schools' wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting pupils from other forms of harm and abuse.

Staff use their judgement in identifying pupils who might be at risk of radicalisation and speak to the D/DSL if they are concerned about a pupil. The D/DSL will always act proportionately, and this may include making a Prevent referral to the Channel support programme or to the Local Authority Childrens Services.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Staff will inform the D/DSL immediately if they suspect a girl is at risk of FGM. We will report to the police any 'known' cases of FGM to the police as required by law.

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.

Since February 2023 it has 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. Staff will inform the D/DSL immediately if they suspect a child is at risk of forced marriage.

Staff training

Induction

The welfare of all our pupils is of paramount importance. All staff including governors and regular volunteers are informed of our safeguarding policy and procedures including online safety, at induction.

Our written induction schedule for staff also includes:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures
- Online safety
- KCSiE update
- Whistleblowing policy
- Behaviour Policy (pupils)
- Staff Behaviour Policy (or Code of Conduct)
- Role and identities of the DSL and DDSL
- The school's response to children who are absent and/or missing from education, and the school's protocol about managing absence
- Procedure to follow in case of an allegation being raised against an adult
- Professional disagreement and escalation including the SVPP Case Resolution Protocol

Safeguarding training

This training is for all staff and is updated every year as a minimum to ensure staff understand their role in safeguarding. Any member of staff not present at this whole school session will undertake this statutory training requirement on their return.

In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as necessary and at least annually. All staff also receive training in online safety and this is updated as necessary.

Advanced training

The D/DSL has additional multi agency training which is updated every two years as a minimum. The D/DSL also attend multi-agency courses relevant to school needs. Their knowledge and skills are refreshed

at least annually e.g. via e-bulletins or safeguarding networking events with other D/DSLs. The D/DSL attend a Wiltshire IFD tour.

Safer Recruitment

At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. This training is updated every five years as a minimum.

Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After

The designated teacher for looked after children has attended training specific to the role.

Preventing Radicalisation

All staff undertake Prevent awareness training.

Staff support

Due to the demanding, often distressing nature of child protection work, we support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through the challenges of this aspect of their role with a senior leader and to seek

further support as appropriate.

Governors

As well as the school's safeguarding induction programme, all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. Safeguarding training is updated yearly. Governors are also encouraged to attend whole school safeguarding and child protection training.

Appendix 1

Related legislation and key documents

Children Act 1989 (and 2004 update): The Children Act 1989 gives every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquires made to safeguard his or her welfare. The Act place duties on several agencies, including schools, to assist Social Services departments acting on behalf of children and young people in need (s17) or enquiring into allegations of child abuse (s47).

Education Act 2002 - This requires schools to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education.

Sexual Offences Act 2003 - This act sets out an offence of 'abuse of trust' - a sexual or otherwise inappropriate relationship between an adult who is responsible for young people and a young person in his/her care.

Information Sharing – Department for Education (DfE) Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2024 This advice is for all frontline practitioners and senior managers working with children, young people, parents and carers who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case by case basis.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), section 26 requires all schools, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Mental health and behaviour in schools (2018) advice to help schools to support pupils whose mental health problems manifest themselves in behaviour. It is also intended to be helpful to staff in alternative provision settings, although some of the legislation mentioned will only apply to those alternative provision settings that are legally classified as schools.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) Section 53(3) and (4) of this applies to schools if they broker student accommodation with host families for which the host family receives a payment from a third party, such as a language school. At a future date, the regulated activity provider will have a duty to carry out a barred list check on any new carer – section 34ZA Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

The Teachers’ Standards (2013) set a clear baseline of expectations for the professional practice and conduct of teachers and define the minimum level of practice expected of teachers in England.

Children Missing Education (2016) Statutory guidance for local authorities and advice for other groups on helping children who are missing education get back into it.

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017) Advice for schools on effectively preventing and tackling bullying.

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (2016) Advice for headteachers and school staff on developing school behaviour policy, including an overview of their powers and duties.