

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Child in Need and Child in Need of Protection)**

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:**

**Anti-Bullying Policy  
Online Safety Policy  
Recruitment Selection and Disclosure Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Whistleblowing Policy  
Behaviour Policy  
Sex and Relationships Policy  
Academic Support Policy**

### **Contents:**

Policy Statement

1. Policy Principles
  2. Aims
  3. Role responsibilities and key contacts
  4. Definitions of Child Abuse
  5. Specific Safeguarding issues
  6. Training and Induction
  7. Whistleblowing
  8. Promoting Safeguarding and Prevention
  9. What to do if you are concerned about a child's welfare
  10. What to do if a Child makes a disclosure
  11. General Principles of Confidentiality
  12. Safer recruitment
  13. Online safety
- [Appendix 1.](#) Safeguarding Training Handbook  
[Appendix 2.](#) Staff Code of Conduct  
[Appendix 3.](#) Yellow Form

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

This statutory policy sets out the arrangements made by the proprietors of the school as required by the Independent School Standards and Regulations 2014; Section 87(1) of The Children Act 1989, Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (and any guidance issue by the Secretary of State) to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

This policy and its effectiveness will be fully reviewed at least annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Compliance Committee; it will also be reviewed whenever new legislation or guidance are issued. It is designed to act as a handbook for safeguarding at BMS and therefore its contents may be subject to amendments in response to specific incidents or general trends both internal and external.

### **Statement**

Bedford Modern School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children defined for statutory purpose as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

At BMS, we aim to create a warm and supportive environment where pupils feel safe and secure. Equally **all** school staff will be fully trained, encouraged to share concerns, supported in their safeguarding role and encouraged to adopt an 'it could happen here' approach. The school will take action to promote a safeguarding culture amongst all members of its community.

## 1. Policy Principles

This policy is one of a series of policies that sets out how the school will safeguard its pupils and enable all children to have the best outcomes. It sits above and works alongside the following policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Recruitment Selection and Disclosure Policy
- Whistleblowing policy

In the event of a national or local lockdown during the Coronavirus outbreak it should be read alongside the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Addendum**.

This policy has been prepared using the guidance and principles set out in the following documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Working together to Safeguard Children July 2018
- Covid-19: Safeguarding in Schools, colleges and other providers
- Protecting Children from Radicalisation: the Prevent Duty 2015
- Guidance from Local Safeguarding Partners (which include Beds Borough, Central Beds and Luton as well as any other partners from the areas in which students from the school reside.
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools
- SEND Code of Practice:0-25 years 2015
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools 2017
- School Attendance July 2019
- Children Missing Education 2016
- Sexting in schools and colleges: UKCCIS
- Guidance on safer working practices 2019
- Statutory guidance; Relationships Education relationships and Sex education and health education

For the purposes of this policy the word child or children refers to any young person up to the age of 18. As BMS is located in Bedford Borough Local Authority, unless a child resides in a different authority, the school will follow procedures and protocols and follow advice for this area

- 1.1 Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment where children can learn. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. The school expects **all staff** to share its commitment to create an open environment where staff and pupils feel able to raise concerns,

- where concerns will be listened to and where support services and other agencies are readily involved.
- 1.2 All professionals should make sure their approach is child centred and all staff must consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
  - 1.3 Abuse in whatever form, always constitutes serious harm to the child. Suspicion, belief or evidence of abuse of a child, currently or in the past, must be passed to a person of authority in order for them to seek advice and evaluate the information. In most cases this will be to the DSL, Jude Goodacre. The school supports Government advice: Think it, Report it.
  - 1.4 It is accepted that child abuse can be a problem for children from all backgrounds and that any child may be in need of protection. All children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection: to feel safe, secure, valued, respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they have a concern.
  - 1.5 It is recognised that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of their previous experiences, level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
  - 1.6 The school accepts that peer on peer abuse can also occur and may be a sign that further problems are happening in a child's life.
  - 1.7 The school accepts that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. The school will work with other agencies as soon as possible (such as Children's Services and the police) to support children who may benefit from early help (i.e. providing support either for a problem or to help stop a problem developing).
  - 1.8 The school is committed to ensuring effective record keeping enables the DSL and Deputies to have access to a complete picture of any safeguarding concerns. Staff will make appropriate use of online Child Protection Systems. Information sharing will take into account GDPR but this will not be a limiting factor when deciding what information should be shared.
  - 1.9 The school (including the Governors and Headmaster) will maintain an 'it could happen here' attitude and will be actively encouraged to report any concerns regarding other staff, including the Headmaster, via the appropriate channels (Whistleblowing).
  - 1.10 The school recognises the importance of safer working practices to keep all members of its community safe. All staff will be expected to read, sign and adhere to the School Staff Code of Conduct. In addition, teachers should adhere to the Teacher Standards 2012.
  - 1.11 The school is committed to ensuring that children are kept safe from those that may do harm through its recruitment process and proper maintenance of its single central record. Potential staff will be checked as to their suitability, including verification of identity, qualifications and satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance). All volunteers, visitors and contractors will be subject to the appropriate checks as well as close supervision as deemed necessary.
  - 1.12 The school accepts its duty to safeguard children and young people from violent extremism and takes positive steps to instil fundamental British Values. The school recognises that the possible radicalisation of children and young people is a current and real threat and treats such concerns as a safeguarding issue.
  - 1.13 The school understands that the context in which children live can influence their ability to stay safe and should always be taken into account when making decisions about the best course of action when dealing with any safeguarding concerns.
  - 1.14 The school recognises the impact of online technology on young people and is committed to safeguarding children through education for themselves as well keeping parents as informed as possible.
  - 1.15 The school promotes vigilance in all admissions and leavers procedures promoting a safeguarding response to any children who may go missing in education.

- 1.16 The school believes in creating a continuous learning environment and practice will constantly be reviewed and acted upon to ensure we always act in the best interests of the children.
- 1.17 The school will always seek to actively support parents/guardians through any safeguarding process and inform them of any action taken as quickly as possible. Where necessary this will be on the advice and with the support of external agencies.
- 1.18 The school recognises that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is suffering abuse or neglect and that mental Health problems can also occur as a result of abuse or neglect. The school accepts that all staff have a responsibility to act immediately where a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern.
- 1.19 The school recognises its responsibility to promote young people's emotional health and well-being.

## **2. Aims**

- 2.1 To demonstrate how the school will foster an active and positive safeguarding culture in all aspects of the school life and throughout the entire school community.
- 2.2 To clarify the processes in place for Child Protection in the event of suspected abuse.
- 2.3 To ensure all staff are aware of and have access to the Key Contacts (including those responsible for Early Help) who will advise and guide in ensuring the best possible outcomes for all children and young people in the school.
- 2.4 To raise awareness of and provide guidance for the different types of abuse that occur including specific safeguarding issues such as FGM, forced marriage and sexting.
- 2.5 To set out the manner in which staff will be inducted and trained to enable them to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 2.6 To reinforce the importance of good communication, thorough record keeping and careful evidence taking to enable all professional agencies to act in the best interest of the child.

## **3. Roles, responsibilities and Key contacts.**

### **3.1 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body fully accepts their responsibility to comply with their duties under legislation and will ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times. A full description of the responsibilities can also be found in the Harpur Trust Safeguarding Policy 2020.

The Governing Body will:

- Promote a positive safeguarding culture with an attitude of 'it can happen here'.
- Maintain an overview of the systems, structures and curriculum (including co-curriculum) of the school to ensure it actively promotes safeguarding and enables the best outcomes for all children.
- Follow the guidelines as laid out in KCSiE (2020).
- Have a nominated Child Protection and Safeguarding Governor, Dr Simon Lowe.
- Review the policies and procedures for Child Protection and Safeguarding at least annually, or more frequently as required, through the Compliance Committee and at a School Committee of Governors meeting.
- Take proactive steps to satisfy themselves that the duties outlined have been appropriately and efficiently discharged.

- Remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to Child Protection without delay.
- Ensure the school pays due regard to Government Guidance when dealing with safeguarding matters.
- Ensure that the school operates a thorough safer recruitment process and that the SCR is kept up to date and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the school has a safeguarding response to children who go missing in education.
- Through the Chair of Governors, Shirley Jackson, receive and act upon any concerns about the Headmaster via the whistleblowing process.
- Ensure the school is compliant with The Prevent Duty by maintaining an overview of how the school promotes Fundamental British Values.

### **3.2 The Headmaster**

The Headmaster will:

- Promote a positive safeguarding culture with an attitude of 'it can happen here'.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- Ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- Inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse in relation to allegations against staff.

### **3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead sits with the Deputy Head Pastoral and Student Progress, Mrs Jude Goodacre, part of the school's Senior Leadership Team. The Deputy Safeguarding Lead will assume the responsibilities in the absence of the DSL and is the Senior Deputy Head, Mr Andrew Whomsley. The Designated Safeguarding Lead in the Junior School is Mrs Paula Pacyna and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead in the Junior School is Mrs Joanna Rex.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Take lead responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals themselves.
- Refer cases of to the Channel Programme where there is a radicalisation concern and support staff who make referrals themselves.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required and refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police.
- Promote an 'it could happen here' culture and encourage all staff to 'Think it, Report it'
- Understand the process for providing early help as an intervention, for example locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- Have a working knowledge of how Local Authority conduct a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute as required.
- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- Liaise with the Headmaster to inform him of any issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations

- As required liaise with the case manager and the designated officer at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- Be available to discuss any safeguarding concerns during term time and out of school hours as deemed appropriate by the Headmaster and Governing Body.
- Undergo formal training as provided and advised by the Local Safeguarding Partners at least every two years as well as taking active steps to keep up to date with new guidance, trends or safeguarding issues that are specific to the school.
- Liaise with other key members of school staff via the Safeguarding Committee to ensure that there is a thorough child centred approach to individual children. This list includes the DSL, Deputy DSL, Pastoral Care Lead, School nurses and where appropriate the Attendance Officer, Director of Sport, Assistant Heads and Heads of Year.
- Liaise with outside agencies including following the protocols for the local area Bedford Borough as well as from counties/areas in which the pupils reside; the police and schools liaison officer; the Local Authority Designated Officer and the Channel Programme.
- Maintain written (hand or electronic) records of any concerns relating to Child Protection, including those that do not require immediate referral and ensure the records are kept confidentially and securely, separate from pupil records.
- Understand the importance of information sharing as well as understanding relevant legislation on data protection including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation
- Transfer any pupil records to another school in a timely manner and in advance where to do so would promote better outcomes for those involved.
- Monitor attendance of all pupils and refer as appropriate to the Education Welfare Service in the first instance.
- Ensure process and procedures are in place to recognise and refer any children missing education.
- Ensure all staff receive effective induction training on safeguarding when they join the school and then further updates as necessary with formal training at least every two years. Ensure that staff are aware of any training opportunities offered by the local safeguarding partners.
- Liaise regularly with the Safeguarding Governor, Dr Simon Lowe, to ensure the Governing Body is kept up to date on any ongoing issues or concerns.
- Keep all staff well informed of any additional guidelines, updates, serious case reviews as and when necessary through regular briefings.
- Understand the unique risks associated with online safety and working closely with the e-Safety Co-ordinator, ensure that staff are aware of their responsibility with regard to online safety and ensure that all members of the school community have regular advice about keeping themselves safe online. Liaise with the e-Safety Co-ordinator and anti-bullying group as and when evidence suggests further review in both areas is necessary.
- Recognise the additional risks that children with Sen and disabilities face online
- Undergo and disseminate Prevent Training.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker are experiencing or have experienced with teachers and school leadership staff. Ensure that staff know whose these children are and understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

### 3.4 All Staff

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 states that **all** school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They should also:

- Have read and understood KCSiE 2020, at least Part 1.
- Promote a positive safeguarding culture for example by challenging anyone on the premises who cannot be identified by a visitor or staff lanyard or badge.
- Leaders and those who work directly with children should also read and understand Annex A.
- Be aware of systems within the school which support safeguarding. This includes the child protection and staff behaviour policies (Code of Conduct), Behaviour and Anti- bullying policy and have received Prevent Training.
- Understand the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and be clear on the identity of the DSL and deputies.
- Be aware of the early help process and be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the process for making referrals to social services understanding the importance of acting promptly if there is a concern about a child.
- Be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, and of what to do if a child makes a disclosure.
- Receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated.
- Always act in the best interests of the child.
- Be aware of specific safeguarding issues such as radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, children missing education and mental health.
- **Teachers are required by law to report to the police known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) involving a girl aged under 18.**
- Understand that appropriate internet filters and monitoring systems must be in place to keep pupils safe online.
- All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected.
- If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the Headmaster.
- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Promote fundamental British Values as part of The Prevent Duty.
- Be aware that abuse, neglect and Safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events.

### KEY CONTACTS

#### Bedford Modern School

DSL: Mrs Jude Goodacre [jgoodacre@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:jgoodacre@bedmod.co.uk)

Deputy DSL: Mr Andrew Whomsley [awhomsley@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:awhomsley@bedmod.co.uk)

DSL Junior School: Mrs Paula Pacyna [ppacyna@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:ppacyna@bedmod.co.uk)

Deputy DSL Junior School: Mrs Joanna Rex [jrex@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:jrex@bedmod.co.uk)

Nominated Safeguarding Governor: Dr Simon Lowe [nsg@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:nsg@bedmod.co.uk)

Chair of Governors: Mrs Shirley Jackson [sjackson@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:sjackson@bedmod.co.uk)

E-Safety co-ordinator: Mr David Donoghue [ddonoghue@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:ddonoghue@bedmod.co.uk)

School Nurse: Mrs Joann Talkington [nurses@bedmod.co.uk](mailto:nurses@bedmod.co.uk)

Key Contacts	
<b>Bedford Borough</b> Integrated Front Door (IFD) (MASH) Out of hours	Multiagency@bedford.gov.uk 01234 718700 0300 300 8123
<b>Central Bedfordshire</b> Central Bedfordshire Access & Referral Hub The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) For emergencies outside of working hours contact	0300 300 8585 0300 300 8123
<b>Luton</b> Rapid Intervention and Assessment Team Out of hours	<a href="mailto:mash@luton.gcsx.gov.uk">mash@luton.gcsx.gov.uk</a> 01582 547653 0300 3008125
LADO Bedford Borough	01234 276693 <a href="mailto:Lado@bedford.gcsx.gov.uk">Lado@bedford.gcsx.gov.uk</a>
Prevent	0207 340 7464 <a href="mailto:Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk">Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Police Liaison	Richard Denton <a href="mailto:SchoolsLiaison@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk">SchoolsLiaison@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk</a>
Senior Education Welfare Officer, Bedford Borough Education Support Services	Jane Ward Tel: 01234 276625 <a href="mailto:jane.ward@bedford.gov.uk">jane.ward@bedford.gov.uk</a>
CAMHS	Jo Meehan Tel: 01234 310040 <a href="mailto:Jo.meehan@sept.nhs.uk">Jo.meehan@sept.nhs.uk</a>
Prevent Duty Bedfordshire Police Contact	Richard Denton Tel: (101) or 01234 275206 <a href="mailto:richard.denton@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk">richard.denton@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk</a> Anti-Terrorism Hotline Tel: 0800 789 321 DfE Dedicated Contact Tel: 0207 340 7264 <a href="mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk">counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Children Missing Education Officer	Debi Momi Tel: (01234) 228178, ext, 42178 <a href="mailto:debi.momi@bedford.gov.uk">debi.momi@bedford.gov.uk</a>
Phillipa Scott, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Manager	<b>0300 300 6455</b> Email: <a href="mailto:lscb@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">lscb@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a>
NSPCC 24 Hour Helpline Childline	0800 800 5000 0800 1111

#### 4. Definitions of Child Abuse

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

##### 4.1 Physical Abuse

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

- **Possible signs:**

Bruising (without satisfactory explanation), burns (often recurrent), bite marks, parent/carers frequently alleging illness in a child, body covered in hot weather, reluctance to do PE or shower, self-harm.

- **Impact of physical abuse:**

It can lead to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability and occasionally death. Harm may be caused directly by the abuse itself or by the abuse taking place in a wider family context of conflict. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour, emotional and behavioural problems and educational difficulties.

## 4.2 Neglect

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

Neglect's six forms:

1. Medical – withholding medical care including health and dental.
2. Emotional – lack of emotional warmth, touch and nurture.
3. Nutritional – lack of access to proper diet, which can affect their development.
4. Educational – poor school attendance prevents child from reaching their potential.
5. Physical – failure to meet child's physical needs.
6. Lack of supervision and guidance - putting child in dangerous situations.

- **Possible signs of neglect:**

Constant hunger, poor personal hygiene, poor state of clothing, frequent lateness or non-attendance at school, untreated medical problems.

- **Impact of neglect:**

Severe neglect of young children is associated with major impairment of growth and intellectual development. Persistent neglect can lead to serious impairment of health and development, and long-term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress.

## 4.3 Emotional Abuse

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature

age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- **Possible signs of emotional abuse:**

Physical, mental and emotional development lags, over-reaction to mistakes, extremes of passivity or aggression, continual self-depreciation, self-harm, inappropriate emotional response to painful situations. It may be when an adult constantly behaves in an uncaring or hostile way towards a child or young person, perhaps by bullying, rejecting, frightening or criticising them.

- **Impact of emotional abuse:**

Emotional abuse has an important impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.

#### **4.4 Sexual Abuse**

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

- **Possible signs of sexual abuse:**

Genital pain or itching, bleeding, bruising, discharge, stomach pains, pregnancy, incontinence, UTI's or STD's.

- **Impact of sexual abuse:**

Self-harm, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, depression, loss of or a poor self-esteem, aggressive behaviour, lack of trust, running away from home.

**In making professional judgements, take into account:**

The frequency of bruising/injury, context of injury, explanation from child and adult, parent response.

**N.B. 'Non-Accidental Injuries' may need to be followed up too.**

If injuries keep occurring, issues of neglect and level of supervision need to be discussed with appropriate agencies.

**Table 1**

<b>Type of Abuse</b>	<b>Physical signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Signs</b>
<b>Physical: causing physical harm to a child, which includes fabricating or deliberately inducing illness.</b>	Unexplained and unusual bruising, finger and strap marks, fractures, injuries, bite marks, cigarette burns, scalds, missing teeth	Fear of contact, aggression, temper, running away, fear of going home, reluctance to change or uncover body, depression, withdrawal, bullying or abuse of others
<b>Emotional: persistent emotional maltreatment such as to cause adverse effects on a child's emotional development.</b>	Weight change, lack of growth or development, unexplained speech disorders, self-harm	Unable to communicate, fear of mistakes, fear of telling parents, withdrawn, few friends
<b>Sexual: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.</b>	Genital pain or itching, bleeding, bruising, discharge, stomach pains, pregnancy, incontinence, UTI's or STD's	Fear of someone, nightmares, running away, sexually explicit knowledge or behaviour, masturbation, bed-wetting, eating problems, substance abuse, unexplained money or gifts
<b>Neglect: 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.</b>	Hunger, dirty, ill-fitting clothes or inappropriate clothing, weight change, untreated conditions and continual minor infections	Being tired, early or late, absent, few friends, regularly left alone, stealing, no money, parent carer not attending
<b>Bullying: the use of force, threat or coercion to abuse, intimidate or aggressively dominate others.</b>	Weight changes, unexplained injuries and bruising, stomach and headaches, bed wetting, disturbed sleep	Anxiety about school, withdrawn, angry, few friends, truancy, missing items, distress and anxiety over receiving calls

4.1 Table 1 identifies the four main types of abuse as set out in KCSiE (2020) as well as drawing attention to Bullying (FA Safeguarding handbook). The Table is designed to alert staff not only to the types of abuse, but also the different ways in which they manifest in individuals.

## **5. Specific Safeguarding issues**

### **5.1 Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due to more societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and

discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

The school takes steps to protect children who may be particularly vulnerable through identification, close monitoring and mentoring and the use of a nurture list and through the use of an online system CPOMS. The school recognises that these children may be more likely to benefit from Early Help.

#### **Children who may have an increased risk of abuse:**

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is a privately fostered child.

**Children with SEND** can face additional safeguarding challenges. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying.
- Communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to be alert to these concerns and act where necessary. All staff have guidance from the SENCO and there is a comprehensive list of students who have SEND available to all teachers.

### **5.2 Contextual safeguarding**

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Therefore, children's social care practitioners need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

### **5.3 Peer on Peer Abuse**

At BMS we work hard to promote and teach tolerance and mutual respect through our PHSE Programme, Relationships and Relationships and Sex Education, anti-bullying strategy and our promotion of fundamental British Values. Our School Aims and Values are shared on a regular basis through assemblies, co-curricular activities

and our house and student leadership systems as well as visual reminders around the school. We recognise that 'abuse is abuse' and should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up.' Bullying, victimisation, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the wide community.

However, we recognise that students are capable of abusing their peers. This abuse may take the form of:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery/ taking and sharing of nudes or semi nudes); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Peer-on-peer abuse will always be considered a safeguarding matter and staff will follow the guidance on specific issues as laid out in this policy and in the anti-bullying strategy. In all responses the school will endeavour to put the students' welfare at the centre of its response. All incidents of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded on CPOMs and will be actioned by the Pastoral Team under the guidance of either the Deputy Head Pastoral and Student Progress (DSL), Senior Deputy Head (Deputy DSL) Deputy Head of the Junior School (DSL) or Head of Junior School (Deputy DSL). When dealing with incidents the senior member of staff will decide which school policies (e.g., Senior School Behaviour Policy) and/or government guidance (e.g., Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools) apply. If there is a possibility that a crime may have been committed the School will take advice from the police or Bedford Borough Integrated Front Door on the investigation of such allegations and will take all the appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse.

Where allegations of abuse or assault have been made against one or more pupil the School will undertake a thorough risk-assessment of the situation and risk-based decision-making will be carried out with a view to ensuring the safety of all students involved. Both the victim and perpetrator will be provided with appropriate support. When peer-on-peer abuse has occurred, it may be appropriate to refer the students involved to Children's Social Care or Early Help. Where this happens the school will inform the student involved and their parents unless to do so is likely to cause the student harm.

A pupil (or pupils) against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation. A pupil may also be removed from certain classes or sleeping arrangements rearranged if the alleged incident occurs on a school trip.

If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the Local Safeguarding Partners, the pupil's parents are informed as soon as possible, and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

Data on peer-on-peer abuse will be reviewed regularly by the Safeguarding Team, Senior Leaders and Governors to spot any trends and take any necessary action to address issues and concerns.

#### **5.4 Cyber-Bullying**

In recent years, there has been a rapid rise of a new type of bullying, one that harnesses the modern technology that all teenagers use - mobile phones, email and web-based chat rooms. The school recognises that abuse can take place wholly online or technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. The school has a specific online safety policy, which covers specific issues in more detail.

Cyber-bullying is covered in more detail in the Anti-Bullying Policy. Following the advice in Preventing and Tackling Bullying, the school will take disciplinary action where cyber bullying occurs. It may be treated as peer on peer abuse.

#### **5.5 Honour based abuse/violence**

Is a collection of practices used to control behaviour within families in order to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Women are predominantly (but not exclusively) the victims, which can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members. Males can also be victims, sometimes as a consequence of their involvement in what is deemed to be an inappropriate relationship, if they are gay, or if they are believed to be supporting the victim. Honour based abuse cuts across all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities; usually where a culture is heavily male dominated. Relatives, including females, may conspire, aid, abet or participate in honour-based abuse, for what might seem a trivial transgression. For more information click on the link below:

[https://www.bedford.gov.uk/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/children\\_young\\_people/safeguarding\\_children\\_board/professionals/honour\\_based\\_abuse.aspx](https://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/professionals/honour_based_abuse.aspx)

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. For more information click on link below:

[https://www.bedford.gov.uk/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/children\\_young\\_people/safeguarding\\_children\\_board/professionals/female\\_genital\\_mutilation\\_fgm.aspx](https://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/professionals/female_genital_mutilation_fgm.aspx) or

look at Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (April 2016) below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/512906/Multi\\_Agency\\_Statutory\\_Guidance\\_on\\_FGM\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512906/Multi_Agency_Statutory_Guidance_on_FGM_-_FINAL.pdf)

**Teachers are required by law to report to the police known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) involving a girl aged under 18**

**Forced marriage** should not be confused with an arranged marriage. Arranged marriages often work very well. Forced marriages are where one or both people are

'forced' into a marriage that their families want, without the valid consent of both people, where physical pressure or emotional abuse is used. Victims are sometimes persuaded to return to their country of origin under false pretences. For more information click on the link below:

[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/children\\_young\\_people/safeguarding\\_children\\_board/professionals/forced\\_marriage.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/professionals/forced_marriage.aspx)

**Breast Ironing**, also known as "Breast Flattening", is the process whereby young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education. For more information click on the link below:

[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/children\\_young\\_people/safeguarding\\_children\\_board/professionals/breast\\_ironing.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/professionals/breast_ironing.aspx)

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

CSE and CCE occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual activity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. This abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and children or adults. It may be a one off or a series of incidents over time from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. The victim may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology." For more information click on link below:

[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/children\\_young\\_people/safeguarding\\_children\\_board/professionals/child\\_sexual\\_exploitation.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/professionals/child_sexual_exploitation.aspx)

CSE and CCE can affect young people from any social, cultural or economic background. Warning signs include: non age appropriate relationships; gifts including drugs, alcohol and money; use of inappropriate sexual terminology.

## **5.7 Serious Violent Crime**

Indicators that may signal a child is at risk of serious violent crime include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of an assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached or are involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

## **5.8 Mental Health**

All staff are aware that mental health problems can in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse neglect or exploitation. Staff observe children and identify and record any whose behaviour suggest they may be experiencing mental health problems or are at risk of developing one. Where staff have specific concerns about a child's mental health and consider it a safeguarding concern it is referred to the DSL in line with this policy.

The DSL and deputies including the Pastoral Care Lead work closely with external agencies including CAMHS to refer any child who is displaying mental health problems. The school uses an evidence based approach recording evidence and

observations to share and does not attempt to make diagnosis. However staff will escalate and re refer if they feel there is need.

The school works to ensure it follows the advice and guidance in Preventing and Tackling Bullying and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools.

## **5.9 Children Missing from Education**

A child missing from education is a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll or being educated elsewhere. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

### **Children Missing from Education (including safeguarding response)**

BMS fully accepts its responsibilities to provide a safeguarding response to Children Missing from Education and understands as a school it plays a key role in ensuring children do not become CME.

A child missing from education is not in itself a child protection matter, and there may be an innocent explanation for this. However, regular school attendance is an important safeguard and unexplained non-attendance can be an early indicator of problems, risk and vulnerability.

Schools should endeavour to deal with this problem in three ways:

- By preventing poor school attendance and truancy;
- By acting once absence occurred to establish children's safety and try to get them back to school;
- By taking action to trace children whose whereabouts are not known.

BMS will inform both **Bedford Borough and the relevant Local Authority** (i.e. the one in which the child resides) when a child's name is about to be deleted from the admission register under all fifteen grounds outside the standard transition points (Junior School -Year 6 into 7 and Senior School Year 11 into 12).

When removing a name, the notification to the Local Authority will include (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register.

The school will **make reasonable enquiries** to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with Local Authority before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8 (1), sub paragraphs (f) (iii) and (h) (iii).

BMS will notify the Local Authority **within five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a **non-standard** transition point.

As an independent school, BMS does not use the CTF files. However, where these files are sent by a pupils' previous school, BMS will either accept or reject the file.

A child may be removed from the school following a written request from parents to educate at home. In the event of this happening, the relevant Local Authority and Early help service will be informed.

If any member of the school staff has reason to believe a child is missing from or about to be missing from education, they must inform the DSL. The DSL will then

inform the Local Authority, Early Help, or in the case of a Child in Need or a Child in Need of Protection MASH or the police.

In the following circumstances, a referral to Children's Services and /or the police should always be made promptly:

- The child may be the victim of a crime;
- The child is subject of a Child Protection Plan;
- The child is subject of Section 47 enquiries;
- The child is looked after;
- There is a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household;
- There is a history of the family moving frequently;
- There are serious issues of attendance.

All Practitioners should follow the appropriate Local Authority CME procedures.

### **5.10 Private Fostering**

Private Fostering occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child (under the age of 16 or under the age of 18 if the child is disabled) for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. By law, children's services must be informed in such cases.

### **5.11 Prevent Duty**

Schools are required under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Protect children from radicalisation by: building their resilience, promoting fundamental British Values should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

The Leaders and Governors of Bedford Modern School ensure that Fundamental British values are promoted throughout the school both implicitly and explicitly for example through the structure of the Student Government or during the Remembrance Day Service. Where the school has a programme of individual speakers (for example in the Sixth Form), care is taken to ensure there is a balanced view, especially on controversial topics and each speaker will be risk assessed and recorded on the central register.

The DSL acts as the Single Point of Contact for Prevent. The school ensures that preventative measures are in place such as ensuring appropriate restrictions on internet sites are in place.

**Channel** is about ensuring that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

Staff should be particularly aware of the dangers of social media and the internet in the radicalisation of young people.

Any child suspected of becoming radicalised should be reported via the normal safeguarding procedures. All relevant staff receive online Prevent training.

## **5.12 Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

Any allegations of sexual violence or harassment will be treated seriously and any victim will be supported and kept safe. All staff will be aware that any such allegation should be treated as a safeguarding concern for all involved and the DSL should be informed immediately.

When dealing with such allegations, the guidance, *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018* and *KCSiE 2020* will be followed. Where necessary a risk assessment will be put in place to protect those involved.

Support from the police, 'What If' at MASH or from Social Services may be sought or the school may decide to it is most appropriate to handle the decision internally. In this case it will be a discussion between the DSL, Headmaster and Senior Deputy Head. Decisions and discussions will be recorded at all times using CPOMS. Whatever the decision, it will be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

[Preventing Child Sexual Abuse & Keeping Children Safe | NSPCC](#)

Call us on 0808 800 5000, email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or fill in our online form.

## **5.13 Sexting**

Sexting is defined as images or videos: by young people under the age of 18 or of young people under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature or are indecent. These images are shared between young people and/or adults via mobile phone, handheld device or website. A young person is breaking the law if they: take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend; share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's between children of the same age; possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created. As of January 2016, Police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action isn't in the public interest.

Sexting disclosures should follow the normal safeguarding practices and protocols, the guidance set out in the online safety policy. Where sexting is suspected or possible; the school will always follow the procedures laid out in UK Council for Child Internet Safety. Staff who become aware of sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery should be also aware of [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice](#) (January 2018). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/609874/6\\_2939\\_SP\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_In\\_Schools\\_FINAL\\_Update\\_Jan17.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609874/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **5.14 Upskirting**

The taking of a picture under another's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear.) It is now a criminal offence.

## **6. Training and Induction**

The school accepts the importance of thorough training and induction for all staff. The DSL, working with the Senior Deputy Head and the Deputy Head of the Junior School, takes responsibility for ensuring that all staff have training to recognise the

signs of abuse and neglect and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil or a member of staff.

### **Induction:**

All new staff are required to read KCSiE (2020) Part 1, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and the Senior School Behaviour Policy prior to starting employment. All new staff will receive either bespoke Safeguarding Training by the DSL or whole school bi-annual training with a follow up session as part of the Induction Programme. New teaching staff are also assigned a mentor who acts as a support for any questions or concerns and makes sure the school's protocols and systems are understood.

- All teaching staff and support staff who have contact with the pupils, receive 'formal' refresher training every two years about their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and Child Protection. All staff will be updated on a more regular basis (at least once per year) as and when new information/changes come to light.
- An INSET course for all staff on Safeguarding takes place annually. In addition, all staff receive a safeguarding training handbook, which clearly sets out the school's policy and procedures. Clear records are kept which are constantly updated and any staff who were unable to attend training will attend an additional session or complete an online course.
- Safeguarding bulletins are sent out every term and an 'e-safety' briefing is also sent out to staff and parents at least twice a year.
- All staff received a copy of Part 1 KCSiE September 2020 at the beginning of the Autumn term 2020 which staff read and confirmed that they understood. All staff who work directly with children also receive a copy of KCSiE Annex A.

In addition to the DSL and the Senior Deputy Head, the Junior School Head, Junior School Deputy Head, Pastoral Care Lead, Heads of Year and CCF Contingent Commander/Outdoor Education Co-Ordinator, have also attended the two day safeguarding inter-agency training from the Local Safeguarding Partners LCSB (Central Beds/Luton/Beds Borough).

Staff will also receive appropriate training to enable them to teach Safeguarding to children through everyday tutoring, PSHE and RSE Education.

The school is committed to being reflective, and reviews any serious cases both internally and within the Harpur Trust to ensure lessons are learned and best practice is in place.

## **7. Whistleblowing**

The School promotes an environment in which children and adults feel confident to express concerns regarding the behaviour of a member of staff.

Whistle-blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear or repercussion.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Harpur Trust Whistleblowing policy.

If a member of staff feels unable to follow the school protocols on whistle blowing, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **7.1 Procedures for acting when abuse by a member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) is alleged**

In the event of an allegation, the school will follow the guidance below referring closely to the duties as an employer and employee as laid out in part four KCSIE 2020.

This process should be followed if an allegation is made that might suggest a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college. If there is an allegation that a person has:

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

This relates to members of staff, supply staff and volunteers who are currently working the school regardless of whether this is where the abuse took place. Allegations against teachers who are no longer teaching will be referred to the police, as will historical allegations.

The school recognises its duty of care towards employees and will provide support and a named contact for anyone who is suspended. If the school are not the employer, responsibility is still recognised. At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated and the allegations will be dealt with quickly to provide effective protection for the child and to support the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Common sense and judgement will be applied when dealing with allegations. The School will not undertake their own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO, or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases discussions with the LADO can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.

All allegations are to be reported straight away to the Headmaster (case manager). In his absence it would be reported to the Chair of Governors who would ensure that the LADO is informed without delay. If the Headmaster is the subject of an allegation this should be reported to the Chair of Governors without informing the Headmaster or DSL first. The Chair of Governors will inform the LADO without delay within 24 hours and any action taken should be by the Chair or other members of the Governing Body.

If a pupil makes an allegation against the DSL with responsibility for Child Protection, the member of staff receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Headmaster who will inform the Chair of Governors or the Governor with specific responsibility for Child Protection, currently Dr Simon Lowe. They will ensure the LADO is informed without delay.

The Case manager will discuss the case with the LADO to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. There may be situations where the case manager will want to involve the police immediately or they may discuss this with the LADO.

The initial discussion may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken. In this case the decision and a justification will be recorded by both the case manager and the LADO with an agreement reached on who should record what.

The case manager will inform the accused person as soon as possible following the consultation with the LADO making sure they have as much information as possible. If a Strategy meeting is needed and/or if police and children's social services need to be involved, the case manager will not do that until those agencies have been consulted and agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused.

Careful consideration will be given to whether the circumstances warrant the accused being suspended from contact with children at the school or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place until a resolution has been reached. All options to avoid suspension will be considered.

When it is clear that investigation by the police or children's social services is unnecessary, the LADO and the case manager will agree the next steps. This will depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available and will range from no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in the future.

If further enquiries are needed an investigation will normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school staff.

The school recognises the duty of care towards those involved and will ensure that the procedures for support and confidentiality as laid out in KCSIE 2020 part four (page 60 and 61) are followed.

If the accused person resigns this will not prevent an allegation being followed up.

The investigation and subsequent decisions, actions and recording of information will be conducted in line with other relevant policies and following the guidance as laid out in KCSIE 2020 part four.

If the school (as the employer) thinks an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child, a referral to the DBS will be made in line with statutory responsibility.

Where qualified teachers are registered, any misconduct referrals (that is those which are not child protection related) must be reported to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

If a child is involved information must be recorded on a yellow (Cause for Concern) form or as a CPOMs incident under the category of Child Protection. Where necessary referrals will be made to Children's Social Care or Early Help; this may be done by the LADO. This may happen whether or not an allegation is substantiated. If the allegation is shown to be deliberately malicious, the Headmaster will consider whether any disciplinary action is necessary against the student who made it or whether the police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible.

The school will always apply a 'lessons learnt' rule and aim to make any relevant changes to policy and practice as deemed necessary.

Allegations found to be malicious are removed from personnel record; records are kept of all other allegations but those not substantiated, unfounded or malicious are not referred to in employer references.

**Note: any member of staff may make a referral to external agencies.**

## 8. Promoting Safeguarding and Prevention

It is the aim of Bedford Modern School to create a warm and supportive environment where pupils feel safe and secure. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult provide an essential framework within which our pupils can live increasingly independent lives.

Pupils are actively encouraged to talk and they are listened to sympathetically. Their viewpoint is valued.

Teaching and support staff provide guidance through the pastoral system or as subject staff. All are aware of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting concerns regarding pupils' well-being, including possible cases of abuse. Assemblies are held regularly which promote safeguarding, mental health and online safety and additional assemblies are held when necessary in response to any concerns. Sixth Form Monitors and Year 13 students receive full safeguarding training from the DSL to enable them to support both staff and younger children.

Through the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) programme, responsible attitudes to adult life and parenthood are engendered and pupils' awareness is raised. This also includes covering relevant issues through Relationship Education in the Junior School, and Relationships and Sex Education in the Senior School.

Pupils are taught online safety through a variety of methods including system monitoring which allows staff to facilitate educational conversations as necessary. Pupils are made aware of a variety of support mechanisms in place to help them keep safe. ([See paragraph 13 for more information.](#))

The School has both a vertical and horizontal pastoral structure to support children develop and thrive. Heads of Year, assisted by Assistant Heads of Year, manage teams of tutors who are responsible for the day to day pastoral care of the pupils. In the Sixth form tutor groups are divided into clusters which are overseen by Senior Tutors and ultimately the Director of Sixth Form. The House system is run by the senior pupils, overseen by Heads of House and the Senior Head of House. Its vertical ethos encourages younger pupils to mix with older pupils in a safe and supportive environment.

Peer to peer support is at the heart of the school's success. Each year group has a team of monitors, led by the Senior Monitors and Head Boy and Girl and their Deputies. The monitors are on duty at break and lunchtime and work to promote social interaction and communication within the year group. They also act as role models and mentors to the younger pupils.

We believe that Bedford Modern School promotes the welfare, health and safety and guidance of every pupil through its positive, safe and stimulating environment.

## **8.1 Multi Agency Working**

The school is committed to working with external agencies including but not limited to the three local safeguarding partners (primarily those in Bedfordshire but also where necessary surrounding Counties), CAMHS, CHUMS, and various local charities such as Mind Map and Aquarius. The school will be proactive in seeking help and advice at the earliest possible point. The school will also promote the sharing of information between agencies in order to act in the best interests of the child and will encourage TAF meetings which bring together all of the agencies as well as the parents and where necessary the child. The school recognises the importance of the voice of the child and will seek to gain and include this at each step.

## **8.2 Early Help**

All staff are trained to be alert to the signs of abuse and encouraged to record any concerns. All staff are aware that certain children ([see paragraph 5.1](#)) are more vulnerable and likely to benefit from Early Help. Staff at BMS are encouraged to record any information (however insignificant it may seem) that may be relevant using the electronic system CPOMS.

Bedford Modern School is completely committed to Early Help as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2019):

*Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.*

As individual teachers we are aware when things are not going well for a child and it is our responsibility to ensure that any identified need is reported to either the Deputy Head of Junior School, Head of Year, Deputy Head Pastoral, Deputy Head Academic, Director of Sixth Form, Senior Deputy or Headmaster as appropriate. In this way we can ensure that issues are fully discussed and the necessary guidance or referral made to support the child. In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

## **8.3 Education Welfare Officer**

Regular attendance at school is a legal requirement. If attendance becomes a concern then appropriate actions will be undertaken to draw this to the attention of parents and if necessary communication will be made with the Education Welfare Service to inform them of our concern. Children missing education must be dealt with appropriately and in a timescale that will disadvantage the pupil least. We will make reasonable enquiries where a pupil is absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more or at any stage where there are concerns over the reasons for an absence.

## **8.4 Children's Social Care including Children in Need (Section 17) and Children in Need of Protection (Section 47)**

Where a child has been identified as being a child in need or a child in need of protection, the school will work to ensure it liaises with the relevant individuals to ensure a co-ordinated offer. The DSL will ensure that staff know who these children are and understand their academic progress and attainment. The DSL will encourage all staff to maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort and will also support teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

If the DSL or deputies feel a child is at risk of harm they will always refer to the thresholds for the local authority in which the child resides and report to the relevant authority.

If the DSL or members of the safeguarding team are concerned about the action being taken by external agencies this matter will be discussed during the regular safeguarding meeting. If agreed it will be escalated and the Headmaster will be informed. Any complaints regarding conduct of professionals involved in supporting children will be shared with the DSL and discussed with the Headmaster before contacting the relevant authorities.

The law with respect to Child Protection covers all children under the age of 18. Pupils who are 18+ may decide themselves whether to report abuse to the police, but they are will still be supported by the School.

## 9. What to do if you are concerned about a child's welfare:

If you **suspect** that a child is being abused, speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Head Pastoral, Jude Goodacre, who will advise on the best course of action. In her absence you should speak to the Senior Deputy Head, Andrew Whomsley. In the Junior School talk initially to the Deputy Head, Paula Pacyna, or if she is absent Jude Goodacre. You will subsequently need to document your concern in writing using CPOMS (Yellow safeguarding category) or on the yellow Cause for Concern form as soon as possible. If the abuse has been perpetrated by another child, refer both children.

If you **know** that a child is being abused you must speak **immediately** to the DSL, Jude Goodacre, or, in her absence the Senior Deputy Head, Andrew Whomsley, or the Headmaster. **Do not delay your report.**

**If, at any point, there is a risk of serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. You can call the emergency numbers listed in this handbook. Anyone can make a referral. If there is an immediate risk to the child's safety, call the police. You can also call the NSPCC 24 hour helpline.**

- Even if unsure always discuss your concerns with the DSL, Jude Goodacre, or, in her absence, Senior School, the Senior Deputy Head (Andrew Whomsley), Junior School, Junior Deputy Head (Paula Pacyna). If you think it, report it.
- Put your concerns in writing either using the yellow Cause for Concern Form or using CPOMs Yellow Form section) with dates and details of these suspicions and pass to Jude Goodacre.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.
- It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

## 10. What to do if a child makes a disclosure:

### Guidance for Staff

- A disclosure may happen at any time.
- Do not panic and think things have to happen instantly. It is more important that the right decision is made and therefore immediate referral to the DSL is essential.
- It is important to remind the child that you will have to pass on their concern.
- Confidentiality should not be promised; make clear that staff have a responsibility to share relevant information with the Deputy Head Pastoral (who is the DSL).
- If you talk to a child, do so with tact and sympathy. Listen, but do not offer an opinion.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- When asking questions always ask open questions using the **TED** principle of **T**ell me, **E**xplain to me, **D**escribe to me.
- Do not let the child take the blame. A child cannot be held responsible for abuse received at the hands of an adult, older sibling or carer.
- Make careful and detailed legible notes (on the yellow form) – they may be needed later. Record the date, event, observation, disclosure and action taken.
- Pass the information and a written account to the DSL, Jude Goodacre, immediately.
- The DSL, Jude Goodacre, will either seek guidance from the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) or contact the Social Services Duty Desk. **She will decide whether it is appropriate to contact parents. Do not contact parents yourself.**

## 11. General Principles of Confidentiality

- All staff should be aware that personal information about a child and his/her family is confidential and should only be given to an appropriate person.
- If abuse is suspected accurate information must be given to the DSL immediately.
- Other teachers need only know enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed child.
- If a child makes a disclosure, the child should be kept informed of who knows and why.
- Promises of confidentiality must not be given as a teacher has a duty to protect a child from abuse; all abuse must be reported.
- Teachers should not, in any circumstances, remove a child's clothing. They should only note those marks which they have noticed or which are brought to their attention by the child.
- No further examination should be carried out.
- Teachers should not photograph the injury.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

If staff (teaching or support) hear worrying information about children from other parents, neighbours or even other children, this should be passed on to the DSL.

### 11.1 Monitoring and Record Keeping

The School can play a vital role in helping children and those who are suspected of being abused, by monitoring and recording certain aspects of the child's progress and behaviour in school.

Evidence from reports and reviews into the deaths of children indicate the vital importance of record keeping as indicated in the *'Working Together to Safeguard*

*Children – a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children March 2018*. Early Help Assessment Referral Forms will be used by the school as well as references made to the referral thresholds as set by the Local Safeguarding Partners in which the child resides, to ensure support is provided as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

<http://www.bedford.gov.uk/earlyhelp>

All staff are responsible for passing the following information to the DSL:

- Patterns of attendance.
- Changes in mood.
- Changes in classroom functioning.
- Relationships (with peers and adults).
- Behaviour.
- Statements made by the child, comments, stories, 'news', drawings.
- General demeanour and appearance.
- Home/family changes.
- Medicals.
- Response to PE/Sport.
- Injuries/marks – past and present.

The DSL will decide when to start and finish monitoring the child and decide upon further action to be taken.

The online management system CPOMs will be used to record all relevant information. All teaching staff, and where appropriate support staff, will have access to CPOMs and should input any concern however small using the 'add an incident' button.

### **11.2 Referrals to Social Services (through MASH)**

When the School makes a referral, thought must be given to the type of referral – 'What if', Early Help, child in need or child in need of protection.

For 'What if' ring MASH and ask for 'What if' advice.

Child in Need – use Early Help Assessment Referral Forms

<http://www.bedford.gov.uk/earlyhelp>

- Child Protection – ring The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or equivalent for the area in which the child resides.
- When referring, anything said by the child should be written down as a verbatim report.
- Information will be recorded in factual, non-emotive, non-judgmental terms, with notes of the time, date and context of the events in question. A reference will be made on the child's file.
- The file will be kept centrally and confidentiality will be respected. Child Protection records will be kept securely locked either hard copy or electronically using the CPOMs system. A reference should be made on a child's school file that a Child Protection File exists. When the child transfers to a new school, the Child Protection File will be forwarded to the receiving school.

### **11.3 Child Protection Records, the Data Protection Act and GDPR**

Child Protection records can be kept on computer and are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 1984. From September 2018, all CP records will be kept online in CPOMS. For manual records the Education (School Records)

Regulations 1989 exempt information relating to child abuse from the requirement of disclosure. However, in cases of alleged child abuse which come to court, the court may require the School to provide its Child Protection records. The school is fully GDPR compliant and recognises and promotes that a fear of breaching data protection regulations should not stop staff taken action where necessary for the purposes of safeguarding and child protection.

#### **11.4 Supporting the Child**

If abuse is suspected, accurate information will be given only to the DSL. The School accepts that other staff need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed child.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of worth. They may experience feelings of helplessness, humiliation or self-blame.

### **12. Safer recruitment**

Bedford Modern School is committed to safer recruitment and acts at all times in compliance with the Independent Standards Regulations. In addition to its safe recruitment procedures as set out in KCSiE (2020), members of staff (including contractors where appropriate), school proprietors and Governors are subject to the necessary child protection checks before starting work. A single Central Register is in place to record this.

All visitors are supervised at all times and required to wear a visitor badge or lanyard. All staff including Governors wear a lanyard or their staff badge when in school.

### **13. Online Safety**

It is the duty of Bedford Modern School to ensure that every pupil and member of staff in its care is safe; and the same principles apply to the digital world as apply to the real world. IT and online communications provide unrivalled opportunities for enhanced learning in addition to traditional methods, but also pose greater and more subtle risks to young people. Our pupils are therefore taught how to stay safe in the online environment and how to mitigate risks, including but not limited to the risk of identity theft, bullying, harassment, grooming, stalking, radicalisation and abuse. Both the online safety policy and the ICT AUP are available online and cover both fixed and mobile internet devices provided by the school (such as PCs, laptops, webcams, tablets, whiteboards, digital video equipment, etc.), as well as all devices owned by pupils and staff brought onto school premises (personal laptops, tablets, smart phones, etc.). All users whether staff, governors, pupils or guests must read this policy and the ICT AUP prior to using their provided login details; upon their first login they must click/accept these policies. All parts of this Online Safety Policy and ICT AUP should be understood fully prior to acceptance and any questions that arise should be directed to the e-Safety Coordinator or the ICT Services and Innovations Manager.

Procedures to keep children safe online are regularly reviewed by the DSL and the E-safety co-ordinator. Information is regularly shared with staff and parents. All staff but especially teaching staff have been reminded of responsibilities of online safety during the Coronavirus pandemic.

## **14. Coronavirus Pandemic**

The school recognises the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic will have had on the school community and will take additional steps to ensure that all staff are aware of safeguarding, mental health issues and online safety concerns that may arise as a result. In the event of a local or national lockdown this policy should be read in conjunction with the safeguarding addendum which will be regularly updated to ensure it reflects local arrangements.

Whilst this policy attempts to cover all eventualities, it is vital that it is always viewed in conjunction with Government advice for schools and statutory guidance.

**Mrs J Goodacre**  
**Deputy Head (Pastoral and Student Progress)**  
**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

**Interim Review April 2021**  
**Review Date September 2021**

