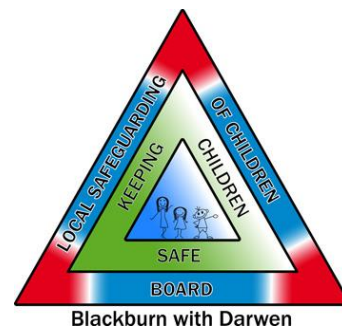


[Name of School]

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy



Adopted by: (signatures)

Review date:

Designated Senior Person:

Date:

Deputy Designated Senior Person:

Date:

Head Teacher:

Date:

Nominated Governor:

Date:

The designated senior person for safeguarding and child protection is:

Contact email: _____ tel:

The deputy designated person is _____

Contact email: _____ tel:

The nominated safeguarding and child protection governor is _____

The Head Teacher is _____

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The LADO for Blackburn with Darwen is: Megan Dumbleton

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Blackburn with Darwen – Advice and Consultation Social Worker: 01254 666403

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Note: All content should be read and adjusted according your school profile, with extra attention paid to any *italicised text* which you may wish to add, alter or delete.

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1. Policy Statement and Principles

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. [This may also include your school's designated person policy and allegations against staff policy]

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- representatives of the whole-school community of pupils, parents, staff and governors will be involved in policy development and review
- policies will be reviewed at least annually

Safeguarding & Child Protection Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

Where it is believed that a child is at risk of or is suffering significant harm, the school will follow the procedures set out in the Blackburn with Darwen Local Safeguarding Procedures.

These are available in electronic form at: <http://www.lscb.org.uk>

Policy Principles

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

Prevention: (insert school name) is committed to early help and identification of unmet needs and vulnerabilities. The school works in partnership with other agencies to promote the welfare of pupils and keep children safe.

Protection: All staff and volunteers are trained to recognise and respond to abuse and neglect. All staff and volunteers are expected to be vigilant and must act quickly when they suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm. (In line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures).

Support: Our school acknowledges the sensitivity and complex nature of safeguarding and child protection and therefore ensures that pupils, staff and families are supported appropriately.

At (insert school name) we recognise that effective safeguarding systems are those which:

- Put the child's needs first;
- Provide children with a voice;
- Promote identification of early help;
- Encourage multi-agency working and sharing of information.

Policy Aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully. **(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013)**

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm. **(Children Act 1989)**

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents or legal guardian

2. The Education Act 2002

Note: *You may wish to alter this section so that it relates specifically to your school*

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

3. Our School Commitment

(Insert school name) School is committed to providing a safe, caring and welcoming environment where every child is able to reach their full potential free from harm, abuse and discrimination. All staff and volunteers are expected to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities effectively and recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, especially those at risk of or suffering abuse, to thrive.

Our school will therefore: (See Guidance Notes)

- a) (Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) (Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) (Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and / or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse.
- d) (Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- e) (Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children and keep them safe.

Simplistically this is done by following the 4 R's

- **Recognise** – unmet needs, abuse and harm
- **Respond** – alert the DSP and/or Children's Social Care
- **Record** – ensure records are kept up-to-date and secure
- **Refer** – share information and refer to external agencies to safeguarding and protect children from harm

Early Help

A local Early Help Strategy has been developed to promote the early identification of support and intervention. The strategy can be accessed at www.blackburn.gov.uk

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that staff is alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) maintains a list of all designated senior persons (DSPs) for child protection.

The Designated Senior Person:

- is appropriately trained
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of LSCB procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child subject to a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a pupil that is subject to a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the pupil's social worker is informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- liaises with the nominated governor and Head Teacher (where the role is not carried out by the Head Teacher) as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- will make the child protection policy available to parents
- ensures that the School Single Central Record is maintained and up-to-date

Deputy DSP

The deputy designated person(s) must be appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions.

The governing body must ensure that the school has:

- a DSP for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training about their DSP role, including inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- a child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents (available on the school website)
- procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Head Teacher
- safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate pre-employment checks
- a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Head Teacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals; and the DSP receives refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's child protection provision and are appropriately trained

The Governing Body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Head Teacher.

For the purposes of accountability the Governing Body will receive and scrutinise the Head Teacher's Annual report with regards to safeguarding and subject to any amendments which may be necessary then this report will be submitted to the local authority. This report will be signed by the Chair of Governors and any amendments accepted by the signature of the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher:

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum
- provides a signed annual report to the Governing Body

5. Good Practice Guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice. This expectation of good practice applies to all staff

All staff and volunteers will:

- treat all pupils with respect
- treat pupils as individuals
- put the child's welfare first
- set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involve pupils in decisions that affect them
- encourage positive and safe behaviour among pupils
- be a good listener
- be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour
- recognise that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- read and understand the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information-sharing
- ask the pupil's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- be aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- be aware and sensitive of different cultures and different communities
- be aware of the possible necessity for a neutral translator for a child who cannot express him/herself in English as well as his/her mother tongue
- share concerns immediately with the DSP
- always act in the best interests of the child or young person

6. Abuse of Trust

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

7. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a domestically abusive situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- regularly absent from school
- attending alternative provision or subject to a managed move
- living away from home (frequent movers)
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- living a transient lifestyle
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- speakers of another first language
- children that are subject to a Child Protection Plan

8. Thresholds for Referring to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council - Children's Social Care (CSC)

Where a Designated Senior Person (DSP) or deputy DSP considers that a referral to CSC may be required, there are two thresholds and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

Is this a Child In Need?

Under section 17 (s.17 (10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is 'in need' if:

- The child is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority;
- The child's health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- The child is disabled.

Is this a Child Protection Matter?

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

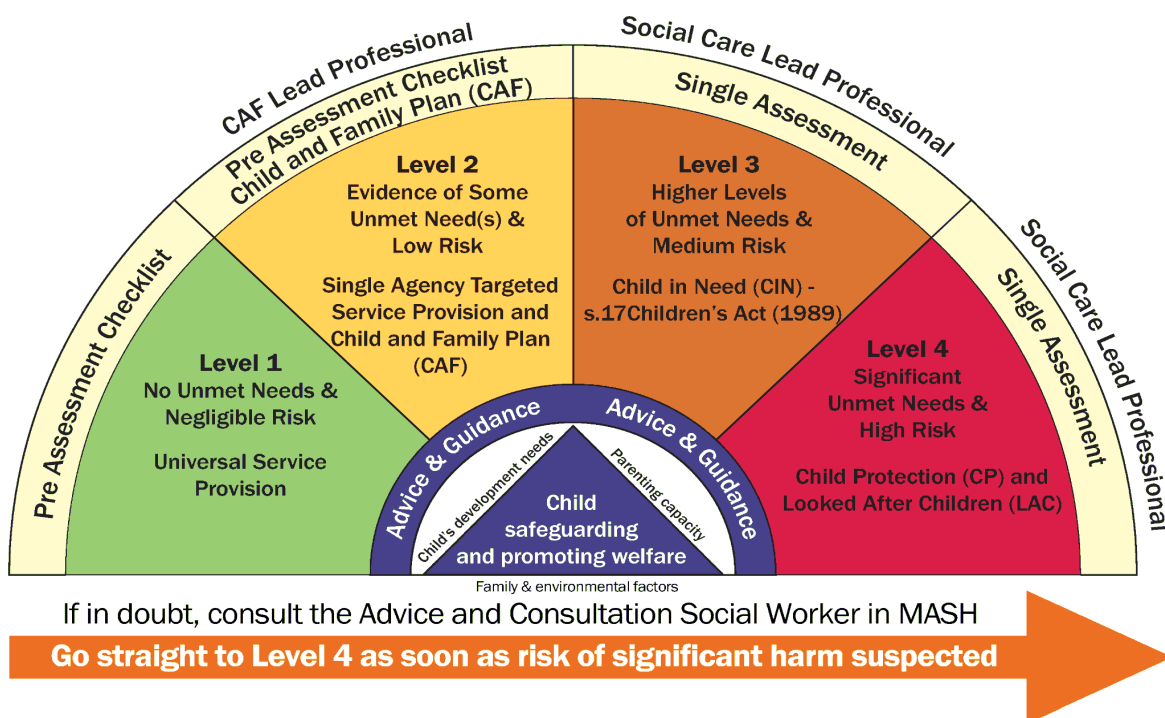
- is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- is in Police Protection; or where they have
- reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm

Therefore it is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

The Designated Senior Person will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of 'need and risk' and when to refer.

The Blackburn with Darwen Continuum of Need and Response (CoNR) Framework is the local model to assist all those whose work brings them into contact with children, young people and their families to identify the level of help and protection required to ensure children grow up in circumstances that achieve their best outcomes. The framework can also assist the Head Teacher and other colleagues in school to identify where they can work individually with families and where it may be better to co-ordinate their efforts with other agencies.

Blackburn with Darwen Continuum of Need and Response



The Blackburn with Darwen Children's Continuum of Need and Response (CoNR) Framework is a guidance tool to assist all those whose work brings them into contact with children, young people and their families (including the unborn child) to identify the level of help and protection required to ensure children grow up in circumstances that achieve their best outcomes.

The table below defines the four levels of the framework and in appendix 1 there are more detailed need and risk indicators to help practitioners decide the appropriate level of service response and provision.

Level	Risk & Need	Definition of the Level
1	No Unmet Needs & Negligible Risk	<p>Universal Service Provision</p> <p>Primary prevention services being accessed by parents/carers through universal service routes; effects of socio-economic disadvantage addressed</p> <p>Good enough parenting</p> <p>Social and emotional readiness for school and equipped for life</p> <p>Step Down from level 2: Provision of prevention services to avoid long term suffering, monitoring of</p>

Level	Risk & Need	Definition of the Level
		progress and access to tools required to transform lives
2	Evidence of Some Unmet Need(s) & Low Risk	<p>Single Agency Targeted Service Provision and Child and Family Plan (CAF)</p> <p>Selective primary prevention services offered to vulnerable groups/areas</p> <p>Variety of unmet needs and ‘underlying risk factors’ that are not being met, making the child potentially vulnerable and requiring multi-agency early help to ensure the child maintains the capacity and protective factors to sustain satisfactory development</p> <p>Parenting and parental relationships requiring additional support and guidance</p> <p>Secondary prevention to respond quickly to low level problems to prevent them getting worse; interventions designed to stop falling into difficult circumstances</p> <p>Step Down from level 3: Provision of prevention services to avoid long term suffering, monitoring of progress and access to tools required to transform lives</p>
3	Higher Levels of Unmet Needs & Medium Risk	<p>Child in Need (CIN) – s.17 Children Act (1989)</p> <p>Unlikely to meet developmental milestones without concerted multi-agency support led by a social worker</p> <p>Variety of unmet needs and ‘underlying risk factors’ that are not being addressed (including resistance at CAF level to address), making the child vulnerable and unlikely to achieve good outcomes</p> <p>Tertiary prevention services including responding to serious problems and avoiding them becoming entrenched</p> <p>Step Down from level 4: Provision of prevention services to avoid long term suffering, monitoring of progress and access to tools/services required to transform lives</p>

Level	Risk & Need	Definition of the Level
4	Significant Unmet Needs & High Risk	<p data-bbox="663 154 1302 226">Child Protection (CP) and Looked After Children (LAC)</p> <p data-bbox="663 271 1316 405">Reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm requiring immediate multi-agency management and service provision – s.47 Children Act (1989)</p> <p data-bbox="663 450 1316 517">Possible unaddressed ‘underlying risk factors’ and the presence of ‘high risk indicator(s)’</p> <p data-bbox="663 562 1316 763">Child accommodated by the local authority due to: the child having no person who has parental responsibility for him/her; or, the child being lost or abandoned; or, the person caring for the child is prevented from providing suitable accommodation or care – s.20 Children Act (1989)</p> <p data-bbox="663 808 1316 1010">Child is suffering, or likely to suffer (if a court order were not made), significant harm and that the harm, or likelihood of harm is attributable to the care given to the child (the care not being what it would be reasonable to expect a parent/carer to provide) – s.31 Children Act (1989)</p> <p data-bbox="663 1055 1316 1144">Tertiary prevention services including responding to serious problems and avoid them becoming entrenched</p>

9. Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person (DSP) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- nominating separate link people for the child and member of staff, where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies
- making sure a neutral interpreter is available when English is not the child's first language

10. Complaints

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Head Teacher and governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints, disciplinary and grievance procedures which can be found in our school complaints policy. **[You may wish to state where this policy can be found/ how it can be accessed]**

11. If you have Concerns about a Colleague

Staff that are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount and that they have a duty to respond and inform the Designated Senior Person. The school's whistleblowing code (you may wish to state where this can be found/ how it can be accessed) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Head Teacher. Complaints about the Head Teacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

12. Allegations against professionals (staff and volunteers)

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Head Teacher. Allegations against the Head Teacher should be reported to the chair of governors. The Head Teacher and/or Chair of Governors must discuss the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in the LSCB's policy on allegations against staff – www.lscb.org.uk

13. Staff training

It is important that all staff have appropriate training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the Head Teacher (unless the Head Teacher is the DSP) and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSP will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's Visiting Staff guide [you may wish to state where this policy can be found/ how it can be accessed].

Guidance for Safer Working Practice – a copy of this guidance should be given to every member of staff (paid or voluntary) to assist with appropriate behaviour and minimise allegations of professional abuse.

The Governing body, via the Head Teacher, must be satisfied that every member of staff has received, read and understood the guidance, with a signed declaration agreeing to operate inline with the best practice guidance.



Safer Working
Practices\Education\C

A copy of the most recent guidance can be found here

14. Safer Recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (pp20-54) together with the local authority and the school's individual procedures.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will: [change/add to in accordance with your school procedure]

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service as appropriate to their role
- be interviewed

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy; stating that they have read, understood and have adopted the expectations and principles of safeguarding children and safer working practices.

***Guidance under review – Consultation 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' ending June 2013**

15. Extended school and off-site arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place. This includes alternative provision and managed moves.

When a child is on-roll at (School name) we will monitor the safeguarding arrangements and ensure the child is safe.

16. Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

Staff will not use their own devices to photograph children except in an emergency

To protect pupils we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.
- Wherever possible we will ensure appropriate communications are in place which would not need to use their own phone.

17. E-Safety

Mobile phones, computers and other digital devices can be a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm may include sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails; enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations online; inappropriate/indecent webcam filming and photography, face-to-face meetings. The school's e-safety policy and ICT security policy [you may wish to state where these policies can be found/ how they can be accessed] explain how we try to keep pupils safe in school. Children and young people may unknowingly also engage in activities that could put themselves and others at risk, such as revealing personal information and uploading images of others. Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are provided with a secure learning platform where they can learn the skills needed to use communication technology safely [You may use social networking sites in class or for school projects. If so, refer to the location within the ICT security policy or e-safety policy and where it can be found/ how it can be accessed. NB. this use should be appropriate to the child's age and abilities and stage of development]

Cyber-bullying by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

18. Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may feature age – or developmentally – inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

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

Neglect

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

Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2013).

19. Taking action

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help and protect the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSP by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed

If you suspect a pupil is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no ‘real’ evidence. The pupil’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or concerning, pupils might write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the cause for concern form to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSP.

If a pupil discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- endeavour to utilise a neutral translator if necessary
- remain calm and collected – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this
- tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comfort to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise it is the duty of the member of staff to inform the DSP of what has been discussed. If the pupil does agree to go and see the designated person, the staff member should inform the DSP that the child will be coming to see them at some point
- report verbally to the DSP even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person
- seek support if they feel distressed

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSP will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care.

Referral to children's social care

The DSP will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council – MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

01254 666400

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The care of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. [You may wish to list your local agencies here] Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff will follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the Head Teacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable

they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

Related safeguarding portfolio policies: [delete/add as appropriate (your school may organise your policies differently in which case you may wish to amend this section appropriately)]

- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Personal and intimate care
- Visitors and Contractors
- Health and Safety, including community use of school buildings
- Health and Wellbeing
- Complaints procedure
- Anti-bullying
- E-safety
- School attendance policy
- Considering applications for discretionary leave of absence during term time
- Appropriate physical contact
- Whistleblowing
- SEN
- Behaviour
- Missing children
- Safer recruitment
- Managing allegations
- Workforce Development and Training
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Educational Visits

- Managed moves and alternative provision
- Work Experience
- Private Fostering
- Data Protection
- ICT Security

20. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, Head Teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items will also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Head Teacher or DSP.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and pupils on request.